

Is one-party rule best for governance in a complex world?

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Basic Features of the Chinese Communist Party, which spent the first 30 years of its existence as a **revolutionary party**

- A Leninist Party with strict chain of command and elite selection of its leader
- Extensive grassroots organization in all walks of life
- A party leader accountable mainly to a higher level party committee controls all grassroots party cells
- The party maintains strict control over all organizations in China, especially organizations that control means of violence

The CCP Pledge of Allegiance

- "It is my will to join the Communist Party of China, uphold the Party's program, observe the provisions of the Party constitution, fulfill a Party member's duties, carry out the Party's decisions, strictly observe Party discipline, guard Party secrets, be loyal to the Party, work hard, fight for communism throughout my life, *be ready at all times to sacrifice my all for the Party and the people*, and never betray the Party."

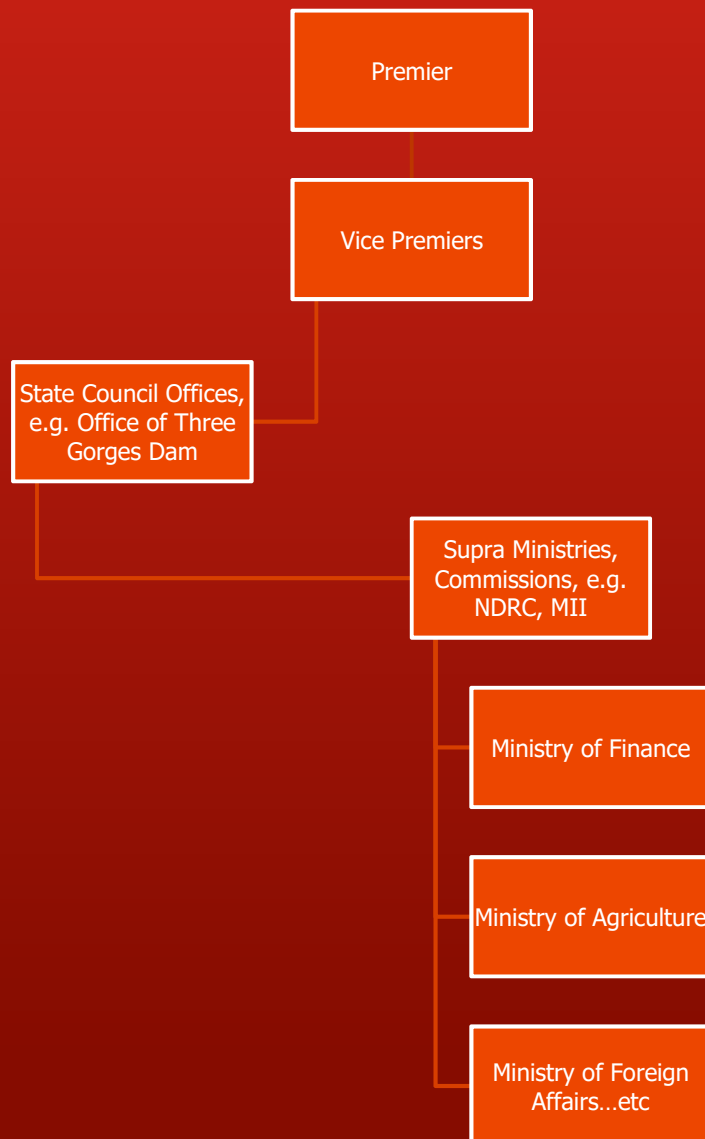
Layers of Government in China: Strictly Hierarchical

- Central Government
- Provincial Government (including Autonomous Region and Directly Administered Cities) (31)
- Prefectures
- Counties (over 2000)
- Townships (45,000)
- Villages (many, many)

The Party Is Everywhere

- The principle of overlapping government: at every level, the state and the party co-govern.
 - Every state organ (including SOEs) in China has an administrative head and a party secretary.
 - Every state organ has a party committee or a party cell, which include most, if not all, senior leaders in the organ.
 - Some party organs, such as the propaganda department, in reality control multiple state organs

The Central Government: The State Council



Chinese Communist Party Hierarchy



The Most Powerful Men in China: the Politburo Standing Committee

十八届中央政治局常委



习近平



李克强



张德江



俞正声



刘云山

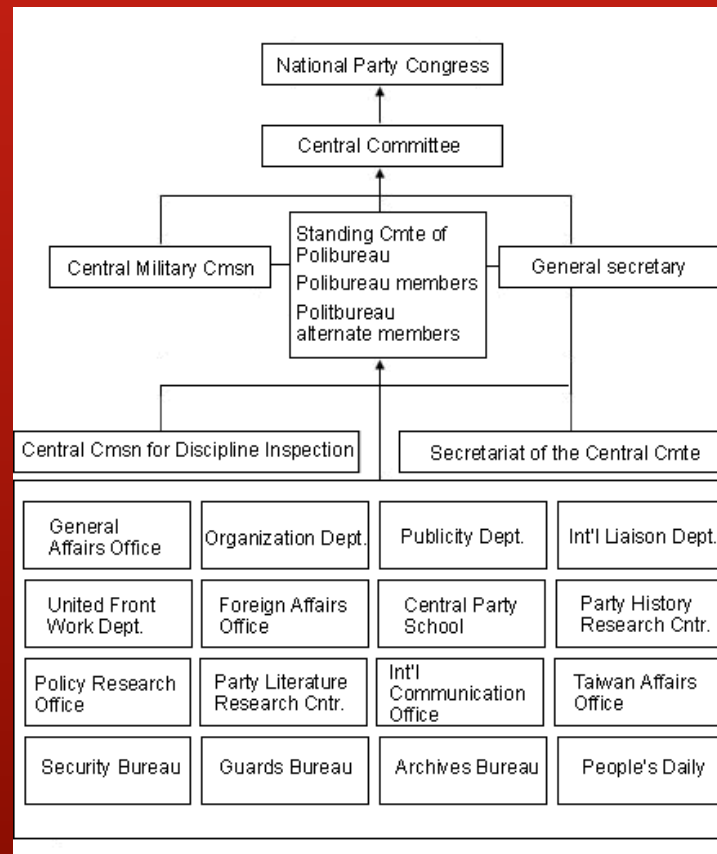


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Formal Election of Top CCP Leaders



How top leaders are actually selected



The Pitfalls and Merits of a One-Party Regime in the Contemporary World

Merits:

- **Total mobilization of resources during crises**
- **Rapid policy making and decision when the top leaders focus on an issue**
- **The command structure can make policy implementation very rapid and thorough**

Pitfalls

- **Unchecked power, which leads to corruption, expropriation, and human rights violations**
- **Because the party controls the court, grievances against the government cannot find independent adjudication**
- **The echoing chamber effect: if a top leader supports a bad policy, no one dares to debate it**
- **Even well-meaning policy reflects the preference of a small handful of elite. Sometimes serious problems are not addressed until the elite realize the urgency of the problem**

CCP Mobilized Massive Resources to Help with the Wenchuan Earthquake



Problems in rural areas receive little elite attention



White elephant projects abound in China (e.g. Ordos)



Because people cannot redress grievances in courts, they find extreme means of addressing grievances



Finally, one-party regime creates political uncertainties

- No clear way of discerning the partisanship or loyalty of senior officials in a one-party authoritarian regime
- No clear way to measure who has more power
- No clear succession mechanism and ways to change top leaders
- Uncertainty about the consequence of losing power
- All of these create a lot of uncertainty