

Ma Zhipeng

(Member, Beijing Municipal Discipline Commission)

LEADING CADRES MUST BE CAREFUL IN MAKING FRIENDS

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[The lively if repetitious document translated/paraphrased below, amounts to a general anatomy of official corruption in China. As the author hammers home again and again, unsavory people seek to make friends with cadres—persons in position of authority—in order to gain special favors; and they are willing to do favors (in the form mainly, it seems, of providing money and sex) to the cadres. The author exhorts cadres to straighten out and avoid questionable practices. It is “even more important” to “strengthen the routine education and management and supervision over leading cadres.” This is the function of the Discipline Inspection Commission, to which the author is attached.]

At the plenary meeting of the Discipline Inspection Commission, Comrade Hu Jintao clearly pointed out: All leading cadres must be careful in how they treat their friends. Practice proves that the problem of friends of leading cadres is not a mere matter of personal life but is a political matter related to the purity of Party style and of political development. It is necessary, then, to be one hundred percent prudent.

1. The importance and urgency of the problem of friends of leading cadres

For a long time now, as a result of great collective efforts by Party comrades, the ideological style, study style, work style, leadership style, and cadre lifestyle have all undergone unceasing improvement. There have been obvious results. The majority of leading cadres have increased the attention they give to cultivation of their Party nature; they have made strict demands on themselves in terms of work and manner of living. They are proper in their work style and healthy and prudent in their attitude toward friends. However, the ideological understanding of not a few leading cadres is not up to standard. Their style of life does not stand up to inspection and they have an unwholesome approach to social intercourse. This has had a bad influence on the tasks of the Party and the healthy development of leading cadres individually. Party organizations at all levels and leading cadres must raise the level of attention given to the problem of friends of leading cadres. They should deeply understand the important and urgent nature of the problem of friends of leading cadres.

When leading cadres take care in making friends, they are acting correctly in accord with the needs of exercising power. Every leading cadre holds in his hands a certain amount of power and resources. Exercising power in a correct manner is a basic demand upon leading cadres. After the reform and opening of the capital and the speeding up of the steps toward modern construction, there was a transfer of management power over land, a need for investment in capital construction, a change in the system of governmental commercial transactions, and other economic activities in

response. The amount of power held by leading cadres along with their access to gold also increased. There was then an even greater need to supervise them. If leading cadres were not careful in choosing friends, some ill-intentioned people would be able to use the banner of friendship and, using a hundred means and a thousand tricks, try to get close to you. They will bribe you with money and beguile you with sex, corrupting you with the aim of using the power in your hands as a means to gain illegal benefits. The power in the hands of the leading cadres has been given them by the Party and by the people and may be used only for the benefit of the popular masses. It cannot be used for the benefit of a minority, for a small number of “friends.” Only if leading cadres are careful about making friends will they be able to prevent the power in their hands from becoming a commodity, corrupted. They will only then be able to prevent the power given them by the people from becoming a tool for the private benefit of a few. Only then will they be able to exercise their power in the service of the broad masses of the people.

Care by leading cadres in making friends is a necessary condition for being intimately linked to the masses. Intimate linkage with the masses is a fine tradition of our Party. It is a special trait of a Marxist political party and is also one of our Party’s basic outstanding advantages. The conditions under which a leading cadre makes friends are a measure of whether he meets the important standard of being intimately linked with the masses. It is also the standard by which the masses measure whether or not a leading cadre can be relied upon. If a leading cadre makes friends according to his own advantage, seeking friends for the sake of utility, focuses his energy on seeking the benefit of a small number and giving his attention to those who can be of benefit to him, while being cold and distant to the common people at the basic level, then he will necessarily become separated from the broad masses and his purpose in serving them. The work of our cadres will then become isolated, passive, losing the trust and support of the masses. Only if we stand firm in our duties, take root among the masses, and put our energy and heart into carrying out the work of the masses, solving their difficulties and doing good things for them—only then will we be able to enjoy high prestige and a good image among the masses; only then will the Party’s line, direction, and policies be able to obtain the masses’ support and protection. Only then will all aspects of the Party’s work have a strong base in society and among the masses.

Care in the choice of friends by leading cadres is a necessary part of rejecting corruption and guarding against degeneration. Leading cadres have a special status. Their choice of friends is not a simple matter of individual preference but is the outward reflection of their world view, their view of life, and their standard of values. It is a concrete embodiment of their commitment to the Party, of their political qualifications, and of their moral fiber. It is, then, a major issue of our Party’s self-construction. Those who touch pitch become black. Care in the choice of friends is a strong guarantee against passive and corrupt phenomena and of the preservation of our purity. Lack of care in the choice of friends is often a way of abetting passive and corrupt phenomena. From an examination of cases in recent

years we note that not a few leading cadres have come to walk the road toward defiance of discipline and toward crime. Those “friends” for whom friendship is a means toward seeking illegal advantages will not only drag leading cadres into the water along with themselves but will also at critical junctures implicate the leading cadres as the main culprits. Liu Zhihua, Bi Yuxi, and Nie Yuhe are profound lessons on that aspect.* The collapse of a dike a thousand miles long begins with a worm hole. Should leading cadres suddenly become careless in making friends, not being strict about it, it will be very difficult to remain pure and unsullied; there is the possibility that they will fall into corruption. Only if leading cadres remain careful in making friends will they be able to resist the infections of money-worship and hedonism in a self-aware way and so unceasingly raise their ability to resist corruption.

2. Leading Cadres Must Be Earnest in Being Careful in Making Friends

In order to develop the economy, foster the happiness of the common people, facilitate their own work or their proper personal interactions, it is positive and advantageous that leading cadres have a wide range of friends. But these friends must be treated carefully and in a healthy manner.

One point concerns being wary. Comrade Deng Xiaoping has warned us: It is necessary to make friends, but our hearts must remain wary. This means that we must use judgment in making friends and be able to distinguish who is a true friend and who is not. Friends are those who “share the same teacher and the same will” [a classical definition]. True friends of leading cadres should be people who are upright and honest, who concern themselves with the good of the whole; they are people who help leading cadres perform their duties even better; they are people who contribute to the mental and physical health of leading cadres. It is generally worth associating with such comrades who are straight-speaking and good at raising criticisms. These are friends one can rely on. Those who are always finding ways to impose on you, to flatter you, to satisfy you, who constantly seek favors and influence—such people are basically not your friends. Leading cadres must be alert in the matter of making friends and not be deceived by superficialities. They can’t be moved by various kinds of temptations. They must put a great distance between themselves and those who speculate in emotions, so avoiding the evil consequences of lack of care in making friends. Power is relatively concentrated in the hands of leading cadres. There are many objects requiring management and service. There are also numerous people who make demands on them and seek their attention. Therefore there is a need for cool observation, analysis, and judgment, a need to make detailed distinctions. You must discern the purposes of those who seek to be your friends and understand the techniques that they use; and you must remain clearheaded and alert in all your intercourse with them.

The second is to seek to interact with those who are good. In making friends leading cadres need to have a certain political and moral standard. In making choices they must choose the good. It is necessary to analyze those you deal

with. Now there is a minority of leading cadres who are promiscuous in seeking friends, and this requires our deep reflection and a high degree of attention. Some like to listen to good words; they like to be praised; they make friends with anyone willing to kiss up to them. Some are rotten and besotted with pleasure and so become very broad-minded in seeking friends. Some are immersed in the pleasures of sex and wine and seek friends with women who have been around the block many, many times. Why have there been so many large and important cases? Why does it always turn out that behind the scenes there is always some collection of bosses, businesses, or whores? This obviously is because people have been enticed by lawless people, who are able to take advantage of high-level cadres whose moral quality and commitment to the Party are not high. Lack of a strong ability to resist temptation is relevant here, but another major factor is lack of strictness among these cadres regarding their social circles, their failure to make the friends they ought to make. It is precisely as some leading cadres have said after they have been put in jail: "I thought that these were all congenial big brothers, but now I see that they all used me." It is obvious how dangerous it is to make the wrong friend. It says in the Analects: "There are three kinds of friends who are beneficial and three kinds of friends who are harmful. Those who are morally straight, understanding, and knowledgeable are beneficial. Those who are crooked, hypocritical, and narrow are harmful." Leading cadres must be skilled at finding beneficial friends and avoiding those who are harmful. It is just as Comrade Hu Jintao said at the Seventh Plenary Session of the Central Disciplinary Commission: Do more to make friends with the masses, with basic level cadres, with advanced models, with specialists and scholars; pay attention to the purity of your social circles; be upright in your behavior, avoiding all taint, from beginning to end uphold the political character of a Communist Party member.

The third is that there are degrees in making friends. The intercourse of a gentleman is fresh as water, his way of government clear as tea [a proverb]. There are limitations in the extent of interaction with friends. In making friends leading cadres must pay attention to principle. Do not mix up personal interactions with public powers and act according to feelings or personal obligations. Things which ought not to be done absolutely should not be done; things you ought not to take you absolutely should not take; places you ought not to go you absolutely should not go. A minority of leading cadres do not enforce limitations in their friendships. They pay attention to connections rather than to principle, to personal attachments rather than to discipline. They even have notions of sworn brotherhood that get in the way of their commitment to the Party. They cross over the line demarcating morality and legality. This is extremely damaging. There is an uncrossable moat between authority and friendship. If you try to cross over that moat you will not only damage your friendship but will come to harm yourself. Leading cadres at all levels should act on the basis of the job, of their duty, of the well-being of the Party and the people. They should correctly grasp the measure of what is private and what is public, act indeed as proper and healthy friends.

3. Pay attention to grasping well the problem of leading cadres' friendships

One part of resolving the problem of the friendships of leading cadre is that the leading cadres themselves need to be aware and disciplined, careful in choosing their friends. It is even more important to strengthen the routine education and management of and supervision over leading cadres.

The first part is to strengthen education. We must deepen our Marxist world view, our view of life, or concepts of value, and of the correct use of authority, status, and interest. There needs to be good education in the glorious traditions and excellent work-style of the Party. This education must lead cadres to enhance their commitment to the Party and their cultural qualities; it must cultivate in them a sense of life and feelings. We must be self-aware about preventing wrong ideas and behavior concerning friendships. Education will lead those of the cadres' households to be inner aids to honesty and to show concern about and inquire into the friendships made by the cadres. If we fully make use of model conditions and deepen education in awareness, this will induce leading cadres to appreciate more deeply the bad consequences of lack of care in making friends. They will cultivate virtue and think upon the evils of corruption; they will keep discipline in their hearts and will constantly grasp the moral defenses against dishonesty.

The second part is to strengthen management. We must be energetic in grasping ways to assure that cadres are honest and self-disciplined in their work. We must be strict in seeing that they do not use their authority for the private improper benefit of companions, children, or other sorts of friends. We should summarize the regulations issued by the CDC concerning the problem of cadre friendships and set up a system to regulate and limit the scope of such friendships. In the process of selection and appointment we should examine the associations of the candidates, do everything we can to get better information, and evaluate the candidates from every possible aspect. Improper friendships among cadres in important positions have a bad effect on the masses and must be treated in a timely fashion. Cases involving collusion between officials and merchants or the use of authority for private advantage must be treated severely.

The third is to strengthen supervision. We must fully implement all aspects of the system for inner-Party supervision, bringing the friendships of leading cadres within the scope of supervision. As part of their duties there should be exercises designed to nurture honesty, such as meetings concerning democratic life, inspections, conversations, and penalties. We must supervise what leading cadres do outside the eight hours of work. We must energetically pursue institutional renewal, strengthening the powers of supervision over cadres, especially those holding important positions. We must promote democratic decision-making, scientific decision-making, and collective decision-making. We must promote transparency in the system of decision-making, preventing intrigues in the dark, preventing the misuse of authority by a small number of "friends."

Party and supervisory organs at all levels must fully carry out their duty, adopting effective method in order to strengthen the building of Party-style and supervision and control. They must become immediately aware bad friendships among leading cadres and be swift in implementing education and rescue. Violations of Party discipline resulting from friendship must be dealt with severely, without any toleration. The broad mass of supervisory cadres, especially leading cadres, must set examples in their making of friends. They must be prudent and careful, attentive to the purity of their social circles, so promoting a good work style among leading cadres under the new situation, fighting to carry out the resolutions and goals of the 10th Municipal Party Congress.

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* Liu Zhihua, vice mayor of Beijing, was removed from his position for “corruption and degeneracy.” Bi Yuxi , a “moral degenerate,” was head of the Beijing municipal transportation department. Nie Yuhe, head of the Beijing Urban and Rural Corruption Group, was convicted of taking bribes.