

## GAC Directive on the Improvement and Development of National Publishing Industry

(October 28, 1950)

The publication, distribution, and printing of books and magazines are crucial political tasks closely related to the national construction efforts and the cultural life of the people. The First National Publishing Conference decided to adjust the relationship between public and private publishing industries based on the principle of "overall planning, division of labor, and cooperation." This aims to gradually eliminate the disorganized and unplanned aspects of publishing and distribution work, ensuring a planned and ample supply of various publications needed by the people. This policy is correct. To improve and develop the national publishing industry under this policy, the following directives are issued:

1. The Central People's Government Publishing Administration is the central authority responsible for guiding and managing the national publishing industry. In the past, the Publishing Administration concentrated its efforts on directly engaging in publishing, distribution, and printing work, resulting in a lack of emphasis on leadership in the national public and private publishing industry. This deficiency should be corrected in the future. On one hand, the Publishing Administration should timely propose the overall guidelines for the national publishing industry to facilitate the coordinated work of various public and private publishing, distribution, and printing institutions under a unified direction. On the other hand, national public and private publishing institutions should submit their work plans and reports to the Publishing Administration on time to receive timely adjustments and improvements.

2. The publication, distribution, and printing of books and magazines are three distinct types of work that, in principle, should gradually achieve scientific division of labor. To facilitate the improvement of publication quality, publishing houses, primarily state-owned ones, should implement a rough division of labor based on the nature of the publications. The Publishing Administration should also assist large private publishing houses in determining specialized publishing directions and support small publishing houses in cooperative operations under voluntary principles to overcome conflicts, redundancies, waste, and low-quality issues in publishing.

3. The main shortcomings of the current publishing work are the disorganized distribution of types of publications and the low quality of publications. To overcome these issues, the Publishing Administration should fully mobilize and organize various forces involved in writing and compiling, ensuring an abundant supply of publications urgently needed by the people, especially popular periodicals. Simultaneously, various effective methods should be employed to gradually improve the quality of publications. The Publishing Administration should promote and organize the introduction and criticism of publications in newspapers, magazines, and broadcasts. Rewards should be given for excellent, demand-oriented publications, while substandard and irresponsible publications should be phased out gradually.

4. Public and private specialized publishing houses should establish fixed connections with relevant government departments or people's organizations with the assistance of the Publishing Administration to ensure that the content of publications better aligns with the needs of the country and the people. Where possible and necessary, government departments and people's organizations should gradually establish their own editing or publishing institutions, with attention to streamlining.

For those departments and organizations that have already established publishing or editing institutions, efforts should be made to improve their leadership over publishing agencies and overcome the current state of inefficiency. In sectors such as military affairs, finance, industry and mining, transportation, agriculture, health, public security, etc., there is a relatively low number of publications at present, and the Publishing Administration should collaborate with relevant departments to increase publications in these areas.

5. Currently, publishing resources are mostly concentrated in Beijing and Shanghai, with large administrative regions or provinces having few or almost no publishing capabilities of their own. This situation needs to be changed. To meet the specific needs of local social, economic, and cultural life, to fully mobilize local translation forces, and to promote the widespread development of the publishing industry across the country, the Publishing Administration should assist major administrative regions in establishing, improving, or supporting local publishing efforts. Local publishing work should particularly consider the needs of farmers, workers, working cadres below the county level, and ethnic minorities.

6. Publishing journals are one of the most important methods in publishing work and should be given due attention. Most current journals lack planning, leadership, and well-established editorial departments, resulting in unsatisfactory quality and even wasteful use of resources. The State Council instructs the Publishing Administration, in collaboration with relevant parties, to gradually adjust existing journals and improve their editorial conditions. Organizations related to these journals should also prioritize journal work, considering it a regular and sharp weapon for guiding work, providing specific guidance on time.

7. The distribution of books and periodicals should be significantly improved to address the current issue where a vast majority of the people cannot access reading materials. State-owned Xinhua Bookstore should expedite the completion of unified operations for its national branches. State-owned bookstores should unite and organize all private bookstores (including vendors selling and distributing books and periodicals). They should improve the distribution of books and periodicals gradually, establishing various book and periodical sales and subscription outlets, book kiosks, book stalls, libraries, and mobile book and periodical supply organizations in factories, mines, rural areas, military units, schools, and government offices. All national institutions have a responsibility to assist in promoting the distribution of books and periodicals. To utilize postal services, trains, and cooperatives for the promotion of book and periodical distribution, the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, the Ministry of Railways, and the Central Cooperative Management Bureau should make specific decisions and enter into special contracts with the Publishing Administration.

8. The publication and distribution of books and periodicals, whether public or private, should not be solely profit-driven. To facilitate the expansion and development of the publishing industry, both public and private publishing should be allowed to gain legal profits, but excessive illegal profits should be strictly prohibited. Public and private publishing industries should strive to rationalize their operations to appropriately reduce book prices. The Publishing Administration should inspect and guide the business operations of both public and private publishing.

9. The National Cultural Paper Management Committee should actively research and address the supply issues of cultural paper. Industrial departments should make efforts to develop and improve the domestic paper industry to ensure an adequate and reasonably priced supply of paper for the publishing industry.

10. Due to the temporary oversupply of production capacity in the national printing industry, central and local government agencies and people's organizations should temporarily halt the establishment of new printing factories. All printing should be entrusted to existing public and private printing factories to avoid unnecessary duplication. If there are compelling reasons to establish new factories, approval must be obtained jointly from the corresponding financial authorities and publishing administrative authorities. Printing factories overly concentrated in coastal cities should be assisted by relevant government departments to relocate some of their operations to inland areas lacking printing equipment.

Premier Zhou Enlai

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According to the regulations on January 1, 1950