

ECONOMIC REFORM, POLITICAL REPRESSION: Arrests of Dissidents in China since Mid-1992

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Introduction

In the wake of Deng Xiaoping's highly publicized tour of southern China in late January 1992, China experienced a major new wave of economic reform which was heralded by some observers as the "rebirth of capitalism" in the country. In what might be termed "compensatory repression," however, China's political dissidents have paid a heavy price for this vigorous new round of economic reform. At least 40 of them were secretly arrested during 1992 and are still being held, their families often denied all information on their whereabouts or conditions of detention; and peaceful, underground dissident organizations were smashed and dispersed by the authorities. They included groups known as the *Free Labor Union of China*, the *Liberal Democratic Party*, the *China Progressive Alliance*, the *China Social Democratic Party*, the *All-China People's Autonomous Federation*, the *Young Marxism Party* and the *Democratic Freedom Party*. There was no hint from the authorities that any amnesty lay in the offing for the several thousands of peaceful demonstrators and activists who still remained behind bars across the country for their involvement in the 1989 prodemocracy movement.

As he pursued what was probably his last attempt to push the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) beyond the restrictive confines of the command economy and toward a "socialist market economy," Deng once again signalled unequivocally that political pluralism and democracy have no role to play in his unfolding blueprint for China's post-Mao social and economic future. Even as the reformist battle-cries of "emancipate thinking," "put economic development first" and "embrace the socialist market" gathered strength in the official media during 1992, so too did their familiar Dengist ideological counterparts—the stern warnings against allowing "bourgeois liberalization," "peaceful evolution" and incipient "counterrevolution" or "turmoil" to deflect the nation from its well-regimented march toward the new economic Utopia. As the year wore on, even the addition of capitalist-style stock markets to the system of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" appeared to pose no hindrance, in the authorities' view, to the ongoing implantation in China of market economic relations with a Stalinist face. For Deng, the principle of "unified leadership by the Party" over all spheres, particularly politics, has been rendered more important by the current shift toward a semi-capitalist economy.

Laying Down the Law

Party leader Jiang Zemin sounded the political keynote for the year when he reminded a meeting of the country's top judges in early January 1992 that "the dictatorship of the proletariat is one of [Deng's] Four Cardinal Principles." "The more that we pursue reform and the open door policy," Jiang declared, "the more we must uphold [this dictatorship.] There must be no weakening of it at all."¹ Two months later, in his opening speech to the National People's Congress (China's parliament), Premier Li Peng called for a "bolder approach" to economic reform but stressed: "We must be on the watch for any ideological trend toward bourgeois liberalization, checking it the moment it appears and never allowing it to run rampant."² Ren Jianxin, president of the Supreme People's Court, then drove home the point by informing the assembled delegates, in a clear reference to political dissent: "The people's courts are an important tool of the people's democratic dictatorship....We must strengthen our usefulness against enemies of the dictatorship."³

In late March, just as his economic reform offensive was beginning to prevail over obstructive attempts by more conservative members of the Party leadership, Deng himself raised the chorus of hardline political rhetoric to a new level by announcing: "Once the factors of turmoil reappear in the future, we will, if required, not hesitate to use any means to eliminate them as soon as possible." Unrepentant on his June 1989 use of military force to crush the Tiananmen Square movement, Deng even added: "We can use martial law or measures harsher and stricter than martial law, so that we will not be subjected to interference from outside [countries]."⁴

Nor did the renewed stress on economic reform translate into any more general improvements in the human rights situation; in fact the reverse was true. According to a July statement by the Supreme People's Procuratorate, state prosecuting offices examined no less than 23,466 cases involving illegal detention, extortion of confessions by torture and other rights violations by police and security agencies during the first half of 1992, of which 9,492 were subsequently brought to court.⁵ As for freedom of speech, the prospects for its observance in 1992 were well indicated by a Western survey, published in January, which named China as currently holding more journalists in jail than any other country in the world.⁶

¹ "Party tightens its grip in judiciary," *South China Morning Post (SCMP)*, January 8, 1992.

² "China's Goals: Economic Reform, Strict Regimen," *Washington Post*, March 21, 1992.

³ "Beijing clamp on crime," *SCMP*, March 29, 1992.

⁴ "Threat by Deng to use force," *SCMP*, April 28, 1992.

⁵ Cited in *China Daily*, July 22, 1993; and *Reuters*, same day. The figure of 9,492 represented an increase of 17.2 per cent over the total number of such cases tried during the same period the previous year, but the official report gave no indication as to how many of those tried were actually convicted by the courts or what the level of sentencing was. Overall, it is clear that there has been a marked increase in the incidence of such cases in recent years.

⁶ "China tops list for jailing journalists," *SCMP*, January 3, 1992. The report, issued by the French press organization *Reporters Sans Frontieres*, said that of 108 journalists imprisoned worldwide, 26 were in China.

Emergence of Underground Prodemocracy Groups

In advance of the third anniversary of the 1989 protest movement and encouraged by the success of Deng's "trip to the south" and his renewed economic reform offensive, several small, underground prodemocracy groups in China began planning a limited revival of the movement. In the course of the year, they sought to expand their membership and influence and also staged a number of peaceful, though necessarily clandestine, activities to publicize their aims. Activists evoked the idea of a three-year cycle, whereby previous high points in the movement had resulted in heavy government repression and a roughly two-year period of fear and retrenchment, followed eventually by a new round of official reform and fresh opportunities for the prodemocracy movement.

There was an awareness among these groups on the need to avoid any over-provocative activities which might present hardliners in the Party with an excuse to oppose the economic reform drive and could sting Deng himself into launching a preemptive crackdown. Three years of harsh repression had taught the movement a few basic lessons, and those involved in the new underground groups, some of whom were 1989 activists who had only recently been released from prison, showed an increased level of political maturity. The regime, however, gave them scant opportunity to tread any such cautionary line, for it regarded all traces of organized political opposition, however peaceful or moderate, as representing "counterrevolution" and therefore to be eradicated.

The Liberal Democratic Party of China

In mid-November 1991, shortly after the publication of an official "White Paper on Human Rights in China" in which the government sought to defend its rights record against critics, a previously unknown underground group called the *Liberal Democratic Party of China (Zhongguo Ziyou Minzhu Dang)* secretly distributed to Western journalists in Beijing a one-page document entitled "A Statement Concerning the Question of Human Rights in China." Apparently timed to embarrass the regime on the eve of a visit to Beijing by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, the *LDPC's* three-point appeal condemned the Communist Party for its 40 years of "despotic atrocities" and demanded the release of political prisoners and an end to political persecution. It also urged the United Nations and world leaders to scrutinize China's human rights record and "to exert much-needed pressure" that might force Beijing "to make concessions," and to lend "moral and material support" to China's prodemocracy movement. The statement called Beijing's decision to publish its White Paper on human rights a "defensive move" forced upon it by international pressure.¹

On March 18, 1992, the eve of the opening session of the National People's Congress, the *LDPC* released a second statement to the foreign press corps calling upon the government "to lift the press blackout immediately, stop persecuting dissidents, release all political prisoners, and legalize all domestic and overseas democratic organizations." While welcoming the reform fruits of Deng's "trip to the south," the group pointed out: "It is unreasonable to pursue economic reform while reinforcing totalitarian politics....The prerequisite for smooth reform lies not in upholding the dictatorship's 'social stability' but rather in creating a relaxed environment for democracy." According to the statement, "Important reform policies must be taken to all the people for discussion and approval. Under no circumstances can one single party take sole charge of affairs as the agent of the people. Otherwise, the people will not recognize

¹ *United Press International*, November 14, 1991.

or support any decisions on reform."⁸

An official of the Beijing municipal government later dismissed as "trivial" the *LDPC* leafletting incidents, claiming: "These organizations have no market among the Chinese since people do not believe them." He added, "If they [the underground activists] think they can create chaos in the country, it is sheer paranoia."⁹

The Free Labor Union of China

In late January 1992, the second of the underground groups to announce its existence, a dissident workers organization called the *Preparatory Committee of the Free Labor Union of China (Zhongguo Ziyou Gong Hui Choubei Weiyuanhui)*, secretly mailed around 2,000 copies of its inaugural manifesto to government-run union offices and workplaces.¹⁰ According to the manifesto, "The right of workers to organize free trade unions is an internationally recognized right...During its 40 years of rule, the CCP has deprived workers of [this] right...The officially recognized *All-China Federation of Trades Unions* is merely a tool of the CCP and the ruling regime. It is a feudalistic body run by a tiny minority of labor scabs who have betrayed the workers' interests, and it was long ago scorned by the overwhelming majority of workers."

The *Free Labor Union of China* was perhaps the most radical of the groups that emerged in 1992, and its manifesto touched on a subject that inspires much anxiety within the Party leadership: "What does it matter if the authorities refuse to recognize and authorize our union? ...Didn't Polish Solidarity get banned and suppressed ten years ago? What was the result? Solidarity won and their oppressor fell. The *FLUC* will definitely succeed, and those who suppress it are destined to fall also."¹¹ In mid-June, 1992, following a major crackdown by the authorities on the *FLUC*, the group managed to send a letter of appeal for support to the congress of the *International Labor Organization* in Geneva.

The Social Democratic Party of China

On April 6, the day after the anniversary of the 1976 crackdown in Tiananmen Square, the third of the underground groups to emerge, a previously unknown dissident organization based in Lanzhou, the capital of Gansu Province in northwest China, called the *Social Democratic Party of China (Zhongguo Shehui Minzhu Dang)* issued its founding charter. The party's basic aim was "to organize China's democratic and patriotic forces to eliminate the one-party dictatorship" and "to establish a new society of freedom, justice, humanity and law." According to the document, the student-led protests of 1989 had been part of a "worldwide democratic wave" which had washed away many authoritarian regimes and would eventually undermine Communist Party rule in China.

⁸ *Agence France Presse*, March 30, 1992; and *SCMP*, March 31.

⁹ "Beijing dismisses leaflet agitators," *Hong Kong Standard*, April 3, 1992.

¹⁰ *Reuters*, February 5, 1992.

¹¹ An earlier statement issued by the Preparatory Committee of *FLUC*, entitled "Letter of Proposal" and dated December 25, 1991, called upon China's workers to actively begin organizing secret free trade unions in their workplaces.

"Our democratic credo and scientific spirit are to oppose the autocratic rule that has existed for millennia in China and has been pushed to its pinnacle by the Chinese Communists," the statement continued. The group acknowledged, however: "Under a democratic system, all parties have a right to exist, including the Communist Party." In a secret interview with a Western journalist, a representative of the *SDPC* claimed a total membership of several hundred people spread over numerous different provinces. "We have workers, peasants, intellectuals, students and government officials ranking as high as provincial-department chief—every social stratum except the military."¹² In August, following a wave of arrests of *SDPC* leaders, the group's overseas supporters sent a letter of appeal to the Socialist International, the worldwide association of ruling and opposition social-democratic parties, giving further information about the group and seeking international support.

The China Progressive Alliance

Sometime in May, a fourth underground group known as the *China Progressive Alliance (Zhonghua Jinbu Tongmeng)*, held a secret congress and formally adopted its founding charter. The group appears to have been based in the Beijing area and according to some reports had a wide membership. According to the group's charter: "We harbor no more illusions about the Communist Party. We must rely on our own democratic rights to help liberate the nation and the people from the system of dictatorship, autocracy, corruption and ossification...Under the existing brutal conditions, we basically adopt the form of underground struggle."

The charter also stated: "The immediate task of the *CPA* is to expand its forces to become a democratic, strong, independent national organization. In the medium term, it will work together with other democratic and progressive forces to end the CCP's autocratic rule. Its long term aim is to set up a new order in China to realize the values of freedom, democracy, humanity, justice and harmony, and to implement a market economy, democratic politics, cultural pluralism, the open society and national rejuvenation. The *CPA* insists on the principles of peace, rationality and non-violence. It strives to avoid large-scale social confrontation and to minimize the costs of social change...Reform of the ownership system is the main prerequisite for economic revival...We advocate the promotion of the shareholding system, and in particular the widespread establishment of stockholding companies."

¹² "Shadowy dissident party seeks Chinese Communists' fall," *United Press International*, April 6, 1992.

The All-China People's Autonomous Federation

On June 2, Tang Boqiao, a former student leader from Hunan Province who was imprisoned after June 1989 and then escaped from China after his release 18 months later, announced at a press conference in Washington D.C. the founding of a Hunan-based, underground prodemocracy network called the ***All-China People's Autonomous Federation (Zhongguo Minzhong Tuanti Zizhi Lianhehui, or Min-Zi-Lian.)***¹³ Claiming a large membership spread over numerous provinces, Tang said the ***ACPAF*** had pledged to carry out clandestine but non-violent activities on the mainland to bring about democracy. The group, moreover, was presently distributing thousands of copies of the group's recently-drafted constitution around China. "Since June 1989," said the statement, "the Communist Party has completely lost its legitimacy to rule and the Chinese people have once again been faced with a deep and serious crisis."

According to the document, "The ***ACPAF*** strives to realize each person's right to enjoy freedom and satisfy his or her needs...We start from ourselves. Relying on our rights as members of society, we shall find the courage to speak the truth, to support those who are bullied and oppressed, to criticize all cases of injustice and irrationality, whether large or small, and to engage in acts of civil resistance against the despotic powers-that-be." Concerning the group's structure and activities: "The ***ACPAF*** is a federation, not a political party, and it is independent of all political parties or regimes...Groups that join the ***ACPAF*** have a duty to share and exchange their experiences; to participate in discussions, to distribute newsletters, books and periodicals; to assist in the establishment of other autonomous people's organizations and try to induct them into the ***ACPAF***; to carry out acts of civil resistance within society; and to practice and implement democracy, starting from themselves."¹⁴

General Repression

Short-term detention of dissidents

On December 24, 1991, in the first public display of mourning over the Tiananmen crackdown since June 1989, about 100 people attended the funeral in Beijing of a prodemocracy leader named Wen Jie, a masters graduate in classical Chinese literature and former teacher at Beijing University who had been imprisoned for 18 months for his role in the Tiananmen protests. A deputy head in 1989 of the propaganda section of the ***Command Center to Protect Tiananmen Square***, Wen had contracted stomach cancer while in prison, and according to his supporters, medical treatment had been withheld by the authorities. Several leading dissidents attended the funeral, and six lesser-known ones - Wang Guoqi, Zhang Qianjin, Zhao Xin, Li Xiang, Chen Wei and Wang Tao, all of whom had spent time with Wen Jie at Qincheng Prison, China's top-security jail for political prisoners - were subsequently detained by plainclothes police and interrogated for several days about the incident. (A seventh activist, former People's University student Lu Mingxia, who served as head of finance in the 1989 ***Beijing Students Autonomous Federation***, is also thought to have been detained.)

¹³ "Dissidents form group on mainland," *SCMP*, June 3, 1992.

¹⁴ A report written by Tang Boqiao and published by Asia Watch in June 1992, entitled ***Anthems of Defeat: Crackdown in Hunan Province, 1989-92***, gives a detailed firsthand account of the post-June 1989 suppression of the prodemocracy movement in Hunan and provides details on more than 200 recent cases of political imprisonment in the province.

On March 1, 1992, two organizers of the Wen Jie funeral meeting, Wang Guoqi, 31, and Zhao Xin, 24, together with a veteran prodemocracy activist named Liu Di¹⁵ and six others were detained by plainclothes police at a party held at Wang's residence to celebrate Zhang Qianjin's birthday. Several of the nine were punched and had their faces bloodied by the police before being taken into custody; they were later released.¹⁶ At least three members of the group, however, were subsequently arrested as part of the general crackdown on underground prodemocracy groups launched by the authorities in May, and are still being held.

Some weeks later, Minister of Public Security Tao Siju announced that Tiananmen Square would be strictly controlled by the police as the anniversary of the June 4 crackdown approached. No wreath-laying would be allowed in the square and security patrols would be dispatched to the main municipal crematorium at Babaoshan to maintain public order. "If we are careless, problems could easily arise," the minister told journalists.¹⁷ (In a separate comment, Tao appalled government officials and public opinion in Hong Kong by revealing that both he and Deng Xiaoping regarded certain Triad leaders in the colony as being "good people" and "very patriotic.")¹⁸ The same day, U.S. Embassy officials revealed that at least three Chinese citizens had recently been viciously beaten by members of the People's Armed Police outside the gates of the embassy. In one of the incidents, a Chinese man was knocked to the ground and kicked in the head until he bled profusely.¹⁹

From early May, security was tightened on university campuses; at Beijing University, for example, agents of the Ministry of State Security reportedly took over a low-rise building near student dormitories and began closely monitoring the activities of "troublemaking" students and teachers.²⁰

On May 14, dissident labor rights activist Han Dongfang, who two months earlier had applied for permission to hold a one-man demonstration in Beijing to protest a restrictive new labor union law, was kicked, beaten and stunned with an electric cattle prod by court officials (in full view of the court president,

¹⁵ Liu, 40, was a leading figure in the mass protests against the Gang of Four which occurred in Tiananmen Square on April 5, 1976.

¹⁶ *Associated Press*, March 1, 1992. Also around this time, reports surfaced of peaceful, urban-guerrilla-style prodemocracy actions in the capital involving computers in government offices that had been infected with computer viruses. One virus displayed the words "Remember June 4" on computer screens, while another demanded that the user reply "yes or no" to the question "Down with Li Peng?" If the response was negative, the virus would promptly wipe the user's hard disk. ("Virus as part of a dissident campaign," *Hong Kong Standard*, March 13, 1992.)

¹⁷ *Agence France Presse*, March 31, 1992.

¹⁸ "Police enraged by 'patriotic' triad claims," *Sunday Morning Post*, April 5, 1992. The Triads are secret societies which typically engage in criminal activities such as extortion, protection rackets and running of prostitution networks in Hong Kong and many other parts of Asia.

¹⁹ "Militia 'beat up' embassy visitors," *Reuters* in *SCMP*, April 1, 1992.

²⁰ "Secret police on campus," *SCMP*, May 8, 1992.

who did nothing to intervene) after being summoned to the courthouse in connection with an official lawsuit to evict him from his home.²¹ The authorities subsequently claimed that injuries to Han's head were "self-inflicted"; he had, they said, deliberately smashed his head down on a table during questioning.²²

On June 2 and 3, the eve of the third anniversary of the Tiananmen crackdown, several former members of the *Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation* (all of whom had spent time in prison after June 1989) were detained by the police for periods of from one to several days, apparently to prevent them from staging commemorative activities.²³ While these activists in no sense constituted an "underground group," they held informal discussion meetings from time to time which soon made them a major focus of attention by the Chinese security services. Those detained included Zhang Jinli, a housing maintenance worker; Qian Yumin, a former railway worker; Liu Qiang, an unemployed former worker at a PLA-run factory; Zhou Guoqiang, a noted poet and legal adviser to a Beijing acoustical equipment factory; Song Jie, a college graduate employed as a financial planner in the Beijing subway system; He Lili, a former political instructor at a workers college; and Han Dongfang.²⁴ Moreover, a close associate of the group, Men Xixi, a dissident artist who had been involved in the Democracy Wall movement of the late 1970s and had recently developed links with the foreign press corps in Beijing, was detained at Han's home on June 4 and held at a local police jail for more than a month.

Harassment of foreign journalists

In the run-up to the Tiananmen anniversary, surveillance and harassment of foreign journalists was also greatly increased. On the eve of the May 1 Labor Day holiday, the Beijing bureau chief of the *British Broadcasting Corporation*, James Miles, was detained by police for attempting to report on a pro-labor rights demonstration in Tiananmen Square by a delegation of European trade unionists and parliamentarians, seven of whom were also briefly detained.²⁵ Miles was soon released, but his journalist's pass was confiscated and held by the authorities for several weeks. Around the same time, the Beijing bureau chief of the *New York Times* was summoned on several occasions to the Foreign Ministry to receive official warnings concerning recent articles he had written which the ministry characterized as being "vicious slanders of the Chinese government."²⁶ In addition, several Chinese contacts of other Western journalists were reportedly detained by the authorities in Fujian, Wuhan and other cities around this time. (The detainees' names and subsequent circumstances are not known to Asia Watch.)

²¹ *Associated Press*, May 14, 1992.

²² The leader in May and June 1989 of the now-banned *Beijing Workers Autonomous Federation*, Han Dongfang had contracted severe tuberculosis during his subsequent imprisonment and was only released in April 1991 when it appeared that he would otherwise die in prison. In September 1992, Han and his wife, Chen Jingyun, were allowed to leave China so that Han could receive medical treatment in the U.S.

²³ "More protests over action against press," *SCMP*, June 6, 1992.

²⁴ Han's pregnant wife, Chen Jingyun, was also detained for several hours on June 3.

²⁵ "British MP held in Beijing," *SCMP*, May 1, 1992.

²⁶ In January 1993, Beijing indicated that it would henceforth cease carrying out surveillance of foreign journalists, apparently as part of its effort to win the nomination to host the Olympic Games in the year 2000.

Then, on May 17, the office of the Beijing bureau of the *Washington Post* was raided by five plainclothes security agents. Lena Sun, the newspaper's bureau chief, was held in isolation from her husband and young child for three hours while the officers opened her safe and searched through her notes and documents, confiscating a large quantity of material.²⁷ The official *New China News Agency* later asserted that ten secret government documents had been among the material. Commenting on the Sun affair, the press counselor of the Chinese Embassy in Washington, D.C. subsequently pledged: "Foreign correspondents will not run into trouble or unpleasant situations as long as they abide by Chinese laws and regulations."²⁸

The experience of numerous foreign journalists less than two weeks later, however, graphically indicated otherwise. On June 3, at least ten reporters were detained and several were badly beaten by security forces as they tried to cover commemorative events in the capital. In the early afternoon, a cameraman for the *Tokyo Broadcasting System* named Atsushi Yamigawa was brutally attacked by at least a dozen plainclothes agents in Tiananmen Square and then detained, together with an unidentified Asian man with whom he had been talking, for several hours. The Japanese journalist later required numerous stitches to his face and mouth, having been denied medical attention in police custody. One German reporter and another from the *Associated Press* who had witnessed the incident were also detained by police in the Forbidden City for about four hours.

Later that afternoon, a middle-aged Chinese man (see below for case details) tried to unfurl a protest banner in Tiananmen Square. He was seized and dragged away by uniformed police almost immediately, and *ABC* journalist Todd Carrel and two members of a Canadian Television team who tried to record the incident were set upon by numerous plainclothes officers and had their cameras seized. Carrel was kicked in the head and later required hospitalization for a spinal injury. All three were interrogated for several hours before their equipment was returned.²⁹ That evening, a journalist from *Agence France Presse* and one from the *South China Morning Post* were detained for several hours by security officers at Beijing Politics and Law University when they attempted to leave the campus.³⁰

Arrests and trials in Beijing

■ The raid on the *Washington Post* office appears to have been carried out in connection with the arrest some weeks earlier of a former employee of the Foreign Ministry named **Bai Weijl**, a young man who

²⁷ "Beijing authorities harass reporter," *Washington Post*, May 18, 1992.

²⁸ Chen Guoqing, Letter to the Editor, *Washington Post*, May 24, 1992.

²⁹ A Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman later claimed that the reporters had broken a law requiring foreign journalists to obtain advance permission for any reporting in Tiananmen Square. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, however, the office charged with administering such regulations, the Beijing City Foreign Affairs Office, had only a few days previously denied the existence of any such law. ("Beaten journalists accused of lawbreaking," *LA Times*, June 5, 1992.)

³⁰ "Police in Tiananmen crackdown," *SCMP*, June 4, 1992; "Tiananmen Anniversary Passes Quietly in China," *Washington Post*, same day.

had maintained friendly contacts with several foreign journalists including the *Post's* Lena Sun, whom he had known since 1977. Bai was later reportedly charged with the crime of "leaking state secrets" and is expected eventually to face trial.

■ Sometime in May, **Wang Jun**, a reporter for the Overseas Edition of *People's Daily*, was arrested, reportedly in connection with his alleged provision of information to the foreign media. Wang is thought to have been disciplined by the authorities after June 1989 for his participation in the prodemocracy demonstrations in the spring of that year.³¹ There has been no further information on his current situation.

■ **Wang Wanxing**, 43, unemployed and a former political prisoner, was arrested on the afternoon of June 3 when he attempted to unfurl a banner in Tiananmen Square calling for a reappraisal of the June 1989 crackdown and giving details of his own history of mistreatment by the government. He was later forcibly committed to a psychiatric institute in southwest Beijing run by the Beijing Public Security Bureau, having been diagnosed by police doctors as suffering from "paranoid psychosis." In an appeal letter smuggled out in July and addressed to U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and President George Bush, Wang said that he was being forcibly given psychotropic drugs: "I am not a psychiatric patient but they are giving me medication every day....They are trying all the time to destroy my body and my spirit." His wife and others deny that Wang is mentally ill, but he was still being held in the asylum as of February 1993.³²

■ On July 21, in perhaps the most important political trial in China since the trial of the "Gang of Four" in 1980, **Bao Tong**, 59, a former chief aide to deposed Party general-secretary Zhao Ziyang, was sentenced by the Beijing Intermediate People's Court to seven years' imprisonment on the twin charges of "counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement" and "leaking state secrets." The charges related mainly to Bao's alleged role in the Party leadership's failure to keep secret the news of the imminent imposition of martial law in Beijing in mid-May, 1989.³³ (Two other government officials, **Gao Shan** and **Wu Jiaxiang**, were tried soon afterwards in connection with the same case. For brief details, see below: "Recent Releases.")

Around 20 other political trials of prodemocracy activists, which resulted in sentences ranging from two to ten years' imprisonment and were documented by Asia Watch in a previous report, also took place in early 1992.³⁴

³¹ A letter appealing for the release of Wang Jun and two other detainees was sent to Premier Li Peng by the New-York-based *Committee to Protect Journalists* on July 29, 1992.

³² "Method behind the madness," *Sunday Morning Post* (Hong Kong), August 23, 1992, and *Sunday Times* (London), same day; and "Chinese dissident 'forcibly given drugs,'" *Reuters*, in the *Bangkok Post*, July 24, 1992. There is a growing body of evidence indicating that Chinese authorities have long been engaged in the former Soviet-style practice of branding dissidents as "mentally ill" and confining them in police-run psychiatric institutes. Asia Watch is currently preparing a report on this issue.

³³ For further details of Bao's case, including the full text of the court verdict against him, see "The Trial of Bao Tong," *Asia Watch*, August 3, 1992 (Volume 4, Number 22.)

³⁴ "Recent Political Trials in China," *Asia Watch*, March 16, 1992 (Volume 4, Number 10.)

Arrest in Wuhan

■ **Yu Zhuo, 24, a former computer science student at Hubei University (1985-1989) was detained on September 3, 1992 and as of February 1993 remained in incommunicado administrative detention. His offense was having put up more than thirty posters commemorating the third anniversary of the 1989 crackdown just before and after June 4, 1992. Yu had been detained for more than a year for his involvement in the 1989 movement and was released in 1990. After his release, he entered Wuhan Polytechnic's department of economic management as a graduate student under the pseudonym of Yang Yujun. He is detained in Wuhan No.1 Detention Center.**

Crackdown on the Underground Groups

In late May, 1992 the authorities commenced a wholesale roundup of all those suspected of involvement in the various underground prodemocracy groups that had appeared earlier in the year. So far as is known, this crackdown succeeded in virtually eradicating the groups and their activities. In the following account, Asia Watch has adopted certain reporting precautions in order to safeguard the interests of those imprisoned during the crackdown.³⁵ The list of detainees given here is by no means an exhaustive one; according to a number of reports, many more people were actually arrested from some of the groups than those so far reported.

³⁵ In several Western and Hong Kong press accounts of the crackdown, detained individuals have been identified by name as having been involved with specific underground groups in the Beijing area. But such links cannot always be confirmed, and in some instances either appear dubious or are known to be wrong. The precise extent of the Chinese authorities' own information and evidence on these matters, moreover, remains unclear. We have thus chosen to present the Beijing case details without indicating any known or alleged affiliation of individual detainees to specific groups.

In the case of detainees in the provinces, however, where only one main group was dispersed in each locality, such a precaution would be redundant. But equally, it should not be assumed that those listed here as being detained in a given province were in fact either leaders or members of the local underground group; the important point, rather, is that the authorities have detained them on such grounds. In the case of Hunan, the situation is still more complex.

Arrests in Beijing

■ **Kang Yuchun**, around 29, a medical researcher at the Anding Psychiatric Hospital in northwest Beijing, was secretly arrested sometime around the end of May.³⁶ The authorities reportedly later searched his home and confiscated a quantity of prodemocracy leaflets. Kang, who was probably not involved in the 1989 prodemocracy movement, graduated from the Beijing College (or possibly the Institute) of Chinese Medicine in 1991 with a masters degree. He is not yet married, and is short, rather thin and dark-complexioned and wears a moustache. Sometime after his arrest, Kang's relatives were reportedly informed by hospital officials that the Ministry of State Security (the government department responsible for investigating cases of "counterrevolution" and espionage) was in charge of his case, so it would be best if they made no attempt to inquire about him. Kang is believed to be held in the Pinggu County jail, Beijing. However, his family have been denied all information about his current situation; they do not know where he is being held and have not been allowed to visit him or send him clothes or other items of daily necessity. According to unconfirmed reports, Kang was scheduled to go on trial for "counterrevolutionary" offenses sometime in mid-February 1993.

■ **On May 27, Hu Shenglun**, around 37 years old, a researcher at the Chinese-Western Comparative Literature Department of the Beijing Languages Institute, was arrested at the home of a friend together with **Gao Yuxiang**, a street-stall owner at the Hongqiao Agricultural Products Market in Beijing's Xuanwu district.³⁷ The police reportedly found a large quantity of prodemocracy leaflets in their possession. Both men were taken away and have not been seen since. On June 6, officers of the No. 7 Department (*Qi Chu*) of the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau visited the men's homes and confiscated items such as notebooks, namecards, photographs and a shortwave radio. They even removed a pile of piano music belonging to Gao's four-and-a-half-year-old son, which was later returned. No formal arrest, detention or search warrants were issued. The No. 7 Department of the Beijing PSB administers the notorious Banbuqiao Detention Center, which in the past has held such prominent dissidents as Wei Jingsheng, Xu Wenli and Liu Qing, and it is possible that Hu and Gao are currently being held there. According to one report, however, Gao is being held in a jail in Beijing's Changping County. Hu Shenglun is also married with one child.

On May 29, Sha Yuguang, 47, an accountant at the Beijing Wireless Factory, was detained by police on his way home from work. The reason given was that two members of an underground group had been staying at his home, where they had been discovered with a large amount of prodemocracy literature and then been arrested. (It is likely the two were Hu and Gao.) Sha is a veteran activist from the Democracy Wall period, when he edited an unofficial journal called *Zhonghua Si Wu* (*China April 5th*). On July 10, he was released pending further investigations and told to report to the police about all subsequent meetings with his friends. He was then suspended without pay from his work unit. His current situation is unknown.

■ **Also at the end of May, Chen Wei**, 24 or 25 years old, a former student of applied science at the Beijing University of Science and Engineering (*Ligong Daxue*) was secretly arrested. It was Chen's fourth detention since June 1989, when he had been imprisoned for more than 18 months in Qincheng Prison for

³⁶ **Li Hal**, a philosophy graduate student at Beijing University and a former teacher of Kang's, may also have been detained around the same time, but is thought to have subsequently been released.

³⁷ According to another account received by Asia Watch, Hu and Gao were arrested at Gao's home.

leading the student movement at his college. At Qincheng, he shared a cell with Xiong Yan, one of the 21 "most wanted" student leaders of the 1989 movement; following his release, Xiong escaped from China in mid-1992, shortly before the official crackdown descended upon the underground group in Beijing which he had recently helped organize.³⁸ Chen, who is single, was expelled from college after his release from Qincheng in early 1991 and then sent back to his hometown in Sichuan Province. He soon returned to Beijing, however, and continued living there as an unauthorized (or "black") resident, although he never found any work in the capital.

Chen was detained for the second time in early June 1991, apparently as a preventive measure in advance of the June 4 anniversary; no specific reason was ever given. His third arrest was in connection with the Wen Jie funeral in December of that year. The reason for his latest incarceration was probably his close relationship with Xiong Yan, although it is not known if he was active in Xiong's group. Chen's family have reportedly received no information from the police about his conditions of detention or even where he is being held. He is a short, thin young man, extremely bright and said to be an excellent ping-pong player. He impresses people as being very brave and having a strong sense of justice.

■ Around June 1, Liu Jingsheng, 38, was arrested at his home and prodemocracy leaflets found there were reportedly seized by the police. Liu, a worker, is thought to have been employed at the Tong County Machinery Plant. A veteran prodemocracy activist, Liu was coeditor with Wei Jingsheng of the 1978-79 Democracy Wall journal *Explorations* (*Tansuo*), which published such famous essays of Wei's as "Democracy, the Fifth Modernization" and "Qincheng - A 20th Century Bastille." Besides editing the journal, he was also in charge of its distribution, and he listed his own home address on the journal for correspondence purposes. At the time a bus driver at the People's No. 4 Motor Vehicle Factory, Liu was arrested along with Wei in March 1979, and he was called to give evidence for the state at Wei's trial that October. He performed creditably, making only token statements of repentance, and anyway the 15-year sentence given to Wei had clearly been predetermined by the court.³⁹ After his release in late 1979, Liu resumed his job as a bus driver and nothing was heard of him again outside China until his recent arrest. He is likely to face a particularly stiff sentence this time around.

■ On the night of June 8, Liao Jia'an, 24, a postgraduate student of aesthetics in the philosophy department of People's University, was arrested on campus after returning from the "Three Flavors Studio" (*San Wei Shushi*), a privately-run bookstore in central Beijing where he worked part-time.⁴⁰ The *Three Flavors Studio* is closely affiliated to another small bookstore in Beijing, the *Capital Joy Studio* (*Du Le Shushi*). The latter was the site of several key meetings of prodemocracy leaders in May 1989, and served as the main distribution outlet for the "New Enlightenment Series" of books which contained pathbreaking and provocative articles by such writers as Liu Xiaobo, Wang Ruoshui, Li Honglin and Yu Haocheng. The series was banned by the authorities after June 1989 and the *Capital Joy Studio* was closed down. On the same day Liao Jia'an was detained, his friend, Wang Shengli, 26, also a graduate philosophy student at

³⁸ "Police crack down on dissident group," *UPI*, in *SCMP*, July 13, 1992.

³⁹ See "The Trial of Wei Jingsheng: Part 2," published in *SPEAKRhead* (Bulletin of the Society for the Protection of East Asian's Human Rights), Issue No. 11 (New York), Autumn 1981, pp.26-27.

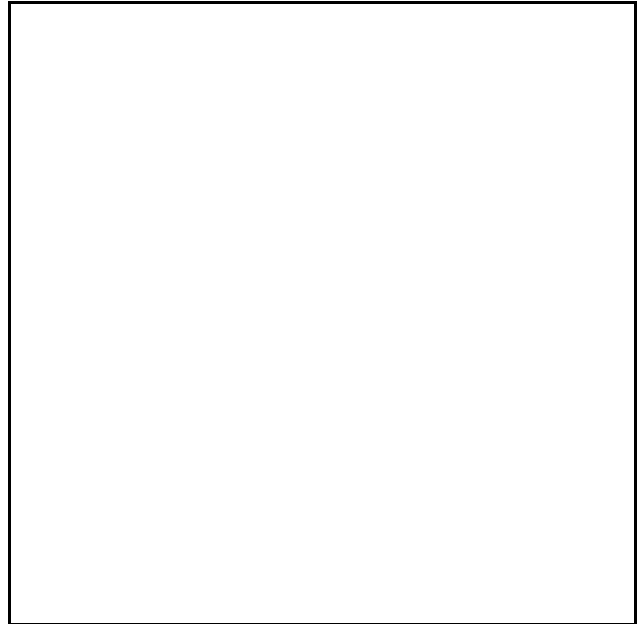
⁴⁰ Some sources say Liao's arrest occurred in late May.

People's University, was arrested while visiting his wife in Hebei Province. The two students' dormitory rooms were raided, and a printing machine was reportedly confiscated, together with various books and papers. The following day, both were sent to a detention center for so-called "shelter and investigation" (an arbitrary and largely unsupervised form of police administrative detention.) Several days later, the university authorities announced to the student and teaching body that the two had been involved in a serious case of "counterrevolutionary leafletting" and would soon be charged with the crime of "counter-revolutionary propaganda and incitement."

Prior to 1989, Liao was an undergraduate at the Beijing Normal University. People describe him as having an innocent and almost naive demeanor. Wang is a member of the Communist Party and previously worked in a provincial justice department. In mid-1991, Wang and Li founded a student discussion group at People's University called the "Study Club" (*Dushu She*), which they formally registered with the university authorities. They also edited and published a student journal called *Everyone* (*Dajia*), of which altogether four issues appeared. The Study Club ran a series of public lectures at People's University which often addressed controversial topics and became very popular among the students and staff. The journal carried a lively mixture of articles: analysis of China's foreign policy, laments on the low social status of intellectuals in China, a trenchant critique of the "Three Gorges Project" (a huge water conservancy and flood control project on the Yangzi River favored by Li Peng and other party leaders), literary and film criticism on the works of, among others, Rousseau, William Morris and Antonioni, and even a review of James Hilton's novel *Goodbye Mr. Chips*. The second lecture, a talk on the ability and effectiveness of local judges given by a renowned elderly law lecturer from Beijing University, was held in September 1991 and attracted an audience of over one thousand. The students' questions extended to a series of highly sensitive issues and the meeting was subsequently criticized by the university authorities. The Beijing University leadership was particularly incensed, since flyers advertising the event had been posted up there and many students from that campus had also attended the talk. Liao Jia'an and Wang Shengli henceforth became a focus of attention by the authorities. In September 1992, the Study Club was forced to disband.

There are also reports, however, that the two were detained partly because they had helped distribute copies of a recently-banned book entitled *Trends of History*, a compilation of essays published by reformist intellectuals, including some who fell from official favor after June 1989, following Deng's "trip to the south," in the aim of criticizing hardline Party ideology.

In December, it was reported that Wang and Liao had been formally charged with counter-revolution and would face trial sometime in early January 1993.⁴¹ The families of the two have been reportedly unable to find lawyers willing to defend them because judicial authorities have warned Beijing law firms not to provide counsel.⁴² The report added that the principle charge against Wang and Liao concerns their alleged distribution on Beijing University campus, on the morning of May 28, 1991, of 4000 mimeographed leaflets calling for teachers and students to wear white shirts and black armbands in memory of June 4, 1989 and to petition the government for political reform. In addition, the two men allegedly hung a banner stating "We have not forgotten June 4" from an upper floor of Dormitory No. 46.



Liao Jia'an and Wang Shengli

The two men are currently reported to be held at Banbuqiao Detention Center in Beijing. Liao is said to have contracted hepatitis but to have received no treatment from the authorities, and Wang is said to have been severely physically ill-treated by the common criminals with whom he shares a cell.

■ On June 22, Wang Guoqi, 31, formerly a printing worker at the Beijing Languages Institute and a co-organizer of the funeral meeting for Wen Jie that was held in late December 1991, was arrested at his wife's home. The procedure was reportedly carried out quite formally, and his wife was given a warrant by the police. Besides the previous two brief periods of detention described earlier, and a spell in jail in mid-1991, Wang had spent two years in jail after June 1989 on account of his participation in the Tiananmen Square movement, reportedly for printing prodemocracy leaflets. He is divorced, and before his arrest was living in a dormitory room at the Institute of Geology; he has one four or five-year-old daughter who lives with her mother. He had been unemployed since his detention by the police in mid-1991, although it is not known if he was actually sacked from his job at the Beijing Languages Institute or simply barred from attending his shift. Wang is said to be a handsome man, of average height, very open-natured and with a good sense of humor. His current place of detention is unknown.

■ On November 2, Wang Tiancheng, 29, a law lecturer at Beijing University, was secretly arrested by police in Beijing, reportedly in connection with two underground political groups called the *Young*

⁴¹ "Students facing dissident charges," *SCMP*, December 30, 1992.

⁴² "Law firms reportedly told not to represent dissidents," *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (FBIS-CHI-93-006), January 11, 1993; original Chinese text in *Hua Chiao Jih Pao* (Hong Kong), January 10, p.4.

Marxism Party and the Democratic Freedom Party. A native of Hunan Province, Wang was also editor of a college journal called *Zhong-Wai Faxue (Chinese and Foreign Jurisprudence)*, which had recently published an article by him entitled "Constitution and Human Rights." An ardent admirer of the 18th century philosopher Montesquieu, Wang's major interest was in administrative law. He had planned to travel to Germany later in November to take up a visiting scholarship there.⁴³

Other persons reportedly detained or arrested in Beijing around the June 4 anniversary, 1992 but about whom little else is known, include:

- **Guo Shaoyan and Wang Peizhong**, both graduate students at Beijing University.
- **Lu Zhigang, Li Ji and Chen Wei** (not the same person as in the case described above), all undergraduates at Beijing University. Lu is believed to be held at the Pinggu County jail.
- **Wang Qishan**, an employee at the China Institute of Geology.
- **Wang Xiaodong**, a former student at the Beijing Institute of Technology.⁴⁴

Arrests in Tianjin

- **Chen Qinglin**, early 20s, a graduate of the Beijing Meteorological Institute (class of 1987) and more recently a government cadre in Tianjin. Although ethnically a Han, he was born and brought up in Inner Mongolia. During the 1989 prodemocracy movement, Chen served in a minor liaison capacity in the *Beijing Students Autonomous Federation*, mainly delivering letters. He was arrested on May 29, 1992 and has not been heard of since.

Arrests in Anhui Province

The following persons are reported to have been arrested in Anhui Province around June 1992 in connection with prodemocracy groups:

⁴³ "University lecturer of law arrested," *SCMP*, November 18, 1992; and *Newsweek* (International Edition), November 23, 1992, p.14.

⁴⁴ Persons detained in Beijing around June 1992 but subsequently reported to have been released include: **Shang Hongke**, around 27 years old, a graduate from the history department of People's University. Shang received an 'administrative punishment' (probably a demerit in his personal dossier) for his involvement in the 1989 prodemocracy movement. Upon graduation, he moved to Hainan island and found work in a company run by Cao Siyuan, a prominent legal scholar who was imprisoned after June 1989 for calling for an extraordinary session of the National People's Congress to be held in order to revoke martial law. And **Zhao Xin**, in his early 20s, a former student at the Beijing College of Science and Engineering. Zhao was imprisoned for about 15 months after June 1989, and was then either expelled from, or forced out of, college. He was briefly detained again in 1991 around the time of the June 4 anniversary, and in early June 1992, he was detained once more along with three others at the Beijing University of Agriculture and Trade. Upon release, all four were sent back to their hometowns (in Zhao's case, in Yunnan Province.) There are unconfirmed reports, however, that Zhao may subsequently have been detained yet again.

- **Yu Liangqing**, a government cadre.
- **Huang Jinwan**, a company manager.
- **Tian Yang** (no other information available.)
- **Ma Lianggang**, formerly a student at Anhui University. According to a Chinese government response of November 1991 to a list of political prisoners submitted to Beijing by the U.S. State Department, Ma, who was previously described in an *Anhui Radio* broadcast as being a "key member" in May 1989 of the now-banned *Hefei Autonomous Students Union*, received a prison sentence in connection with the 1989 protests. He was first arrested in Haikou, Hainan Province, sometime prior to July 19, 1989. The length of sentence he received is unknown.

Arrests in Gansu Province

The crackdown by the Lanzhou City security authorities on the *Social Democratic Party of China* appears to have been launched in early May, even before the arrests of underground party activists had begun in Beijing.⁴⁵ By mid-August, ten known arrests had been carried out, and there were unconfirmed reports of many more.⁴⁶ The following cases were reported by remnant members of the *SDPC* who escaped arrest during the crackdown:

- **Ding Mao**, 25, a former philosophy student at Lanzhou University who had been jailed for nine months for participating in the 1989 prodemocracy movement.
- **Liu Balyu**, 25, also a former student of philosophy at Lanzhou University. Liu was the subject of a secret, nationwide "most wanted" notice issued by the Ministry of Public Security in the summer of 1989. An internal circular issued by the ministry in October of that year lists Liu as having "surrendered and confessed." He was held in custody for 19 months and then expelled from college after his release.

⁴⁵ "'Underground bodies' reportedly rounded up," *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (FBIS-CHI-92-172), September 3, 1992; original Chinese text in *Zheng Ming* magazine (Hong Kong), September 1, pp.29-31.

⁴⁶ "China cracks dissident group," *SCMP*, August 15, 1992.

■ **Liu Wensheng, 24, a former history student at Lanzhou University. Liu was also placed on a secret nationwide "most wanted" list after June 1989, but apparently managed to evade capture for the next three years. According to the wanted notice, his family home is at the Tanglai Canal administrative compound in Gansu. He was described as being "roundfaced, with large eyes, wears spectacles for shortsightedness, combs his hair to one side, has a rather long neck and can speak Mandarin."**

■ **Xing Shimin, 22, former philosophy student at Lanzhou University.**

■ **Lu Yanghua, 25, graduate student in the physics department of Lanzhou University and a participant in the 1989 prodemocracy movement.**

■ **Gao Changyun, 28, a teacher in the Lanzhou University department of administration.**

■ **Zhang Jian, 25, a staff worker at the Gansu Provincial Library.**

■ **Cao Jianyu (age unknown), an employee of the Gansu Public Relations Association.**

■ **Xu Zhendong, 25, a cadre at the Tianshan Boiler Plant, Urumqi.**

■ **Lu Yalin, 24, a teacher at the Yancheng City School of Light Industry, Jiangsu Province.**

Arrests in Shenzhen

One of the underground political parties targeted by the authorities in the 1992 crackdown ran a secret printing shop somewhere in the Shenzhen Special Economic Zone. This unit is said to have produced the various leaflets and manifestos distributed by the group. In early June, the shop was reportedly raided by security forces, who arrested several members of the group that were present at the time and either smashed or confiscated all of their printing equipment. No names or other details are as yet known.

Also in early June, several members of the *Free Labor Union of China* operating in the south of the country who were said to be planning a daring but peaceful publicity action on the June 4 anniversary reportedly disappeared. They were probably arrested, although this cannot yet be confirmed. Again, no names or other details are currently available.

The Shen Tong Affair

On July 29, Shen Tong, a U.S.-based student prodemocracy activist, returned to China after three years of studying in Boston to undertake a secret tour of several Chinese provinces during which he planned to meet and videotape interviews with members of various underground prodemocracy groups and shoot footage of prisons and labor camps.⁴⁷ The group visited Changsha and other places in Hunan Province; Guangzhou and Shenzhen; Tianjin; and Beijing. Toward the end of Shen's trip, which his group referred to as the "summer project," Shen scheduled a press conference in a hotel in Beijing to announce the formation of a Beijing branch of the Boston-based *Fund for Democracy in China* which he chairs.

Shortly before the planned event, in the early hours of September 1, police raided Shen's home in Beijing and detained him and two of his Chinese colleagues: Qi Dafeng, a former student from Tianjin, and Qian Liyun, the wife of escaped student leader Xiong Yan. Two French journalists who had accompanied Shen on his travels in China, Christophe Nick and Pascal Giret, and Ross Terrill, an American writer and sinologist who was also involved in the project, were promptly deported from China.⁴⁸ Shen was detained for the next 53 days in a small hotel in Tong County, to the east of Beijing, for police questioning. He was released on October 24, following an appeal to the Chinese authorities from 74 U.S. senators, and put on a plane back to Boston.⁴⁹ Qian Liyun was at first held in the same hotel and then later transferred to a county detention center; on October 30, she was released and allowed to return to her home in Beijing.

The security authorities began investigating all aspects of the "summer project" immediately after Shen's Tong's initial detention.⁵⁰ About a week later, the search and arrest operation to round up prodemocracy activists who had met and cooperated with Shen on the project was launched. A number of underground activists, however, went into hiding as soon as they received news of the crackdown, and

⁴⁷ All the main overseas participants in this venture, including Shen himself, subsequently published extensive articles about it. Asia Watch has additional information, but in what follows, certain details which might endanger those participants who remain in China have been carefully omitted.

⁴⁸ That evening, a pre-recorded videotape of Shen reading a statement appeared on television screens around the world. "I returned [to China] to stand again with those I left behind after the brutal crackdown on the democracy movement," said Shen. "I am here to strengthen the bridge between those who were forced to flee and those who have carried on the struggle from within - the key forces in shaping China's political future." Despite the wave of arrests of underground prodemocracy activists which had been proceeding throughout the summer, however, Shen apparently now felt that the time was ripe for the movement to shed some of its cover: "I call upon China's established political underground networks to surface in a limited, organized fashion to create a larger role for themselves." ("The Next Revolution," *New York Times*, September 2, 1992.)

⁴⁹ Some days later, he told journalists that he had been threatened with "20 to 30 years" imprisonment and "spiritually tortured" during his detention but had not been physically ill-treated.

⁵⁰ In fact, the authorities had been carrying out surveillance of the group's activities from an earlier date, although it is unclear just when the surveillance began. According to an account given by Shen, it had already started toward the end of their time in Hunan (the first main stop on their itinerary): "He knew he was in trouble when the telephone he was using in Changsha suddenly came to life. 'Is the tape recorder on?' a voice asked. 'I'm testing, I'm testing,' a voice replied." ("Shen Tong's China Actions Divide Fellow U.S. Exiles," *Asian Wall Street Journal*, November 10, 1992.)

eleven from Hunan and two from Tianjin later managed to escape from China.⁵¹ (Roughly half the group are now safely resettled in the West.) Other casualties of the "summer project" are reportedly still on the run inside China. The following persons are known currently to be detained in connection with Shen's visit to China:

Arrests in Tianjin

■ **Lu Gang**, 30, a worker at the Tianjin No.2 Woollen Yarn Factory, in May 1989 served as a standing committee member of the *Tianjin Workers Autonomous Federation*. He was arrested soon after the crackdown began, and was eventually tried and convicted of "counterrevolution" and sentenced to three years' imprisonment. He was released from Tianjin No. 1 Prison, a forced labor facility which is known to the outside world as the "Tianjin Hinge Factory,"⁵² in late June 1992, and found a job in the home electrical appliances section of the Tianjin Far Eastern Department Store. In August, less than two months after his release from prison, he was introduced to Shen Tong and became involved in the "summer project." He was rearrested on approximately September 13, and is now back inside Tianjin No. 1 Prison again.

■ **Qi Dafeng**, a student at Tianjin University until June 1989, was a prominent leader of the *Tianjin Students Autonomous Federation* during the prodemocracy movement that year, and served as his school's representative in the so-called "19 Universities" liaison group in Tiananmen Square. He is married and has a one-year-old baby; the couple's home is in Anhui Province. After the June 1989 crackdown, Qi was arrested and held in the PSB detention center at Tianjin No.1 Prison for 20 months, before finally being put on trial, declared innocent of all charges and released. In August 1992, he accompanied Shen Tong on his tour of several Chinese provinces. According to the director of the Boston-based *Democracy for China Fund*, Qi was hired by the fund to work in its planned Beijing office.⁵³ During the group's time in Tianjin, they were detained by security forces while trying to film the outside of a prison; Qi was held for several days, while Shen was allowed to leave.

⁵¹ "Activists flee after visit by Shen," *SCMP*, November 10, 1992.

⁵² Besides door hinges, the prison manufactures electrical batteries, water pumps, transformers and steel tubing. A detailed account of Tianjin No.1 Prison appears in the restricted-circulation journal *Hunan Sifa (Hunan Judicial Affairs)*, No.1, 1990, pp.64-65.

⁵³ "U.S. Sinologist Held Three Hours in Beijing," *Washington Post*, September 2, 1992.

Upon arrival in Beijing, Qi consented to be interviewed on videotape without disguising his identity, and he reportedly recounted the process of his interrogation by the Tianjin police. The videotape was one of 15 later seized by the Beijing public security authorities. Other taped interviews with Qi, in which he also appears undisguised, were included in a film of the "summer project" which was later shown on French and other national television. Qi's current place and conditions of detention are not known and the authorities have declined to give his wife any information on his situation. "I don't know where he is being held or if he has been charged with any crime," she said. There is nothing I can do."⁵⁴ In February 1993, Asia Watch learned that Qi Dafeng had been sentenced to two years' reform through labor.

Conditions in Tianjin No.1 Prison

One of the two activists from Tianjin who recently escaped from China is a young prodemocracy worker (alias "Wang") who had spent 19 months in Tianjin No. 1 Prison after June 1989 on a charge of "counterrevolutionary propaganda and incitement." He was eventually tried, found not guilty, and released. During his time in Tianjin No. 1, Wang witnessed several other political prisoners, including a 33-year-old cadre named Zhu Wenhua who had received a six-year sentence for his role as a standing committee member of the *Tianjin Workers Autonomous Federation*, frequently being beaten, shocked with electric batons and placed in tight punishment handcuffs.

According to Wang, there are at least seven other major prodemocracy prisoners (all previously unreported cases) currently being held at the same prison. They are: Li Yongsheng, who is serving a 12-year sentence; Wang Ning, serving an eight-year sentence; Chen Jie, eight years; Liao Zhong, seven years; Li Zhongjie, six years; Liu Polgang, six years; and Li Zhongqi, five years.⁵⁵ All were convicted of "counter-

⁵⁴ "Authorities silent on fate of activist," *SCMP*, September 7, 1992.

⁵⁵ Li Yongsheng, around 30 years old, was arrested in mid-June 1989 and subsequently sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment for "counterrevolutionary propaganda and incitement." He is currently being held in Tianjin No. 1 Prison and no further information is available.

Wang Ning, around 35 years old, married with one child, and formerly a trade union official at the Tianjin Hongqiao District College of Planning and Design, served as chairman of the *Tianjin Workers Autonomous Federation (TWAF)* in May-June 1989. After June 4, Wang was knocked off his bicycle by the security officials who arrested him, and he suffered untreated injuries which reportedly left him crippled in one leg; he is also said to have been tortured and given frequent beatings in prison since his arrest. Wang's eight-year sentence was imposed in connection with his "involvement in a counterrevolutionary group."

Zhu Wenhua, a graduate of the Tianjin Staff and Employees University (*Tianjin Zhi-Gong Daxue*), and formerly employed as a cadre at the Tianjin No. 2 Wristwatch Factory, was also convicted of "involvement in a counter-revolutionary group" after June 1989 and sentenced to six years' imprisonment for his role as a standing committee member of the *TWAF*. Besides the severe physical abuse mentioned above, Zhu was also subjected to long periods of solitary confinement after June 1989, sometimes for as long as six months. He is reportedly no longer being held at Tianjin No. 1 Prison and his current place of detention is not known.

Liu Polgang, formerly a teacher of politics at the Tianjin Television Station's Attached Special Middle School, was a leader during May-June 1989 of a group called the *Tianjin Democratic Revival Association (Tianjin Minzhu Zhenxing Hui) (TDRA)*. He was arrested on June 9, 1989 and later sentenced to six years' imprisonment for "involvement in a counterrevolutionary group."

Li Zhongqi, a worker and also formerly a leader of the *TDRA*, was arrested on June 9, 1989 and later sentenced to five years' imprisonment for "involvement in a counterrevolutionary group." No other details are currently available.

revolutionary" offenses in connection with the 1989 prodemocracy movement.⁵⁶

Arrests in Beijing

■ **An Ning**, a graduate student of the archaeology department at Beijing University, was detained by police at the Beijing Railway Station sometime after early September in connection with his meetings with Shen Tong in August, according to An's friends. An had already spent time in prison as a result of his involvement in the 1989 protest movement. Following his latest arrest, police reportedly found a pile of political leaflets at his home in Zhengzhou, Henan Province.

■ Around the same time, a friend of An's named **Meng Zhongwei**, a former chemistry student at Zhengzhou University, was detained by police in the southern city of Guangzhou. According to their friends, the detention was "also in relation to the Shen Tong return." It is not known where either of the two men is currently being held.⁵⁷

Arrest in Hunan Province

The Hunan phase of the "summer project" was a cooperative venture between Shen Tong and Tang Boqiao, spokesman-in-exile of the *All-China People's Autonomous Federation*. Tang provided Shen with the

Liao Zhong, around 30, formerly a teacher at the Tianjin Textile Industry College, witnessed the government crackdown in Beijing on June 3-4, 1989. He was arrested on June 15 after returning to Tianjin and making speeches at his college about what he had seen and calling for the dismissal of Li Peng. Following Liao's subsequent conviction and sentencing to seven years' imprisonment for "counterrevolutionary propaganda and incitement," his wife was forced to vacate their apartment and her application for a passport to study abroad was rejected. The couple have now agreed to a divorce.

Li Zhongjie, around 40, formerly an instructor at the Tianjin Textile Industry College, was arrested after June 4, 1989 and later sentenced to six years' imprisonment for "counterrevolutionary propaganda and incitement." No other details are available.

Chen Jie, 33 years old, was arrested after June 4, 1989 and later sentenced to eight years' imprisonment for "counterrevolutionary propaganda and incitement." No other details are available.

Other previously unreported prodemocracy detainees held at Tianjin No. 1 Prison after June 1989, but who have since been released, include *TWAF* members Lu Yao (three-year sentence), Chen Gang (two years' criminal detention *juyi*), Wei Minghua and Wang Yawen (both sentences unknown); *TDRA* members Fang Jun (four-year sentence, later reduced to 2½ years) and Huang Shixu (sentence unknown); and Chen Wei** (two-year sentence) and Xu Wenjie (two years' non-custodial sentence *guanzhi*).

⁵⁶ In mid-September 1992, "Wang" was arrested again in connection with the Shen Tong project. He was held for the first few days in a secret government guest house for questioning, and was then sent back to the PSB pretrial detention center at Tianjin No. 1, where he was interrogated for three days and two nights without sleep. After that, he was placed in a cell together with major criminals who were slated for the death penalty. Unlike in 1989, however, he was not physically beaten by the prison officials; but they threatened him with a sentence of 20 years to life if he did not cooperate fully with the investigation. Some weeks later, he was temporarily allowed out of the prison under police guard in order to identify a building where he had met with Shen Tong. Taking advantage of a lapse of attention on the guards' part, he managed to lose them in the building's corridors and make his escape.

⁵⁷ "Activists held over Shen visit," *Reuters*, in *SCMP*, December 10, 1992.

key initial contacts in Hunan and certain other areas of southern China, including both full members of *ACPAF* and also "freelance" prodemocracy figures in the region who were not affiliated with the organization.⁵⁸

■ In November, **Xie Changzhong**, an associate of the Changsha *Colleagues Press* bookstore (see next page) was taken into custody. Although a close supporter of the bookstore, Xie was not actively involved in its work, either as an employee or as a manager. His elder brother, Xie Changfa, formerly an administrative cadre in the local government, played a leading role in the 1989 democracy movement in Hunan, however, and was later sentenced to two years of reeducation through labor. It is not known where Xie Changzhong is currently being held.

Following Shen's visit to Changsha, the *Colleagues Press (Tongren Shuju)*, a small-privately-run company was branded as a hotbed of subversion by the authorities and became the focus of a major police investigation. In late October, the bookstore was closed down by the authorities, and its staff and management were subjected to lengthy questioning and harassment. The government appears to have identified the bookstore as having been a liaison point for *ACPAF*, although it reportedly did not in fact play such a role.⁵⁹

According to the *ACPAF* network, several board members and shareholders of the *Colleagues Press* were recently ordered not to leave Changsha, pending the outcome of police enquiries, and it is feared that further arrests may follow.

Conditional releases

Mao Wenke, a young woman activist in the unofficial Protestant "house church" movement who had been harassed and interrogated by the authorities on several occasions in previous years, was detained in Hunan in September 1992 after meeting with Shen Tong. Although released about a week later on medical bail, she was informed by the police that she could still be put on trial at any time. Originally a Chinese language teacher at the Xiangtan City Physical Education College, from 1987 onwards Mao had travelled around several southern provinces, including Jiangsu, Zhejiang and Hunan, teaching the Christian gospel. After the 1989 crackdown, she also visited prisons to appeal for the release of several imprisoned prodemocracy activists. Mao is divorced, and has a seven or eight-year-old daughter.

Zhu Guoqiang,⁶⁰ around 24 years old, was taken away for questioning by police from the *Colleagues Press* bookstore on approximately September 15 and was released sometime in the second

⁵⁸ The damaging outcome of the mission insofar as the security interests of the *ACPAF* membership was concerned, however, subsequently led to a series of acrimonious public exchanges between the two student leaders appearing in the U.S. Chinese-language press.

⁵⁹ "Shen Tong's return caused great damage for the Hunan democracy movement," *Pai Hsing* (in Chinese), January 1, 1993, pp.54-55. The author of this article was personally involved in the work of *Tongren Shuju*.

⁶⁰ There is some uncertainty as to the precise surname: an alternative spelling received by Asia Watch is **Zu Guoqiang**.

week of February. Although active during the 1989 movement, Zhu was reportedly only a very minor figure on the local prodemocracy scene, and he appears to have been largely a casualty of the authorities' failure to catch any of the *ACPAF* leaders. His arrest occurred after a visit to a friend of one of the group's leaders by a plainclothes policeman posing as an agent for the prodemocracy escape network. When asked how the leader could be found, the friend said she herself didn't know, but that Zhu Guoqiang might know. Zhu was arrested the following day. According to reports, he was held in the Changsha City No. 1 Jail, which is run by Section 4 of the Changsha Municipal PSB. Zhu has now rejoined his family in Shenyang, northeastern China, but it is unclear as to whether the investigation has now been concluded or if he has merely been released temporarily for medical treatment. Zhu is reported to be in extremely poor health as a result of the harsh prison conditions in which he was held for almost five months.

Chen Jianyong, a physics graduate from Beijing University and employee of the *Colleagues Press*, was taken into custody in November by the Changsha police in connection with the screening on French television of Shen Tong's documentary film on the "summer project." He was released sometime in the second week of February 1993. It is unclear whether Chen's release is temporary or unconditional in nature.

Recent Releases

On November 25, 1992, **Bao Zunxin**, a former magazine editor and academic who authored several radical protest statements during the 1989 prodemocracy movement, was released from prison in Beijing 19 months ahead of his sentence completion date. One of the most prominent intellectuals punished after the 1989 protest movement, Bao had reportedly been suffering from heart disease and high blood pressure during his imprisonment and had been a focus of various international appeals for clemency.

On February 3, 1993, **Wang Xizhe**, 45 years old, was released from Huaiji Prison in Guangdong Province after completing almost 12 years of a 14-year sentence for alleged "counterrevolutionary activities." He had spent the entire 12 year period in solitary confinement. A veteran prodemocracy writer and activist who had already spent two years in prison in the late 1970s in connection with a long wallposter entitled "On Socialist Democracy and Legality" which he coauthored in 1974, Wang was arrested again in April 1981 for his involvement in the Democracy Wall movement, which began in Beijing two and a half years earlier. Wang authored numerous influential articles for the *samizdat* press during the Democracy Wall period, including a long analysis entitled "Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution," which denounced Mao as a "Stalinist dictator" who had brought disaster upon the Chinese nation. Upon his release, Wang, who had lodged more than 40 fruitless appeals with various courts over the past 12 years, reiterated his intention eventually to clear his name through the Chinese courts.⁶¹

Also in early February 1993, **Gao Shan**, a colleague of Bao Tong, head of the now-defunct Research Center for the Reform of the Political Structure, was released some five months ahead of schedule. In August 1992, Gao, a 34-year-old economist, received a four year sentence for allegedly "leaking state secrets" concerning the imposition of martial law in Beijing on May 20, 1989. (Bao was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment in July 1992. Another former government official tried in 1992 in connection with the same case, Wu Jiexiang, an advocate in 1988 of the controversial theory of "new authoritarianism," was

⁶¹ "Wang vows to clear name in court," *SCMP*, February 5, 1993.

released shortly after the trial.) Several days after Gao Shan's release had been confirmed by the Chinese authorities, however, foreign journalists had still been unable to ascertain his whereabouts or general condition, and his precise situation remained unclear.

On February 17, student leaders **Wang Dan**, 23, and **Guo Hailong**, 27, were released from prison. Although the releases were given great fanfare, both young men had served nearly their entire terms: Wang was scheduled to be released in July and Guo in June. Wang, one of the best-known leaders of the students in Tiananmen Square in June 1989 and leader of a hunger strike that brought the students an outpouring of sympathy from the Chinese public, had been No.1 on the government's "most wanted" list after the June crackdown. He was arrested in July 1989. Guo, a student at Beijing University and also on the "most wanted" list, was accused of trying to set a military vehicle on fire on the night of June 3-4.

The Chinese government also announced on February 17 that **Zhu Hongsheng**, a Roman Catholic priest in Shanghai, had been released more than two years before his sentence was due to expire. In fact, however, he was released to house arrest in February 1988 and was given complete freedom sometime in 1991; the announcement of his release may have been made to convey the impression that many prisoners were being released at once. Father Zhu, 79, had been sentenced in March 1983 to 15 years in prison for counterrevolution for his allegiance to the Vatican; the sentence was later reduced to 12 years. Father Zhu's release to house arrest was apparently because of his deteriorating health. Since 1988, he has been living with his brother in Shanghai.

On February 18, **Li Guiren**, former editor-in-chief of the Shaanxi Huayue Publishing Company, was released on "medical parole." His sentence does not expire until June 25, 1994, and the charges against him of "counterrevolutionary incitement" were not dropped. He has been in very poor health, however, and the "medical parole" release will allow him to obtain treatment while absolving the government from any financial responsibilities for it. In the aftermath of the 1989 crackdown, Li Guiren attempted to organize a protest strike of publishing house employees.

Conclusion

The present motto of the regime in Beijing, in the wake of Deng's celebrated "trip to the south" in January 1992, appears to be: "liberalize economically, repress politically." For the Chinese authorities, indeed, the latter seems to be an axiomatic requirement of the former. They have no intention whatever of allowing China, the world's last surviving Communist giant, to go the same way as the former Soviet Union and East European states—whether along the road of so-called "peaceful evolution" or that of popular insurrection. As the evidence of the past year has clearly shown, it is emphatically not the aim of Deng and his senior colleagues to allow greater political democracy and pluralism to "grow outward" from China's presently emerging "socialist market economy." If such an outcome is ever to take place, it will be as a result of the unrelenting efforts of China's prodemocracy activists from all walks of life to insist upon their constitutional and legal rights, and of sustained and consistent international pressure upon the Chinese government in support of those efforts.

The recent arrests of the 40 peaceful prodemocracy activists listed in this report constitute a blatant violation by the authorities in Beijing of the internationally recognized rights to freedom of speech and association. To Asia Watch's knowledge, none of the detainees stands accused of advocating or engaging in violent activity of any kind. They are behind bars purely for having had the audacity to challenge, in an entirely peacefully manner, the Party's time-honored monopolies on political power and truth. They should all therefore be released immediately and unconditionally and allowed to continue their activities without further persecution from the authorities.

During the past year or so, in response to continuing pressure from the U.S. Congress and other foreign governments over its record of human rights violations, the Beijing regime has adopted what some observers have termed a "smile offensive." This has entailed, to date, the release of several prominent political prisoners somewhat ahead of schedule and the granting of permission to selected other well-known dissidents to leave the country for study and other purposes abroad. The official "White Paper on Human Rights in China," released in November 1991, provided the starting point and overall context for this new exercise in political cosmetics. These steps are welcome, but for the government's current "smile" posture actually to amount to anything, it will be necessary for the authorities to go well beyond such token concessions to international opinion, and to begin to make a real dent in the huge backlog of political prisoner cases.

Beijing's record of arresting peaceful dissidents over the past year holds a clear message in particular for the administration of President Bill Clinton as it assesses the future direction of the U.S.'s China policy. The message is that only through a combination of sustained diplomatic and economic pressure, using substantive leverage such as that offered by the attachment of clear and verifiable human rights conditions to any renewal of China's Most Favored Nation trading status, can the U.S. hope to deflect China's hardline leaders away from their present course towards full-blown "market Stalinism."

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Asia Watch is an independent organization created in 1985 to monitor and promote internationally recognized human rights in Asia. The Chair is Jack Greenberg, the Vice Chairs are Harriet Rabb and Orville Schell, the Executive Director is Sidney Jones and the Washington Representative is Mike Jendrzeczyk.

Asia Watch is a division of Human Rights Watch, which also includes Africa Watch, Americas Watch, Helsinki Watch and Middle East Watch. The Chair of Human Rights Watch is Robert L. Bernstein and the Vice Chair is Adrian DeWind. Aryeh Neier is Executive Director; Kenneth Roth, Deputy Director; Holly Burkhalter, Washington Director; Susan Osnos, Press Director.

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