

Central Committee Instruction Approving the Ministry of Public Security Party Group's "Report on the Second National Conference on the Reform Through Labor of Criminals" and the "Resolution of the Second National Conference on the Reform Through Labor of Criminals"

Date: May 1954

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To all Central Bureaus, Sub-Bureaus, and Provincial (Municipal) and Regional Party Committees:

The Central Committee approves the Ministry of Public Security Party Group's February 27 report, **"Report on the Second National Conference on the Reform Through Labor of Criminals"**, and the **"Resolution of the Second National Conference on the Reform Through Labor of Criminals."**

The Central Committee believes that the policies established and the specific issues resolved by the Second National Conference on Reform Through Labor are correct. Party committees at all levels are requested to supervise the public security organs and the relevant departments of the government's financial and economic systems under their jurisdiction in conscientiously implementing them.

The work of transforming criminals into new people is an important task, and reform-through-labor production constitutes a distinct undertaking of our state. After several years of effort, this work has begun to show results. Party committees at all levels should consistently pay attention to this work, strengthen leadership over it, and ensure its smooth development.

Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party
May 1954

Report of the Party Group of the Ministry of Public Security to the Central Committee on the Second National Conference on the Reform Through Labor of Criminals

February 1954

To the Chairman, the Central Committee, and the Political-Legal Party Group:

The Second National Conference on the Reform Through Labor of Criminals convened by the Ministry of Public Security concluded on December 24 of last year.

The conference was attended by 174 responsible officials from:

- Public Security Departments and Bureaus of the major administrative regions and provinces (municipalities);
- Labor reform departments;
- Major labor reform production units.

The meeting lasted fifteen days.

After extensive discussion, the conference:

- Summarized the experiences of previous work;
- Determined future policies and tasks;
- Resolved a number of urgent and solvable problems;

- Adopted a resolution;
- Approved a draft **Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Reform Through Labor**;
- Considered measures concerning the employment and resettlement of released prisoners;
- Approved financial management regulations;
- Established five-year production targets and the 1954 production plan.

The principal issues discussed and resolved are summarized below.

(1) Review of Labor Reform Work Since the First National Conference

During the previous year, labor reform work had been carried out in accordance with the policies of the Central Committee and Chairman Mao. Under the unified leadership of Party committees and governments and the supervision of public security organs, substantial achievements had been made.

At present:

- 83.67 percent of all prisoners in custody had been placed in labor production.
- Numerous labor reform production units of various sizes had been established.
- Prison labor production had developed considerably.
- Prisoners engaged in production had, on average, become essentially self-supporting.

In prison administration:

- Basic prison management systems had been established.
- Prisoners' living, sanitary, and working conditions had improved.
- Political and ideological education had been implemented.
- Incidents of work stoppages, sabotage, escapes, illness, and deaths had steadily declined.
- Large numbers of prisoners had been successfully reformed.

Labor reform organizations had also become more complete, cadres had generally settled into their work, and they had acquired experience in both production management and prisoner reform.

However, several shortcomings remained.

These included:

- Backward production management.
- Considerable blind expansion of production.
- Financial disorder.
- Inadequate prison administration systems.
- Insufficient prisoner education.

- Weak integration of educational and production work.
 - A growing tendency toward lax discipline after the earlier excesses of beating and mistreating prisoners had been corrected.
 - Lack of satisfactory arrangements for released prisoners.
 - Inadequate staffing and weak political work.
 - Continued incidents in which labor reform units infringed upon the interests of local populations.
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(2) Policy for Labor Reform Production

The conference established a policy of:

Consolidation, rectification, and steady development.

Specific measures were adopted according to local conditions.

Particular emphasis was placed on:

- Improving management.
- Strengthening planning.
- Improving financial administration.
- Strengthening technical management.
- Preparing conditions for economic accounting systems.

Special priority was given to:

- Large agricultural farms exceeding 10,000 mu.
- Industrial, mining, and kiln enterprises administered by provinces and municipalities that possessed development potential.

The five-year targets (through 1957) called for:

- Expansion of cultivated acreage to several million mu (exact figures omitted in the document).
- Grain production totaling billions of jin.
- Additional income from sideline production amounting to approximately 15 percent of revenues.
- Industrial, mining, and engineering production worth several billion yuan.

Delegates expressed confidence that these production targets could be achieved.

(3) Administrative Status of Labor Reform Enterprises

Because labor reform production possessed both the characteristics of state ownership and an extremely decentralized structure, the conference decided that labor reform enterprises would be classified as:

Local state-owned enterprises.

They would therefore be incorporated into local production plans to facilitate leadership and supervision.

However, because many financial issues could not yet be resolved locally, financial administration would continue to remain under central control.

Specific measures would be worked out jointly by the Ministry of Public Security and the Ministry of Finance and then submitted to the State Council for approval.

(4) Strengthening Prison Administration and Reeducation Work

The conference emphasized strengthening prison administration and educational work.

To establish unified nationwide standards, it adopted the draft:

Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Reform Through Labor.

The draft regulations specified:

- The responsibilities and jurisdictions of labor reform camps, prisons, detention centers, and juvenile institutions.
- Educational principles and disciplinary systems for prisoners.

The conference emphasized that ideological transformation and prisoner education constituted essential components of labor reform.

(5) Employment and Resettlement of Released Prisoners

The conference regarded the resettlement of released prisoners as an urgent problem.

During the previous one or two years, approximately several hundred thousand prisoners had already been released.

If all prisoners currently serving sentences were released immediately upon completing their terms, more than several hundred thousand additional prisoners would be released during the next four to five years.

The conference concluded that many prisoners would not have been fully reformed by the end of their sentences and that unemployment after release could create serious public security problems.

Consequently, it adopted the principle:

“Retain more, release fewer” (多留少放).

Under this policy:

- Prisoners in large provincial and municipal labor reform enterprises would often remain employed in their original workplaces after completing their sentences.
- Only a minority would be released.
- Counterrevolutionaries, habitual thieves, and repeat offenders would especially be retained rather than released.

The report argued that this approach would be advantageous to the state.

(6) Staffing and Personnel Questions

The conference established staffing ratios for labor reform departments and production units.

The previous standard, which allocated cadres at approximately 3 to 5 percent of the prisoner population, was judged insufficient.

New staffing standards were established, drawing partly upon the organizational structures of state-owned enterprises.

Public security organs at all levels were authorized to increase staffing where necessary, subject to approval by higher authorities.

To alleviate personnel shortages, the conference proposed that:

- Party committees;
- Government financial commissions;

assign experienced production managers, technical personnel, and specialists to labor reform enterprises.

The conference also addressed the welfare and treatment of tens of thousands of labor reform cadres. Previously, these matters had not been clearly regulated, causing difficulties that affected morale.

The conference resolution therefore established general principles intended to improve these conditions.

The resolution of the Second National Conference on Reform Through Labor is hereby submitted to the Central Committee for examination and approval so that it may be distributed for implementation.

The draft **Regulations on Reform Through Labor** and the **Provisional Measures for the Release, Resettlement, and Employment of Labor Reform Prisoners** will be revised by the Political-Legal Committee and later submitted to the Central Committee for approval before being forwarded to the Government Administration Council and the Central People's Government.

Other conference documents, including production plans and financial regulations, will be discussed with the relevant departments and then distributed directly for implementation without further submission to the Central Committee.