

China — Facts & Figures

Juvenile Delinquency



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Juvenile Delinquency

Juvenile delinquency, although differing among countries, is a worldwide problem. In recent years, it has become a conspicuous social problem in China and aroused concern from the government as well as all circles of society. All the social forces are trying every means to change the situation as soon as possible.

In China, juvenile delinquency means all the anti-social acts which are socially harmful, criminally illegal and punitive, and committed by juvenile delinquents from the ages of 14 to 25, inclusively.

Basic Facts About Juvenile Delinquency in China

China's juvenile delinquency can be divided into three periods since the founding of New China in 1949.

First period From 1949 to 1966 when the "cultural revolution" started. During this period, juvenile delinquency was simple, and the criminal rate was very low and kept dropping thanks to the good social order,

stable life of the people, low social criminal rate and successful education conducted among teenagers. According to a survey of six cities including Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin, juvenile delinquents accounted for 0.199 per thousand of the total number of teenagers in 1965, only 38 percent of the country's total criminal cases, and much lower than the social criminal rate of 0.33 per thousand for the year. Generally speaking, the criminal rate of juvenile delinquency in urban areas, especially in the metropolises, is often higher than that in rural areas. Such a low rate of juvenile delinquency in metropolises like Beijing, Shanghai and Tianjin indicated an even lower rate in rural areas. Thus, juvenile delinquency in China in that period didn't cause serious social problems, and people now cherish the memory of the years before 1965.

Second period From 1966 to August 1983. During that period, juvenile delinquency developed gradually to the main part of the criminal cases and became a serious social problem.

Firstly, juvenile delinquency occupied a bigger proportion of criminal acts than before. Statistics showed that juvenile delinquents accounted for 20 percent of the total criminals in the country between 1950 and 1959, rose to about 30 percent between 1960 and 1965 and continuously increased to about 60 percent between 1966 and 1976. Since the late 1970s, the proportion of juvenile delinquents among the nation's total criminals has been 70 to 80 percent in urban areas and 60 to 70 percent in rural areas, averaging about 70 percent in the whole country.

Secondly, the rate of juvenile delinquency was higher than that of social crimes. The rate of social crimes

was 0.64 per thousand in 1979, 0.76 per thousand in 1980, 0.89 per thousand in 1981 and 0.74 per thousand in 1982; and correspondingly, the rate of juvenile delinquency was 0.84 per thousand, 1.4 per thousand, 1.8 per thousand and 1.6 per thousand respectively, much higher than that of social crimes. The proportion of juvenile delinquents among the total criminals and the rate of juvenile delinquency rose synchronously.

Third period From August 1983 to now. During this period the vicious tendency of the total social crimes has been controlled to some extent and the rate of juvenile delinquency has dropped correspondingly. But still, juvenile delinquency is a serious problem followed with interest by the whole society.

From August 1983 to now the annual average rate of social crimes was 0.5 per thousand or so, much lower than the second period. But the rising proportion of juvenile delinquents among the total criminals warrants attention. For instance, the proportion increased by 8 percent in 1985 as compared with that of 1984, and 1.2 percent in 1986 as compared with that of 1985. The picking up of the rate of juvenile delinquency has once again aroused the attention of various circles of society.

From the above-mentioned we know that in the late 1960s China's juvenile delinquency started to become a major social problem. The severity of China's juvenile delinquency refers to the worsening condition compared with the past, its obstruction and damage to the construction of China's four modernizations, as well as the unbearable social burden on the Chinese people.

Basic Characteristics of China's Juvenile Delinquency

Since the 1970s, new characteristics have cropped up in juvenile delinquency in China, some of them similar to those abroad and some typical only of Chinese society.

Delinquency at a Low Age Delinquency at a low age is the common tendency of juvenile delinquency in all countries of the world. Since the 1970s, the average age of the juvenile delinquents in China has been two to three years younger than that of the 1950s and early 1960s. The research in recent years shows that the regular pattern of juvenile delinquency is as follows: Misdeeds appear at the age of 10 to 12; slightly illegal activities start at the age of 13 to 14; first offenders are mostly at the age of 15 to 16 when serious illegal activities and crimes are committed; and the age of 17 to 18 is the period during which the number of first offenders declines. With the lowering of the age of the juvenile delinquents, underage delinquents have increased obviously in recent years. The underage delinquents increased by 34.04 percent in 1985 as compared with 1984, 6.02 percent in 1986 over 1985, and 5.4 percent in 1987 as compared with that of 1986. Also, the delinquents occupied a still bigger proportion among the criminal gangs.

Juvenile Delinquency by Groups A major characteristic, juvenile delinquency by groups makes up a comparatively bigger proportion among all the juvenile delinquencies both before August 1983, when a campaign of cracking down serious criminal offences be-

gan, and in recent years. Not only does one delinquent take part in multiple groups, but also one group is involved in multiple crimes. Also, juvenile delinquency by groups has the following characteristics:

1. The groups are loosely organized and have a certain number of mainstays, but they don't have definite leaders, commanders or organizers. When they commit criminal offences, the work is naturally divided up according to the status and criminal habits formed previously.

2. The groups have neither clear criminal aim and programme nor special targets. The group members frequently change and don't have definite subordination to or contact with each other. All the acts of a group mainly depend on the mutual need and affection among the group members. The main spiritual prop of a group is often brotherhood and common interests.

3. Delinquency by group is diverse and simultaneous when attacking the objects. Nowadays few of the delinquencies by group are unitary; most groups are involved in multiple crimes such as fighting, gambling, stealing, robbing, hooliganism and rape.

4. Delinquency by group is of high mobility and wide range. Some commit crimes transprefecturally, transmunicipally and transprovincially, and some even collude with the secret societies in Hong Kong and Macao, thus resulting in more tremendous sabotage.

Complication and Diversification of Juvenile Delinquency Before the "cultural revolution" the social economy was of a low level and the society was isolated from the outside world. Therefore, juvenile delinquency was of a low rate, unitary in type and simple in nature, mostly pilfering. After the "cultural revolu-

tion,” the nature and type of juvenile delinquency changed, obviously the sequelae of the turbulent decade and various complicated situation. The changes are as follows:

1. Juvenile delinquencies, such as stealing, swindling, snatching, robbing, fighting, insulting women, rape, gang-rape, hurting, murder, smuggling, speculation and profiteering, gambling, drug dealing, procuring, and producing and trafficking in pornographic publications, have developed greatly as compared with those before the “cultural revolution.” This is one of the characteristics of an open society.

2. The types of juvenile delinquency have developed from ordinary ones to violent ones. Among all the social crimes, the proportions of juvenile delinquencies of hurting, robbing, rape and hooliganism have risen, and violent crimes, which have developed from unitary ones to mixed ones, have obviously increased. In the past few years, the absolute number of the underage delinquents who committed such serious crimes as murder, robbery, arson, dynamiting and rape has grown rapidly.

3. The objects attacked by juvenile delinquents are getting diverse. The state, collective or individuals can all become their victims.

4. Owing to the developed communication and mass media, China’s juvenile delinquency has been characterized by hijacking, smuggling and drug dealing, which are common in other countries. Moreover, international criminal groups are infiltrating China in a planned and organized way.

5. As for the individual delinquents, many are involved in the mixed crimes of robbing, swindling, rape

and hooliganism, not in unitary or special crimes. So the proportion of young delinquents who are sentenced to imprisonment for several crimes is growing.

Sexual Crimes in Juvenile Delinquency Are on the Increase Sexual crime refers to all illegal acts which infringe upon the human rights of others, harm the social order and destroy the relationship between people in order to meet individual sexual needs. The major sexual crimes in juvenile delinquency include rape and gang-rape; raping girls under the age of 14; forcing, seducing and procuring women for prostitution; abduction and trading of women and even raping them; sexual promiscuity; and so on. The above-mentioned sexual crimes have the following characteristics:

1. Female delinquents are on the increase not only in proportion to the juvenile delinquents which have been ferreted out, but also in proportion to female criminals throughout the country.

2. There has been a rapid increase of prostitution, and seducing and procuring of young females. Some young girls prostitute themselves regardless of the national as well as human dignity in order to seek material benefits and sexual incentives, or just to go abroad to live or study.

3. There has been an increasing savageness of sexual crimes. The extremely savage acts committed by sexual criminals in rape, gang-rape, and the rape of underage girls greatly affect both the bodies and minds of the victims.

Causes of Juvenile Delinquency in China

Causes of crimes differ owing to the different social

systems and cultural backgrounds in different countries. Even within one country, causes of crimes also differ in various historical stages because of changes in the political, economic and social factors. Why did teenagers make up the bulk of the criminals after the “cultural revolution”? Why were the juvenile delinquencies of high incidence and on the increase? Obviously, the causes of this social phenomenon are complicated, multiple and comprehensive. Experts and judicial department researchers have varying opinions on the causes of juvenile delinquency. To put it in a nutshell, they are as follows: political and economic reasons; improper family and school educations; physiological, psychological and social factors; and the then general social mood and the influence of the bourgeois way of life, as well as the pornographic or violent literature, artistic works, tapes and video shows which are a result of China’s opening up to the outside world.

Disastrous Effect of Social Upheaval The “cultural revolution” took place during the decade of 1966 to 1976. This historical disaster for the Chinese people exerted a serious impact on teenagers. It may be considered one of the root causes of juvenile delinquency in China.

The high speed of economic development after the founding of New China didn’t balance the production of the means of livelihood and the increase of population, and inexperience caused errors in economic policies; thus the society was fraught with various contradictions. The ten-year turmoil brought the national economy to the verge of bankruptcy, then various shortages of supply cropped up one after another. The teenagers grew up in a materially-deprived society.

Just when they needed education, the social upheaval started. Factories were disrupted; peasants couldn't settle down to productive work; classes were suspended at schools in order to "make the revolution"; teachers were criticized and denounced by the students; the diligent students were regarded as lacking revolutionary spirit, while those who handed in an examination paper unanswered became "heroes"; some veteran cadres, scholars and intellectuals were labelled class enemies of all descriptions; and the "rebels" tyrannized by beating, smashing and robbing, which were regarded as "revolutionary actions." Rights and wrongs and the ideology were confounded in the whole society. All these deeply influenced the growing youths mentally and morally. In those years, out-and-out egoism and anarchism developed malignantly, people jostled against each other and were intensively antagonistic towards each other. As a result a large number of teenagers became anti-civilization and pro-ignorance.

The ten-year "cultural revolution" also brought the revival of the vestiges of feudalism and capitalism. Some cadres sought personal privileges and gain by utilizing their power. This hurted the minds of the teenagers, raised their doubts about the society, and caused them to vacillate and lose confidence in the society. Some of the teenagers obviously had anti-social sentiments and ideology, which laid a foundation for the illegal acts and criminal offences.

Increasing Number of Teenagers with Little Education and Vulgar Interests and the Inadaptative Education System After the "cultural revolution," the Chinese government carried out the policy of opening up to the outside world in order to restore and develop

the national economy as soon as possible. With the opening to the outside world, some teenagers were dazzled by the bourgeois way of life and polluted again before they had recovered from the decade-long wounds. The reforms and opening up to the outside world brought great changes to the Chinese society. But in the meantime a new problem cropped up: the number of teenagers with little education, but vulgar and low interests on the increases. Thinking of their immediate interests only, many utilitarian parents make their children quit school in order to work. The errors in education have greatly dampened teachers' enthusiasm for teaching as well as students' zeal for study, and the nine-year compulsory education system hasn't been well carried out, resulting in a large number of students leaving school before completing their coursework. According to the latest statistics, about four million children from the ages of 6 to 14 quit school, and there are about 220 million illiterates in China. In recent years, more than two million illiterates have been produced annually. When children with little education go into society, many of them will commit criminal offences.

Insufficient Jobs The growth of teenagers requires abundant means of livelihood, sound education and timely employment. The population in China has been out of control for quite a long time. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the slogan "strength in numbers" resulted in the first baby boom since the founding of New China. When this large number of children grew up, the state couldn't afford them timely opportunities of employment. The inevitable outcome was a peak of unemployment. According to vast investigation and

research, during the formation period of the unemployment peak, unemployed youths occupy an increasing proportion among all juvenile delinquents, and a greater proportion of unemployed than employed youths turn to juvenile delinquency. Therefore, in a way, unemployment of large numbers of youth is one of the important causes of the peak of juvenile delinquency.

Influence of the Family Environment The influence of the family environment refers to the change of the family structure and the erroneous education of children by the family. Since the founding of New China, with the rapid development of economy, science and technology, culture and health care, remarkable changes have taken place in contemporary family structure, relations between family members and family functions. Large, extended families are disintegrating day by day, and nuclear families consisting of husband and wife and their underage children have generally taken the place of “five generations under one roof” or “several generations living together,” which have existed for several thousand years. In an extended family, the husband and wife, their parents, their children and their brothers and sisters produce and consume together; they care for and depend on each other, and view the family as a whole. In a nuclear family, both husband and wife are at work from morning until night and can't find time to attend to their children, thus greatly weakening the function of family education. Furthermore, school and social education did not take effective measures to make up for the shortcomings of family education. As a result, no one cares for children and helps them with their study when they return home from school. Also no one

encourages them when they feel frustrated. Such a lonely family life doesn't give the children a feeling of warmth or hold appeal for them, so the children are accessible to the harmful effects of society or the lure of evildoers.

Another factor that should not be ignored is that the divorce rate has risen in China since the 1980s, and also the number of incomplete families has increased. The incomplete families lack the functions of the parents of the complete ones, and provide children with abnormal family environment, which twists their hearts and makes them indifferent, unsociable, eccentric and self-abased. Thus, some of the children try to find consolation in extrafamilial society, and go astray easily under the evil influence of that society.

The wrong attitudes of some families to their children are as follows:

1) Pampering and spoiling children. Parents and grand-parents are docile and obedient to all the excessive demands of their children in material ways so as to win their favour. They are often indulgent towards the misdeeds of their children and even shield them instead of educating them. They don't foster their children's ability to work on their own, and take on what ought to be done by the children; they abuse their power and connections to arrange a "bright future" for their children rather than letting them gain social position through their own efforts. These erroneous ways of fostering and educating children result in very serious consequences in which the children become overbearing, overweening, selfish and greedy, and lack independence and social adaptability.

2) Being oversimplified and crude to children. The

parents neglect the ideological education of their children and try to compel them to submit by the “stick.” They want their children to obey them absolutely, and never think of their children’s personalities and psychology. It cannot be said of those who educate their children in such a way that they don’t care for their children; actually they expect too much and sometimes their eagerness for their children’s success becomes abnormal. When the children can’t meet their parents’ excessive requirements, the parents may abuse them physically and emotionally, or even drive them out of the home.

3) Taking a *laissez-faire* attitude towards children. The parents are selfish, indifferent and shortsighted. Hankering after individual ease and comfort, they even make their underage children quit school to make money. This kind of family lacks love between parents and children, as the parents don’t show much concern for their children’s lives and thoughts, resulting in unsociable, eccentric, gloomy or rude dispositions of the children. When children don’t feel any warmth at home, they try to find warmth in society. Even if they have done evil deeds their parents are unaware, thus accelerating their degeneration. Then, when the children commit acts against the law or discipline, the parents harbour and incite them by every possible means instead of joining with social forces in helping them give up evil and return to good. This makes the children go much further on the road of evil.

Overflowing of Unhealthy Culture Unhealthy culture means timeworn ideas of every description, and obscene and pornographic literary and artistic works in society. With the great changes brought to China by the

policy of opening up to the outside world, foreign pornographic literary and artistic works have been transported to China in various ways and channels. As spiritual narcotics, they seriously corrode the youngsters physically and mentally, and even lead them into illegal activities.

Besides, the trend of sexual liberation and freedom in the West has directly sped the sexual delinquency in China. The reappearance of the long-eliminated prostitution is one of the outcomes of this trend.

Prevention and Remedy

With regard to juvenile delinquency, the Chinese government carries out the policy of putting prevention first and remedying the problem in a comprehensive way. That is to say, the whole society, under the unified leadership of the government, will decrease and eliminate the causes, conditions and factors of the crimes in the socialist country systematically, organically and coordinately, in order to gain long-standing social stability as well as ensure the healthy growth of the teenagers.

This policy of putting prevention first and remedying juvenile delinquency in a comprehensive way is one which has been drawn by the Chinese government from its experiences of combating criminal offences, especially juvenile delinquencies, and is suitable for China's national conditions. Adopting this policy can organize all forces to realize the combination of governmental and mass functions, that of combating and preventing criminal offences, and of punishment and reeducation.

Strengthening the Scientific Research on Preventing and Remedying Juvenile Delinquency The increasingly serious social problem of juvenile delinquency has aroused the attention of the government as well as all the related departments. Some researchers, mainly from the judicial organs and youth departments, and personnel of social sciences have begun to investigate and do research on juvenile delinquency. In 1979, the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party transmitted the "Report on Calling the Whole Party's Attention to the Problem of Juvenile Delinquency," which promoted the research of all the departments on juvenile delinquency.

The Central Committee of the Communist Youth League sponsored the "Seminar on the Protection Law for Teenagers" in Beijing in March 1980, which was participated in by the experts and scholars from the Legislative Commission of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the education departments for teenagers, the judicial departments, and the related colleges, universities and institutions of scientific research. The participants probed into the conditions, characteristics, causes, prevention and remedy of juvenile delinquency in China and suggested a protection law for teenagers be made. In August 1981, the "Programming Meeting on Scientific Research of Juvenile Delinquency" was held by the Research Institution of Teenagers under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, the Ministry of Public Security, the Supreme People's Procuratorate and the Supreme People's Court in Qingdao, and the research subjects concerning juvenile delinquency were clearly set. The First Seminar on China's Juvenile Delinquency was held in Nanning,

Guangxi, in June 1982, and the Research Association of the Chinese Juvenile Delinquency was established. After that, juvenile delinquency as a research subject was listed among the state's key research projects in the field of philosophy and social sciences during the Sixth Five-Year Plan period (1981-1985). During the Seventh Five-Year Plan period (1986-1990), a group of research subjects of juvenile delinquency were still kept in the list. In the meantime, the Ministry of Justice established the Research Institute of Criminal Prevention and Reform-Through-Labour; the Ministry of Public Security established the Research Institute of Public Security; each institute of political science and law established their own research office of juvenile delinquency; and international academic exchanges concerning this problem began to develop.

The development of the research work on China's juvenile delinquency has brought to light the laws about juvenile delinquency in China as well as the causes and characteristics of juvenile delinquency in different periods. This has also provided a scientific basis for the state and government to work out laws, improve the level of prevention and remedy of criminal offences, and redeem those who have gone astray.

Realizing the "Three-in-One" Combination of the Educations of School, Family and Society In their long-time research into the prevention of juvenile delinquency, Chinese law personnel have put forth an effective measure of combining the educations of school, family and society in preventing juvenile delinquency.

This combined preventive measure first brings the leading role of school education for youngsters into full

play. Research shows that the Chinese juvenile delinquents are liable to commit criminal offences between the ages of 13 and 15; most of the delinquents are dropouts from middle schools or those who play truant and fail to be admitted to middle schools. Preventive measures can be taken if close attention is paid to school education. Thus, the educational policy of developing morally, intellectually and physically is carried out in various schools, and school education is regarded as the critical preventive measure for juvenile delinquency. In the past few years, the governments at various levels have devoted major efforts to adjusting the structure of secondary school education by cutting the proportion of ordinary middle schools, especially senior middle schools, and increasing that of secondary vocational school, so as to change the situation of a small proportion of students entering schools of a higher grade, and the insufficient employment of those who do not. Thus, the students can keep their minds on their studies, instead of worrying about their futures.

While bringing into full play the leading role of school education, schools will give lectures about family education to parents in a planned way and seek parents' cooperation in educating their children.

Schools encourage students to go into society for the public good, or invite juvenile education-spirited social personnel, heroes and models to be after-school activities counsellors; they also appeal to the whole society to eliminate the unhealthy culture which corrupts the social climate and poisons the young people, and to create sound social environment for children's growth. In the meantime, schools together with families and the whole society publicize legal education among stu-

dents and make them law-knowing and law-abiding.

Reeducate, Help and Redeem Juvenile Delinquents
Besides the penalty for undermining public order, the facilities set up by the state to reeducate and reform juvenile delinquents are mainly work-and-study schools, juvenile reformatories, prisons and reform-through-labour farms.

Work-and-study schools are designed for those secondary school students who committed misdeeds, and minor offences against the law. Different from other forms of reeducation, the work-and-study schools are part of the state's educational programme and are under the authority of the educational and administrative departments. Thus, those who study at the work-and-study schools are just students, not criminals or prisoners. The educational policy of the work-and-study schools is the same as that of the ordinary middle schools: to train and educate students to be useful to society, with ideals, morality, culture and discipline.

Juvenile reformatories and reeducation-through-labour schools are meant to turn those idle people who have the capacity to work, but often violate the law into ones who earn their own living. In essence the two are the same, and both compulsory administration for handling contradictions among the people. The reeducation-through-labour schools are for those of age and able-bodied persons who violate the law but may not be investigated and affixed the responsibility for their crimes; they only served a certain period of compulsory reeducation and reform. The juvenile reformatory houses those at the ages between 14 and 16 who violate the law and are not up to criminal sanction, and whose parents or guardians can no longer

educate and control them.

Surveillance-and-reeducation centres are generally meant for the underage criminals to reform through labour and reeducation. In view of the criminals' psychological characteristics, the Chinese Criminal Law stipulates as follows: the juvenile delinquents above the age of 14 but under 18 should be punished as lightly as possible or received a lightened criminal penalty. One who commits criminal offences under 18 shall not be sentenced to death. One who commits extremely serious crimes above 16 but under 18 may be condemned to death with the sentence suspended for two years. The basic task of the surveillance-and-reeducation camps is, under the prerequisite of penalty, to reform juvenile delinquents' mentality and conduct through reeducation and labour, and enable them to acquired an elementary knowledge of science and technology as well as production skills, thus making them useful to the socialist construction.

Prison and reform-through-labour teams are meant for those who have been sentenced to set-term in prison, life sentences or death sentences with a two-year reprieve to reform through compulsory labour. Through compulsory labour, the prisoners receive ideological and cultural reeducation, and master production skills in order to turn over a new leaf by earning their own living.

The key of the comprehensive remedy is to reeducate, help and redeem juvenile delinquents. China has, in accordance with its own experiences and traditions, found various social remedies of non-criminal penalties for those teenagers who might commit slight criminal offences. For instance, cooperative help and

education groups consisting of personnel from urban and rural police stations and public security departments of neighbourhoods, factories, mines and other enterprises keep a lookout on and strengthen the control over them together with their schools or work units, parents and local public security committees. Besides, reform and reeducation through labour may not be accessible to those who have been released upon completion of a sentence, and they may have relapses under certain conditions. Thus, the society needs to take care of their life and strengthen non-compulsory help and reeducation among them. According to statistics, there were more than 43,000 help and reeducation groups comprising over 113,000 personnel in Shandong Province.

Strict control is exercised over the juvenile delinquents in the work-and-study schools, juvenile reformatories, reeducation-through-labour schools, surveillance-and-reeducation centres, prisons and reform-through-labour teams, such as the specific requirements for study, labour, dress, behaviour, and time for work and rest, so as to subject them to discipline and establish good habits for life. Teachers and working personnel all hold that the juvenile delinquents, like the blossoms poisoned by insects, harm society and are also victims of social turbulence. So they love, take care of, give well-meaning advice to and help the delinquents just as their parents would. With love and respect for the victims, they never discriminate, cold-shoulder or beat and curse them; they even help them in washing, dressing and sewing, and enable them to feel the warmth of a family and kindness of parents. The teachers on duty at the Beijing Municipal

Juvenile Reformatory live together with the “juvenile delinquents” and unlock their own doors, showing affection and trust for the delinquents.

The Spring Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival are traditionally the time for family reunions in China. Juvenile delinquents often feel abandoned by their family members on these festive occasions. Thus many teachers and working personnel stay with them to have a special meal or moon cakes or to enjoy looking at the moon. Many juvenile delinquents are moved to tears, feeling that they start a normal life again.

Besides mandatory culture classes and labour, classes in weaving, component-making, calligraphy, seal cutting, painting and music are given to enable them to master some professional skills. This not only lays a foundation for their future employment but also cultivates their normal and noble minds.

Thanks to the policy of “Reform first, production second” and “reeducation, help and redemption,” the rate of recidivism of the juvenile delinquency is as low as 2.4 percent according to statistics.

Striking Stern Blows at the Handful of Serious Criminals The main content of the comprehensive remedy is to investigate and affix the responsibility for crimes in accordance with the law, and strike stern blows at the serious criminals. According to China’s national conditions and the vicious tendency of criminal cases, the handful of serious criminals who refuse to mend their ways despite repeated admonitions and are guilty of the most heinous crimes have been suppressed sternly and as soon as possible during certain historical period. This has resulted in sound social effects. For instance, the campaign of attacking the

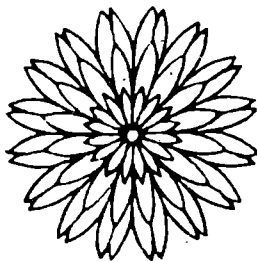
criminals who seriously jeopardized the social public security launched in August 1983 resulted in a decrease of 35.9 percent of criminal cases in the 28 months from September 1983 to the end of 1985, as compared with cases in the previous 28 months.

Of course, to crack down on the tiny minority means to redeem the majority. The Chinese government follows the guideline by which those who may or may not be arrested will never be arrested, those who may or may not be sued will never be sued, those who may or may not be sentenced will never be sentenced, those who may be slightly sentenced will never be sternly sentenced, in handling the majority of juvenile delinquents. In addition, the law is strictly followed in dealing with underage delinquents. For example, those who are under 14 or above 14 but under 16 will not be sentenced unless they commit such crimes as murder, serious injury, looting, arson, habitual stealing or other crimes seriously jeopardizing the social order.

The implementation of this policy has resulted in a powerful check to the vicious tendency of criminal offences after the ten-year “cultural revolution” and a steady decrease of criminal cases in China. This has also aroused the confidence and encouragement of the masses in combating criminal offences, and objectively guaranteed the teenagers an opportunity to grow up healthily.

Thanks to the following of the policy of “putting prevention first and remedying it in a comprehensive way” in recent years, great achievements have been made in preventing and remedying juvenile delinquency, the vicious tendency of juvenile delinquency has been controlled, criminal cases have decreased and

social public security has been improved. Nevertheless the prevention and remedying of juvenile delinquency is a long-term, arduous project. The Chinese government, together with the forces of all circles of the society, will continue to follow the above-mentioned effective policy and try every means to decrease and eliminate the causes and conditions of juvenile delinquency, so as to improve the general social mood and social public security, and guarantee the healthy growth of teenagers.



中国简况

关于青少年犯罪问题

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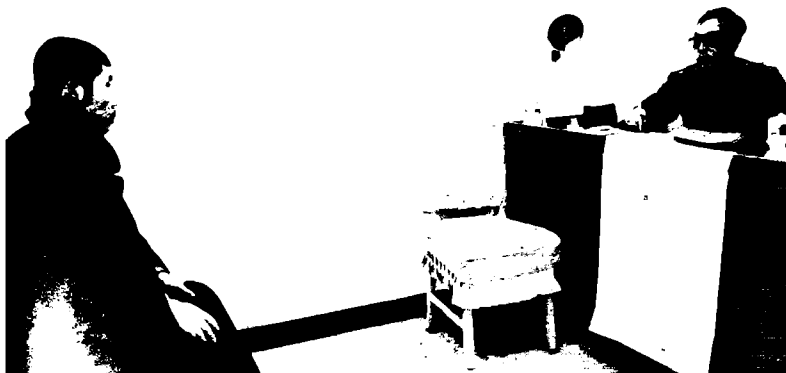
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Xiangfang District Work-and-Study School in Harbin, Heilongjiang Province.

Trying a juvenile delinquent at the Dongcheng District Sub-bureau of Public Security, Beijing Municipality.





A get-together held at the dorm in a juvenile reformatory in Anhui Province.

A symposium of "Say Goodbye to Yesterday and Turn over a New Leaf" held by students at a work-and-study school.



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