

## A Landslide Victory for Provincial Leaders

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Of all the personnel changes that occurred during the 16th national congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the most remarkable one is probably the predominant representation of leaders from China's 31 provincial-level administrations. These top provincial leaders differ from each other in their factional affiliations and occupational backgrounds. As a distinct group of leaders with identical career paths, however, provincial leaders achieved a landslide victory at the 16th Party Congress. Compared with top officials from other bureaucratic institutions in the central administration and in the military, provincial leaders obtained the largest number of seats on both the Central Committee and the Politburo.

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ALL 62 PROVINCIAL CHIEFS—party secretaries and governors (or mayors)—prior to the 16th Party Congress secured full memberships on the Central Committee. Of the people serving on the new 24-member Politburo, 10 (41.7 percent) held provincial leadership posts when they were selected, and 20 (83.3 percent) have served as top provincial leaders in the past. All four provincial party secretaries who served on the 15th Politburo were promoted to serve on the nine-member 16th Politburo Standing Committee, the highest decision-making body in the country. They will concurrently hold some of the most important posts in the central administration when the 10th National People's Congress convenes. Wu Guanzheng was already appointed to the post of secretary of the Central Discipline Inspection Commission of the CCP at the 16th Party Congress. In addition, He Guoqiang (former party secretary of Chongqing), Liu Yunshan (former deputy party secretary of Neimenggu), and Zhou Yongkang (former party secretary of Sichuan) not only obtained seats on the new Politburo, but also have taken charge of three important institutions: the CCP Organization Department, the CCP Propaganda Department,

and the Ministry of Public Security. All three also serve on the new Secretariat, which handles the daily affairs of the entire Politburo.

Never before in the history of the People's Republic of China (PRC) have so many provincial leaders been so quickly promoted to posts in the top national leadership as at the 16th Party Congress. The top leadership positions in China's provinces and major cities have become the most important stepping-stones to national political offices in the country. To a certain extent, current provincial chiefs may be in line for top national leadership positions, lagging behind only Hu Jintao, Zeng Qinghong, Wen Jiabao, and a few others.

The meteoric rise of provincial leaders in the national leadership reveals several important trends in Chinese politics today, especially in central-local relations. First, provincial party secretaries and governors have carried much more weight during the Reform Era of the past 25 years than during the first three decades of the PRC. This influence exists largely because provincial governments now have more autonomy than ever before in advancing their own regional economic interests. As part of the attempt to restrain growing economic localism, the central authorities have frequently reshuffled provincial chiefs from one province to another and promoted some to the national leadership.

Second, the criteria for provincial and national levels of leadership have shifted from revolutionary credentials, such as participation in the Long March and the Anti-Japanese War, to administrative skills, such as coalition-building, both vertically and horizontally. China's provinces are large socioeconomic entities. It is often said that a province is to China what a country is to Europe. China's provincial chiefs, like top leaders in European nations, have constantly been concerned with regional economic development and have coped with daunting challenges such as unemployment, economic issues, political instability, and social welfare needs in their jurisdictions.<sup>1</sup> For China's future national leaders, provincial administration provides an ideal training ground.

Third, in addition to advancing their own careers through provincial leadership, top national leaders have also expanded their power and influence at the national level with support from provincial-level administrations. The appointments and promotions of provincial leaders, therefore, are often a prelude to the jockeying for power that occurs among various factions at the center of power. For example, the promotions of Huang Ju, Jia Qinglin, and He Guoqiang to the central leadership, of Liu Qi and Chen Liangyu from mayors to party secretaries in

Beijing and Shanghai, of Huang Huahua to vice governor of Guangdong, and of Wang Sanyun to deputy party secretary of Fujian, all of which took place a few weeks prior to the party congress, were examples of Jiang, Zeng, and Hu making sure that their own protégés would obtain seats on either the new Politburo or the new Central Committee.

Fourth, China's provincial leadership is also a political force in its own right. During the past two decades, decentralization in both the political and economic arenas has reinforced the tension between the central and provincial governments. Many provincial leaders, especially those in the inland areas, have had reservations about the growing regional economic gap in the country and the overrepresentation in the central government of leaders born in the coastal regions. Deputies to the party congress from the inland regions often use their votes to block the election of those nominees favored by top leaders, especially princelings or those officials who have advanced their careers from Shanghai.

All these factors and forces suggest that the representation of provincial leaders in the central administration, and their characteristics such as political socialization, career patterns, and geographic distribution, are all crucial to an analysis of Chinese politics. This paper has two objectives: 1) to compare the representation of leaders with provincial leadership backgrounds on the 16th Politburo and Central Committee with those on the previous two Politburos and Central Committees; and 2) to examine the differences in terms of power distribution and sociological background between provincial leaders in the coastal provinces and their counterparts in the inland provinces.

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### **INCREASING REPRESENTATION OF PROVINCIAL LEADERS**

Table 1 shows the provincial leadership experience of members of the 16th Politburo, including the names of the provinces (or cities) where they served as leaders and the years of their tenures. Those years spent in the lower levels of provincial administration (e.g., as bureau heads or standing members of provincial party committees) are identified in

TABLE 1. *Provincial Leadership Experience of the Members of the 16th Politburo*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Birthplace</i>	<i>Coastal regions</i>	<i>Inland regions</i>
Hu Jintao	Anhui		Gansu (1975–82), Guizhou (1985–88), Tibet (1988–92)
Wu Bangguo	Anhui	Shanghai (1985–92)	
Wen Jiabao	Tianjin		Gansu (1979–82)
Jia Qinglin	Hebei	Fujian (1985–96), Beijing (1996–2002)	
Zeng Qinghong	Jiangxi	Guangdong (1983–84), Shanghai (1986–89)	
Huang Ju	Zhejiang	Shanghai (1985–2002)	
Wu Guanzheng	Jiangxi	Shandong (1997–2002)	Hubei (1975–86), Jiangxi (1986–97)
Li Changchun	Liaoning	Liaoning (1985–90), Guangdong (1998–2002)	Henan (1990–98)
Luo Gan	Shandong		Henan (1981–83)
Wang Lequan	Shandong	Shandong (1989–91)	Xinjiang (1991–present)
Wang Zhaoguo	Hebei	Fujian (1987–90)	
Hui Liangyu	Jilin	Jiangsu (1999–present)	Jilin (1987–90), Hubei (1992–94), Anhui (1995–99)
Liu Qi	Jiangsu	Beijing (1998–present)	
Liu Yunshan	Shanxi		Neimenggu (1992–93)
Wu Yi	Hubei	Beijing (1988–91)	
Zhang Lichang	Hebei	Tianjin (1985–present)	
Zhang Dejiang	Liaoning	Zhejiang (1998–2002), Guangdong (2002–present)	Jilin (1990–98)
Chen Liangyu	Zhejiang	Shanghai (1992–present)	
Zhou Yongkang	Jiangsu	Liaoning (1983–85), Shandong (1989–90)	Sichuan (1999–2002)
Yu Zhengsheng	Zhejiang	Shandong (1992–97)	Hubei (2001–present)
He Guoqiang	Hunan	Shandong (1986–91), Fujian (1996–99)	Chongqing (1999–2002)
Guo Boxiong (M)	Shaanxi	Beijing (1993–97)	Shaanxi (1982–93, 1997–99)
Cao Gangchuan (M)	Henan		
Zeng Peiyan	Zhejiang		
Wang Gang (AM)	Jilin		Xinjiang (1977–81)

NOTES: AM = Alternate member, M = Military

italics. All other years refer to leadership experience as top provincial leaders—party secretaries, governors (or mayors), deputy party secretaries, and vice governors (or vice mayors). Among the 22 civilian members of the Politburo, 20 (91 percent) have served as top provincial leaders.

The average term of their tenures as top provincial leaders is 8.7 years. This figure does not include the time they served at lower levels of provincial or municipal leadership. Four Standing Committee members of the Politburo, Jia Qinglin, Huang Ju, Wu Guanzheng, and Li Changchun, all served as provincial chiefs for 16 or 17 years. Some of those listed, such as Hui Liangyu, Zhang Dejiang, and Li Changchun, served as provincial chiefs in three or four different provinces. Others, particularly those from Shanghai, spent their entire careers in one province or city before moving to Beijing.

Table 2 compares the percentage of members of the 16th Politburo who have provincial leadership experience with those for the 14th and 15th Politburos. The percentage of those who have served as top provincial leaders increased from 55 percent in the 14th Politburo to 68.2 percent in the 15th Politburo, and again to 83.3 percent in the 16th Politburo. Meanwhile, the percentage of those who have served as provincial chiefs increased from 50 percent in the 14th Politburo to 59.1 percent in the 15th Politburo, and again to 66.7 percent in the 16th Politburo.

Not only have provincial leaders obtained a majority of seats on the Politburo, but many provincial leaders were also concurrently serving as provincial chiefs when they were selected for the Politburo. Table 3 shows the principal bureaucratic affiliation of members of the 14th, 15th, and 16th Politburos. Ten members of the 16th Politburo were serving in provincial administration, doubling the number and percentage of this constituency from the previous two Politburos. The representation of the central party organizations also increased, from 22.7 percent in the 14th Politburo to 25 percent in the 15th Politburo, and again to 32 percent in the 16th Politburo. The representation of the military remained roughly the same.

The increasing representation of leaders from provincial administrations and central party organizations in the 16th Politburo came at the expense of leaders in central government organizations. Only five leaders from the State Council—Vice Premiers Wen Jiabao and Wu Bangguo, State Councillors Luo Gan and Wu Yi, and Minister Zeng Peiyan—obtained seats on the 16th Politburo. This number stands in

TABLE 2. *Provincial Leadership Experience of Full Members of the 14th, 15th, and 16th Politburos*

<i>Provincial leadership experience</i>	<i>14th Politburo (20 members)</i>		<i>15th Politburo (22 members)</i>		<i>16th Politburo (24 members)</i>	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
As top provincial leaders (deputy party secretaries, vice governors, or above)	11	55.0	15	68.2	20	83.3
As provincial chiefs (party secretaries or governors)	10	50.0	13	59.1	16	66.7

sharp contrast to those for the two previous Politburos, which had 10 and 11 representatives from the State Council, respectively.

The declining representation of leaders from central government organizations is partly due to Premier Zhu Rongji's fading power and influence. To a much greater extent, though, this phenomenon is the result of Jiang Zemin's effort to consolidate what he has called the function of the "ruling party." As a result, the CCP Secretariat and various departments under the Central Committee, especially the Organization Department and the United Front Work Department, have become more powerful in recent years.

The distribution of bureaucratic affiliation of members of the Central Committees selected in the past three party congresses has not changed much with regard to the representation of provincial leaders. The representation of the military has also remained the same. Again, the representation of central government organizations has decreased. Meanwhile, the number of entrepreneurs and bankers increased on the 16th Central Committee. At the 16th Party Congress, two delegates, one from the enterprise sector and the other from the financial sector, were added to the previously standard 36 delegates at a party congress for the first time.<sup>2</sup>

Table 4 exhibits the distribution of provincial leaders holding full and alternate memberships on the Central Committee in three particular years: 1997 (the year the 15th Central Committee was formed at the 15th Party Congress), 2001 (the year prior to the 16th Party Congress), and 2002 (the year the 16th Central Committee was formed at the 16th Party Congress). Sixty-five provincial leaders (32.8 percent) obtained seats on the 16th Central Committee, as compared

TABLE 3. *Principal Bureaucratic Affiliation of Members of the 14th, 15th, and 16th Politburos*

<i>Principal current position</i>	<i>14th Politburo (22 members)</i>		<i>15th Politburo (24 members)</i>		<i>16th Politburo (25 members)</i>	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
Central party organization	5	22.7	6	25.0	8	32.0
Central government organization	10	45.5	11	45.8	5	20.0
Provincial administration	5	22.7	5	20.8	10	40.0
Military	2	9.1	2	8.3	2	8.0
TOTAL (includes alternates)	22	100.0	24	99.9	25	100.0

to 61 (31.6 percent) on the 15th Central Committee. Eighty-seven leaders (55.1 percent) at provincial and lower levels of administration were selected as alternate members of the 16th Central Committee, as compared to 84 (55.6 percent) on the 15th Central Committee. The overall presence of provincial leaders on the Central Committee has not changed much, although their presence on the more powerful Politburo has increased significantly.

The most important trend, however, has been the even distribution of full membership seats across provincial-level administrations on both the 15th and 16th Central Committees. Table 4 shows that on the 15th Central Committee, each and every one of China's 31 provincial-level administrations, with the exception of Yunnan, held two full membership posts. On the 16th Central Committee, this institutional norm and practice has remained effective. The fact that the two autonomous regions, Tibet and Xinjiang, had more than two memberships was perhaps the result of CCP Organization Department affirmative action. It is unclear how the alternate memberships among the provincial-level administrations were determined. Some provinces—for example, Shandong and Guangdong—often have more alternate memberships than other provinces.

The even provincial distribution of full membership seats on the Central Committee is of course not static, since top provincial leaders have constantly been reshuffled across provinces or promoted to the central administration. The provincial distribution of membership seats in 2001 indicates this fact. Yet, the even distribution of full memberships among provincial-level administrations at the outset of both the

TABLE 4. *Distribution of Provincial Leaders Holding Full and Alternate Memberships on the CCP Central Committee*

	15th Central Committee						16th Central Committee		
	1997			2001			2002		
	FM	AM	Total	FM	AM	Total	FM	AM	Total
Beijing	2	3	5	2	1	3	2	3	5
Tianjin	2	3	5	2	2	4	2	3	5
Hebei	2	3	5	2	2	4	2	2	4
Shanxi	2	3	5	1	3	4	2	3	5
Neimenggu	2	3	5	1	4	5	2	3	5
Liaoning	2	1	3	2	1	3	2	3	5
Jilin	2	3	5	2	2	4	2	2	4
Heilongjiang	2	3	5	1	3	4	2	3	5
Shanghai	2	2	4	2	1	3	2	2	4
Jiangsu	2	3	5	2	2	4	2	2	4
Shandong	2	4	6	2	3	5	2	5	7
Zhejiang	2	3	5	3	1	4	2	3	5
Anhui	2	2	4	0	2	2	2	3	5
Fujian	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	3	5
Henan	2	3	5	2	2	4	2	2	4
Hubei	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	2	4
Hunan	2	3	5	1	1	2	2	2	4
Jiangxi	2	2	4	1	2	3	2	3	5
Guangdong	2	5	7	2	3	5	2	6	8
Guangxi	2	3	5	2	3	5	2	4	6
Hainan	2	2	4	1	4	5	2	2	4
Sichuan	2	3	5	2	2	4	2	3	5
Chongqing	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	2	4
Guizhou	2	3	5	1	3	4	2	3	5
Yunnan	1	4	5	1	3	4	2	3	5
Xizang (Tibet)	2	2	4	1	2	3	3	2	5
Shaanxi	2	3	5	2	2	4	2	3	5
Gansu	2	2	4	0	2	2	2	3	5
Qinghai	2	2	4	1	2	3	2	2	4
Ningxia	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	2	4
Xinjiang	2	3	5	2	3	5	4	3	7
TOTAL	61	84	145	49	69	118	65	87	152

NOTES: FM = Full member, AM = Alternate member



15th and 16th Central Committees is a significant institutional development in terms of regional representation on this important decision-making body.

Although provincial leaders from the wealthy coastal provinces or cities may dominate the 16th Politburo, especially its most powerful Standing Committee, representatives from poor inland provinces can form a coalition with their large number of votes in the Central Committee. According to a geographic division made by the Chinese government, there are 20 inland provincial-level administrations and only 11 coastal provincial-level administrations. The latter bloc includes Liaoning, Beijing, Tianjin, Hebei, Shandong, Jiangsu, Shanghai, Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong, and Hainan.<sup>3</sup> The coastal region has 38.9 percent of the total population and contributes 56.6 percent of the nation's total gross domestic product (GDP).<sup>4</sup>

#### **POWER DISTRIBUTION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE COAST-INLAND DICHOTOMY**

The Jiang era has been known as a time of growing regional economic disparity. Jiang has allocated too much of the nation's economic resources to Shanghai and other coastal cities while many inland cities lagged far behind. Consequently, the issues of economic inequality and the need for social justice have reemerged. Furthermore, the fact that Jiang's cronies from Shanghai and other coastal cities now occupy two-thirds of the seats on the nine-member Standing Committee of the 16th Politburo has made people both in China and abroad cynical about Jiang's anticipated transition of power to his successor, Hu Jintao.

Ironically, Jiang's failure to contribute to China's institutional development helps to enhance Hu's popularity. Hu advanced his career from China's inland regions, which indicates that he will likely be more sensitive to the needs and concerns of inland provinces and interested in achieving more balanced regional economic development. It is revealing that the delegates at the 16th Party Congress gave Hu Jintao the

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highest number of votes (only one of the 2,132 delegates did not vote for him), while by contrast Jiang's bodyguard, You Xigui, received the lowest number of votes in the election of alternates; his former personal secretary and currently Party Secretary of Shenzhen Huang Liman received the third-lowest number; and his confidante, former deputy party secretary of Shanghai and currently Minister of Education Chen Zhili, failed to obtain a seat on the Politburo.

An analysis of power distribution among provincial leaders with different geographic backgrounds, therefore, can shed light on new patterns of faction formation and the strained relations between inland and coastal regions. This ongoing contention between political forces can potentially lead to disastrous consequences for the country, because it may aggravate region-based animosity.

The nature of the relationship between coastal and inland regions is, of course, constantly changing. Its reflection on the personnel appointments may also be more unsettled and more ambiguous than most China watchers have assumed. To a certain extent, the growing public awareness of power distribution between coastal and inland regions may have a constructive impact on Chinese institutional development if conflicts of interest are resolved through compromise, negotiation, and power sharing.

Crucial to this emerging pattern of regional distribution of power at the center is the dynamic relationship between Hu Jintao and Zeng Qinghong, the two political heavyweights in the upcoming post-Jiang era.<sup>5</sup> Hu and Zeng represent two different political forces and geographic regions. These differences are reflected in their distinct personal careers and political associations.

Hu comes from a nonofficial family background. His political association has largely been with the Chinese Communist Youth League (CCYL). Hu has spent most of his adult life in some of the poorest provinces of China's inland regions, including 14 years in Gansu, three years in Guizhou, and four years in Tibet. It might not be merely a coincidence that in the months prior to the 16th Party Congress, Hu frequently visited inland provinces such as Yunnan, Guangxi, Heilongjiang, Qinghai, and Sichuan. The agenda of the first Politburo meeting that Hu chaired after the 16th Party Congress was the economic development of China's western region.

By contrast, Zeng is a princeling with strong family ties. Zeng has thus far spent almost his entire career in coastal regions such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangdong. The crucial role that Zeng has

played in the formation of the “Shanghai Gang” makes Zeng second only to Jiang in this formidable political network.<sup>6</sup> In recent years, Zeng has taken advantage of his post as the head of the CCP Organization Department to appoint several fellow princelings to head some coastal provinces. In doing so, he probably hopes to expand his power base beyond the Shanghai Gang and build a broad coalition among the coastal provinces from Liaoning to Hainan.

In addition, Zeng has been known for his efforts to promote “returnees from study overseas” (*haiguipai*) to leadership posts.<sup>7</sup> Although almost none of the provincial leaders serving on the 16th Central Committee are returnees from study overseas,<sup>8</sup> this new elite group’s likely rise in the future leadership may increase the

representation of the coastal regions. Most of these returnees from study overseas were born and/or have worked in coastal areas, predominantly Shanghai and Beijing.<sup>9</sup>

The relationship between “inland Hu” and “coastal Zeng,” therefore, will largely determine the nature of Chinese elite politics in the years to come. Table 5 examines some important indicators of the power distribution of provincial leaders in terms of this dichotomous relationship between inland and coastal regions.

Provincial leaders from the coastal regions are overrepresented on the Politburo. Nine members (69.2 percent) of the Politburo advanced their careers exclusively from the coastal regions, in comparison to four (30.8 percent) from the inland regions. Thirteen members (65 percent) of the Politburo concurrently hold, or most recently held, provincial leadership posts in the coastal regions, in comparison to seven (35 percent) in the inland regions.

The composition of provincial leaders on the Central Committee, however, shows a different pattern. Among the total number of 152 provincial leaders who serve on the 16th Central Committee, 32 can be identified as Hu Jintao’s “*tuanpai* officials,” who advanced their careers primarily from the CCYL. Their selection for this category is based on two criteria. First, they served at the national or provincial level of

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TABLE 5. *A Comparison of Regional Distribution of Power among Provincial Leaders Serving on the 16th Politburo and Central Committee (A Coast-Inland Analysis)*

	<i>Coastal regions</i>		<i>Inland regions</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
<i>Politburo</i>						
Politburo members' experience as top provincial leaders (exclusively)	9	69.2	4	30.8	13	100.0
Politburo members' current or immediate past provincial leadership experience	13	65.0	7	35.0	20	100.0
<i>Central Committee (CC)</i>						
Provincial leaders on the CC who advanced career in Chinese Communist Youth League	12	37.5	20	62.5	32	100.0
Provincial leaders on the CC who are princelings	5	62.5	3	37.5	8	100.0
Provincial leaders on the CC who have postgraduate educations	22	43.1	29	56.9	51	100.0
Provincial leaders on the CC who are under 50 years old (born after 1952)	12	35.3	22	64.7	34	100.0

leadership in the CCYL. Second, their tenures as CCYL officials at the national or provincial level concurred—at least partially—with the period during which Hu headed the secretariat of the CCYL (1982–85).

Although it is difficult to trace each leader's association with Hu during that time, one can reasonably assume that Hu and most of these leaders have known each other, through CCYL work, for a couple decades. Many of these *tuanpai* officials used to serve as members of the national committee of the CCYL. Some, such as Song Defu (party secretary of Fujian) and Li Keqiang (governor of Henan), are likely Hu's close friends or allies. Some provincial leaders can be recognized as Hu's followers, not only because they had previous political associations with Hu at the provincial and national levels of leadership in the CCYL,<sup>10</sup> but also due to the fact that their career paths, especially of those provincial officials in China's inland areas, have often been identical to Hu's.

In contrast, there are only eight provincial leaders on the Central Committee with princeling backgrounds. Six of them served as provincial chiefs when the 16th Party Congress convened. They are: Party Secretary of Hubei Yu Zhensheng, Party Secretary of Hainan Bai

Kemin, Governor of Zhejiang Xi Jinping, Governor of Liaoning Bo Xilai, Governor of Jilin Hong Hu, and Party Secretary of Shanxi Tian Chengping. Immediately after the party congress, Bai Kemin was transferred to Hebei where he will serve as party secretary. Another princeling, former vice governor of Guangdong Wang Qishan, was recently appointed party secretary of Hainan.

By comparison, six provincial chiefs have advanced their careers primarily through posts in the CCYL. They are: Party Secretary of Xinjiang Wang Lequan, Party Secretary of Fujian Song Defu, Governor of Henan Li Keqiang, Party Secretary of Guizhou Qian Yunlu, Governor of Ningxia Ma Qizhi, and Governor of Jiangsu Ji Yunshi. CCYL experience and princeling backgrounds are not necessarily mutually exclusive.<sup>11</sup> However, none of the current provincial chiefs with backgrounds in the CCYL comes from a high-ranking official family. Similarly, none of the six princelings has been part of the CCYL. Most of them have been promoted through posts in coastal cities (e.g., Xi Jinping from Fuzhou, Bo Xilai from Dalian, and Yu Zhensheng from Qingdao). In contrast, a majority of former CCYL officials now serve in inland provinces. This observation reaffirms the contrasting career paths between Hu's followers and Zeng's allies.

Table 5 also shows that provincial leaders in inland areas have higher rates of both postgraduate educational attainment and relatively younger age. These factors can be advantages for the future promotion of these provincial leaders, because educational credentials and age requirements for certain levels of leadership are important criteria for elite recruitment. It remains to be seen whether more provincial leaders from the inland regions, especially Hu's followers, will make further political advancement in the years to come.

## CONCLUSION

China's provincial leaders had a landslide victory at the 16th Party Congress, as they occupied an unprecedentedly high percentage of seats on the Politburo and its Standing Committee. Their political advancement was partially due to favoritism and political networking, and partially the result of the growing importance of provincial-level administrations in Chinese politics. Despite the predominance of provincial leaders from the coastal regions on the Politburo, the full memberships on the Central Committee were more evenly distributed. It would be a mistake to underestimate the power of Hu Jintao, since a

large number of his former CCYL officials have now served as top provincial leaders and have constituted an important political and regional constituency on the Central Committee.

The tension and difference between Hu and Zeng, or what I call “inland Hu” and “coastal Zeng,” are obvious, but they may not lead to a vicious power struggle. This is so because the two leaders share a need for cooperation. Hu has a majority of votes in the 16th Central Committee, but his inland officials have less experience or expertise in foreign trade, finance, technological development, and large-scale urban construction than their counterparts in coastal regions. As for Zeng, he has a majority of the votes in the Politburo and has been able to control economic and human resources. But if he does not demonstrate a willingness to share power and resources, the potential backlash against him, the Shanghai Gang, and the rich coastal regions will be overwhelming.

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## NOTES

1. For a detailed discussion of the growing importance of provincial leaders, see Cheng Li, “After Hu, Who? China’s Provincial Leaders Await Promotion,” *China Leadership Monitor* 1 (winter 2002).

2. The 16th Party Congress had a total of 38 delegates. In addition to two new delegates from enterprises and financial firms, there are 31 provincial and municipal delegates, one from the PLA and armed forces, one from the central party organizations, one from the central government organizations, one from Hong Kong and Macao, and one representing Taiwan.

3. For a detailed discussion of the jurisdictional division, especially coastal-inland division, of China’s provincial-level administrations, see Wang Shaoguang and Hu Angang, *The Political Economy of Uneven Development: The Case of China* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1999).

4. For the population numbers, see National Bureau of Statistics of China, *Diwuci quanguo renkou pucha gongbao* (The fifth national census of the population of the People’s Republic of China), no. 2 (May 15, 2001). For the GDP data, see <http://www.stats.gov.cn/ndsj/zgnj/2000/Co8c.htm>.

5. For more discussion of the relationship between Hu and Zeng, see Cheng Li, “Emerging Patterns of Power Sharing: Inland Hu vs. Coastal Zeng?” Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, *Asia Program Special Report* 105 (September 2002), 28–34.

6. For a detailed discussion of Zeng’s role in the formation of the Shanghai Gang, see Cheng Li, “Shanghai Gang: Force for Stability or Fuse for Conflict?” *China Leadership Monitor* 2 (spring 2002).

7. Ever since Zeng became head of the CCP Organization Department in 1999, he has repeatedly claimed that “returnees from study overseas”—including both degreeholders and yearlong visiting scholars—should be seen as a major source of political recruitment. See <http://www.chinesenewsnet.com>, September 25, 2000.

8. Exceptions are Chen Liangyu (party secretary of Shanghai), who studied public administration as a visiting scholar in England in 1992; Li Hongzhong (vice governor of Guangdong), who was a visiting scholar at the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in 1996–97; and Zhang Dejiang (party secretary of Zhejiang), who studied economics at the Kim Il Sung Comprehensive University in North Korea in 1978–80. None of them, however, is a degreeholder from a foreign university.

9. For more discussion of returnees from study overseas and their regional distribution, see Cheng Li, “Zhonggong di shiliujie zhongyang weiyuanhui renshi goucheng jiqi quanli junheng” (The 16th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party: Paths to membership and balance of power), in *Hu Jintao shidai de tiaozhan* (Challenges for the Hu Jintao era), ed. Ding Shufan (Taipei: Xinxinwen Publishing House, 2002).

10. In my case study of 15 provincial-level administrations in 2002, 30 provincial leaders (full or deputy party secretaries and full or vice governors) had served as provincial or national leaders in the CCYL during the early 1980s when Hu Jintao was in the secretariat of the CCYL. See Cheng Li, “Hu’s Followers: Provincial Leaders with Backgrounds in the Youth League,” *China Leadership Monitor* 3 (summer 2002).

11. Some princelings also pursued their careers through the CCYL; for example, Chen Haosu, son of the late Marshal Chen Yi, and He Guangwei, son of revolutionary veteran He Changgong, served as members of the CCYL secretariat in the early 1980s. But the “helicopter style” of promotion in the CCYL did not advance their political careers much further. Chen is currently president of the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, and He is director of the National Tourism Administration under the State Council. Li Yuanchao, party secretary of Nanjing, is perhaps an exception. He is a princeling whose father was a former deputy mayor of Shanghai. He worked as secretary of a CCYL committee in Shanghai in the early 1980s. He is a rising star who has strong ties with both Hu Jintao and Zeng Qinghong.