



The following is an article by Wang Debang, [a Chinese dissident who chose to stay inside China](#) (instead of secretly leaving) and has been under persecution and constant government surveillance since the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre. Wang is a frequent commentator on China's situation for Hong Kong East media since April 2015.

Recently, the question of “what’s the surname of Chinese media” has divided public opinion. Xi Jinping, Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leader, on February 19 when visiting Xinhua News Agency said:

“The media run by the party and the government are the propaganda fronts and must have the party as their family name. All the work by the party’s media must reflect the party’s will, safeguard the party’s authority, and safeguard the party’s unity. They must love the party, protect the party, and closely align themselves with the party leadership in thought, politics and action.”

Real estate tycoon, and network chief, Ren Zhiqiang, tweeted: "Since when did the people's government become the party’s government? Is it spending party’s money?"

A media war erupted with many Chinese supporting Ren Zhiqiang.

Party's media promotes party's position -- Xi Jinping spoke the truth

From 1949 when the CCP took power, or even further, since it dates back to the founding of the Chinese Communist Party in 1921, all media founded by the CCP have had the 'surname of the party', spoken for the party, and served the party.

Writer Wang Shiwei, wrote an article reflecting lives in Yan-An, the party's founding place. Wang was beheaded; in 1957, the anti-rightist movement: millions of Chinese scholars persecuted due to following the party's "media call" to criticise and suggest reforms to the government. This was a ploy by Mao Zedong to expose those who had independent thought.

In the Eighties, when relatively open minded Hu Yaobang and Zhao Zhiyang were centre stage, they arranged chief of the Propaganda Department, Zhu Houze, to advocate for "liberal, tolerant and generous behaviour" in the media, but in less than a year, Zhu was pushed out of office.

After the mass slaughter of 1989, not only was media control tightened, but journalists and editors 'self-censored' to toe the party line. In mainland China, there hasn't been a media outlet which has not promoted the party line since the CCP was formed.

The saying "serve the people" is used frequently in propaganda for the party.

Xi had just spoken of the truth, and disclosed the "Emperor's new clothes".

Serve the people - Ren Zhiqiang 'lies' or distortion

The two micro-blog entries that caused trouble for Ren Zhiqiang are, firstly: "When is the people's government becoming party's government? Is it spending party's money? Please do not use taxpayers' money to do things not serving the tax payers." Secondly: "being divided in to completely opposite camps? When all media have their own surname, and not representing

the people, people are being ignored and left in the corner!”

On the surface, it is criticizing the fact that government is serving the party, but in reality, it is a fake question, a lie. When has the so called ‘peoples government’ in China represented Chinese people in over 60 years? Since when have the people not been relegated to the corner? Since 1949, government has never belonged to the people, it has been serving the party steadfastly, and it has been asking the people to follow and obey the party completely, with total devotion even with their lives.

Basically, the "party" and "people" have always been the two opposite camps. “To serve the people” has always been the slogan for government to promote party control. So Mr. Ren's statement: “When did the people’s government become party’s government?” sounds as though this is a new development. The “people’s media, and people’s courts, have never served the people, only the party.

The people's media should have people’s surnames, not the party's

Xi and Ren’s words raised much discussion about what is the last name of the media, People should not get drawn into this discussion, but establish media for ourselves, especially during this period of transition.

When the truth of the “party’s media belongs to party” is stated openly, the most urgent matter is for people to set up media that represents people. The 80 million party members have their media, should not 1.3 billion people have their own media? The Constitution explicitly gives the citizens the 'right to freedom of speech and of the press', so striving for the implementation of this right, to open, lawful media is a matter of urgency.

Second, party media should be supported financially by the party itself; media employees should not be treated as public servants; media should not be spending taxpayer’s money. People should demand the government exclude the media budget from the national budget. (present Chinese media should be paid from membership fees of the party).

Thirdly, since the internet became widely available, it greatly broadened the scope for any

Xi's 'truth'; Ren Zhiqiang's 'lie' and Stupidity of the Masses

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organizations and individuals to participate.....Therefore, China today does not need to worry about the party media's "last name", but to stand up and defend their constitutional right to freedom of speech, publication, and so on, set up your own media, give it your own family name.

Chinese version of Wang's article: <http://www.secretchina.com/>