

**JIANG ZEMIN, HU JINTAO
AND THE PLA**

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Executive Summary

Party-army relations under Mao Zedong were highly symbiotic for lack of clear institutional boundaries. This is due to Mao's emphasis on "politics taking command" and "human factors," but not division-of-labor-based technical expertise.

Clearer party-army institutional boundaries had emerged under Deng Xiaoping because Deng had allowed for more institutional autonomy, so that the military could stay away from politics and pursue technical expertise.

The only caveat is that at the top leadership level, Deng relied on his personal influence and his pre-1949 Second Field Army comrades to control the army. These enabled him to employ the military against political opponents in the party and from society at critical moments such as the popular rebellion in 1989.

By similar logic, it is assumed that Jiang Zemin, after becoming the commander-in-chief in 1989, had consolidated his power in the military through personnel appointments and budget increases, so that he was able to employ the military against his political opponents in the party and from society.

During the 15 years of Jiang's command of the gun, however, little evidence existed to show that Jiang had mobilized the military against his political opponents in the party and from society.

The lack of Deng's credentials, the presence of institutional limits on how far he could go to consolidate power in the military, and examples of the military's defiance of party's order to suppress popular rebellion in Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union from 1989 to 1991, had apparently convinced Jiang that the policy of mobilizing the military against domestic political opponents may not be the most effective way to control the military.

As a result, Jiang adopted an additional policy, that is, to enhance civilian governance, or the party's legitimacy to rule by promoting economic growth and political stability, and to adopt programs that confine the military to narrow functional-technical tasks.

This policy had helped to maintain party-army institutional boundaries and the internal cohesion of the military because it denied an opportunity for the military to intervene in politics.

After he became party general secretary in 2002, Hu Jintao adopted a policy similar to Jiang's. The only difference is that Hu had not particularly consolidated his power in the military through personnel changes.

Instead, Hu focused on enhancing civilian governance by promoting social justice and sustainable economic growth, and adopted programs to confine the military to narrow functional-technical and external tasks. Both have also helped Hu to consolidate power in the army.