

CHAPTER EIGHT

May 26–28

The Elders Choose Jiang Zemin

EDITORS' NOTE: The leaders worked to consolidate elite support for the declaration of martial law and the removal of Zhao Ziyang, hoping to create a united front among political and military figures that would impress public opinion and eventually sway the students. For the most part, however, the obligatory expressions of loyalty to the Party line were hedged with cautions against the use of force. Wan Li's long-awaited statement from Shanghai supported martial law but also called for the government to deal with the legitimate issues the students had raised.

The Party apparatus mobilized its organizational machinery to guarantee that government, Party, and military officials and staff and their families refrained from supporting the demonstrators. The demonstrations, however, continued, although it was hard to tell whether they were expending their last burst of energy or gaining new support.

In the midst of this ambiguous atmosphere the eight Elders met at Deng Xiaoping's residence on the evening of May 27 to replace the fallen Party general secretary. The minutes of that meeting show how concerned Deng was that the switch of Party leaders and the impending suppression of the student movement not interfere with economic reform and the opening to the West. And they show the Elders' concern for

finding successors who could win public support. For both these reasons, Li Peng was not a contender. Deng deferentially led the group to a consensus in favor of Shanghai Party secretary Jiang Zemin, evidently having discussed this choice in advance with his two most senior colleagues, Chen Yun and Li Xiannian.

May 26

The Party tries to build support

On May 26 Chen Yun chaired a meeting of the Central Advisory Commission Standing Committee, attended by twenty-two of its twenty-seven members.¹ Among the absentees, Zhang Aiping and Huang Hua, former foreign minister, were believed to have stayed away because of their disagreement with martial law and the treatment of Zhao Ziyang.

Chen opened with a speech urging everyone to support the Party's decisions to suppress the student movement and to punish Zhao Ziyang.² His remarks received unambiguous support from some members of the group. But others mixed support with reservations, saying that the students had patriotic motives, that many military officers did not like the idea of sending troops into Beijing, that they hoped the situation could be resolved peacefully, or that corruption and inflation were the ultimate causes of antigovernment sentiment. When members had spoken, the committee voted by a show of hands to support Party Central's decisions. The official media reported the next day that the committee had given martial law its "unanimous support."

¹The Central Advisory Commission is a prestigious but powerless Party body composed of retired high-ranking Party officials, both civilian and military. It was chaired by Chen Yun, the oldest of the Elders. Because of his age, it was unusual for him to appear at any meeting.

²Report of Chen's speech in Michel Oksenberg, Lawrence R. Sullivan, and Marc Lambert, eds., *Beijing Spring, 1989, Confrontation and Conflict: The Basic Documents* (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1990), 331–333.

That afternoon Peng Zhen held a meeting with seven leading non-Party members of the National People's Congress Standing Committee, which he had formerly chaired. Peng expressed respect for the student demonstrators' motives but said it was the Party's duty to help them avoid manipulation by a tiny minority of conspirators. He reassured everyone that the army would not use force against the students and concluded with a lengthy argument condemning bourgeois liberalization, defending the declaration of martial law, and arguing that it was all legal and constitutional. Since the present declaration of martial law did not violate the Constitution or the law, he concluded, it would be impossible for the NPC Standing Committee to reverse it. After Peng's speech, several vice chairs of the Standing Committee expressed their views, on the one hand expressing their understanding for the declaration of martial law but on the other urging the government to accept the reasonable demands of the students.

Expressions of support for Qiao Shi

As it became apparent that Zhao Ziyang and Hu Qili were losing their seats on the Politburo Standing Committee, it was widely anticipated that the next general secretary would be chosen from within the current Standing Committee. This led to some subtle lobbying against Li Peng's being selected. Qiao Shi was a prominent alternative, and offices that worked under Qiao Shi did what they could to build momentum for him. For example, on May 26 the Central Discipline Inspection Commission (CDIC), an organization that Qiao Shi headed, submitted a report that seemed to be an attempt to curry favor for Qiao by toeing Party Central's line.

In addition, each of the five major units within the law enforcement system that Qiao Shi headed—the Supreme People's Court, the Supreme People's Procuratorate, the Public Security Ministry, the State Security Ministry, and the Justice Ministry—took the opportunity to express firm loyalty to Party Central.

Excerpt from Supreme People's Court, "Conscientiously study the important speeches of Comrades Li Peng and Yang Shangkun, firmly

and thoroughly implement Party Central's decisions," report to Party Central, May 26

The leaders of the Supreme People's Court and all its department heads have studied the important speeches by Li Peng and Yang Shangkun. We have also notified the various people's higher courts to study carefully and to understand these speeches in order to form uniform views and take uniform action. They were asked to stay on the side of Party Central and to implement Party decisions resolutely.

Excerpt from Supreme People's Procuratorate, "Thoroughly implement the decisions of Party Central and the State Council without wavering, firmly strike blows against various kinds of illegal criminal activity," report to Party Central, May 26

The Supreme People's Procuratorate has notified all procuratorates at lower levels across the country to firmly implement the directives of Party Central and the State Council. They must take immediate action to cooperate closely with Public Security and other agencies to end the turmoil. They must use legal weapons to strengthen social order and must resolutely prosecute every kind of criminal activity.

Excerpt from Public Security Ministry, "Firmly support the important speeches of Comrades Li Peng and Yang Shangkun, take a clear-cut stand in putting a stop to turmoil," report to Party Central and the State Council, May 26

The Public Security Ministry has requested that police forces across the country support the speeches of Li Peng and Yang Shangkun, stay

at their posts, enforce martial law as ordered by the State Council, openly oppose the turmoil, and maintain public order and traffic order in the capital city.

Excerpt from State Security Ministry, "Conscientiously study the important speeches of Comrades Li Peng and Yang Shangkun, make new contributions to guard state security, and protect stability and unity," report to Party Central and the State Council, May 26

The State Security Ministry promises to remain loyally on duty and to make new contributions in maintaining peace and unity during a struggle that could affect the fate of the Party, the future of the country, and the interests of the people.

Excerpt from Justice Ministry, "Study the important speeches of Comrades Li Peng and Yang Shangkun, firmly and thoroughly implement Party Central's decisions," report to Party Central and the State Council, May 26

The Justice Ministry vows to follow firmly the directives of Party Central and the State Council. We will study the important speeches of Comrades Li Peng and Yang Shangkun and mobilize immediately. We will stay on duty, unified, and on the side of Party Central to guarantee the smooth progress of reform and economic construction in our country.

The Party's top leadership set in motion a massive effort to carry out its recent decisions, including those on Zhao Ziyang's disgrace. The Work Committee of the

Departments under the Central Committee of the CCP and the Work Committee of Central Government Departments issued a joint emergency notice demanding resolute implementation of the directives of Party Central and the State Council to end the turmoil promptly. The notices carried the following five points.

Excerpt from Work Committee of the Departments under the Central Committee of the CCP and Work Committee of [Party Committees within] Central Government Departments,³ “Urgent notice on further organizing the broad masses of Party members and officials to study the important May 19 speeches of Comrades Li Peng and Yang Shangkun, in order to maintain firm unity with Party Central in ideology and action,” May 26

1. Continue to organize Party members and officials to study the important speeches by Li Peng and Yang Shangkun on May 19. All must realize the gravity of the current situation. It is of great importance to stop the turmoil promptly, to reverse and stabilize the situation, and to uphold Party leadership and the socialist system. All must resolutely support the important decisions of Party Central and stand in line with Party Central both ideologically and in actions.

2. All Party members must strictly follow Party discipline. No one is allowed to participate in any activity that is harmful to peace and unity. All must play active roles in mobilizing the masses to oppose the turmoil.

³Every Party and government office is guided in its work by a Party committee made up of its leading members, and each such committee is guided by a Party committee at a higher level. In the citation, the first work committee is in charge of Party committees in central Party agencies like the Propaganda Department. The second work committee is in charge of Party committees within State Council–level offices in the government apparatus, such as ministries and commissions.—Comp.

3. All Party members must stay on duty and do a good job at work. They must submit to martial law as declared by the State Council and must take the lead in complying with the Beijing People's Government's ban on demonstrations, petitions, and student or worker strikes during martial law. They must end all demonstrating immediately and must stop going to the streets to watch or support demonstrators. All Party members must not only behave themselves but also must assist administrative leaders in uniting with the majority of the officials and masses. They must also educate their own relatives not to go to the streets and not to participate in or show support for demonstrations in Tiananmen Square.

4. All levels of the Party organization must actively assist administrative leaders in doing political and ideological work, in uniting with the majority of officials and the masses, and in playing leadership roles in stabilizing the situation.

5. All levels of the Party organization must promptly notify all Party members of the above-mentioned requirements and make sure they are obeyed.

Also on May 26 the Beijing Party Committee and the Beijing People's Government sent a letter extending regards to all officers and soldiers in the martial law troops, including units of the PLA, the PAP, and Public Security. Li Ximing, Chen Xitong, and others went to visit the troops in the evening. Li Ximing told them, "You came to the capital to enforce martial law. You have contributed greatly to security and order in the capital and to stabilization of the entire country. You are undertaking a sacred mission, and history will record your achievements." Chen Xitong said, "We are working on people's thinking at the city, district, and county levels to assure support for the army. We are trying to educate the masses to love the people's army so that you will have the best possible conditions for carrying out your martial law mission." Li and Chen assured the troops that the "broad masses" would surely support them; even people who were temporarily confused about the matter would eventually recognize their debt of gratitude.

Responses from the troops

According to reports coming in to the Central Military Commission and the Politburo, officers and troops gave unreserved support to the decisions of the Central leaders as they had been explained by Yang Shangkun.

The Beijing Military Region expressed strong support for Party Central's decisions to end the turmoil and to restore order. After studying Li Peng's and Yang Shangkun's speeches, everyone agreed the turmoil was manufactured by a tiny minority who were taking advantage of the idealism of young students to challenge the Party and the government. Their goal was to overthrow Party leadership and reject the socialist system, and this violated the Constitution and the fundamental interests of the people. In addition, Zhao Ziyang was responsible for splitting the Party, ignoring the Four Basic Principles, and encouraging turmoil; Party Elders headed by Deng Xiaoping had saved the nation in a time of crisis; and martial law was necessary, constitutional, and in keeping with the popular will. All soldiers showed strong loyalty to Party Central and expressed deep appreciation for the trust the Party and government had placed in them in this time of crisis.

The Chengdu Military Region also reported strong and unanimous support for Party Central's decisions and for the speeches by Li Peng and Yang Shangkun. Its people felt respect and admiration for Deng Xiaoping and the Party Elders for their courage in meeting the challenge, and they condemned the turmoil as an organized attempt to subvert Party leadership and the socialist system. They blamed Zhao Ziyang for violating Party principles by showing sympathy and support for the turmoil. Everyone agreed there could be no turning back in the fight against the turmoil and offered absolute submission to the command of the CMC chaired by Deng Xiaoping and Yang Shangkun. The region's Party Standing Committee resolved on May 25 to have more study sessions with officers at the regiment level and above in order to ensure ideological loyalty to Party Central, to tighten control over the troops, and to stand alert against any hostile forces along the Yunnan and Tibetan borders.

The Party Committee of the air force also offered its resolute support for the decisions of Party Central and for the speeches by Li Peng and Yang Shangkun at the Enlarged Meeting of the CMC. The air force agreed with the April 26 editorial in the

People's Daily. It traced the root of the problem to the split in views within the Party and urged Party Central to resolve that split as soon as possible. It supported martial law as representing the fundamental interests of the Party, the army, and the entire nation and expressed total loyalty and submission to the authority of the CMC under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping and Yang Shangkun.

The democracy movement continues

Reports from the State Security Ministry described Beijing as quiet on May 26. There were no demonstrations on the streets. Most Beijing students had left Tiananmen Square. Those remaining were largely from outside Beijing, but many of these had also gone back home. Some martial law troops in the suburbs were holding parties with the local residents, who had become more and more receptive to them. On the Square and on various school campuses posters announced a new resolution from the Autonomous Federation of Beijing Students about a Great Global Chinese Protest Day to be held on May 28.

At Peking University a wall poster signed by Wang Dan proposed a prolonged battle to promote democracy in China. Wang called for the formation of four groups of two hundred students; the groups would take turns demonstrating on the Square. The student-controlled public-address system proposed a strategy of opposing Li Peng and martial law without attacking Deng Xiaoping. Later it unveiled a plan to reorganize and militarize the autonomous student organizations and called for another round of hunger strikes on Tiananmen Square to press for the withdrawal of the martial law troops; for official recognition of the patriotic democracy movement; for the resignation of Deng Xiaoping, Li Peng, and Yang Shangkun; and for restoring Zhao Ziyang to power.

On the same day Wang Juntao, Bao Zunxin, Wang Dan, and others held a meeting at which they called for the dismissal of Li Peng, the withdrawal of the army, the mobilization of workers to strike, and the continuation of the protests on the Square until the NPC Standing Committee meeting on June 20.

On May 26 Yan Jiaqi and Bao Zunxin published an indictment of Premier Li Peng in the Hong Kong newspaper *Ming bao*.⁴ The authors held martial law to be both unnecessary and unconstitutional and proposed an emergency meeting of the NPC Standing Committee to consider abolishing martial law immediately and convening the full NPC in the near future. The article accused Li Peng of two major crimes: ignoring the demands of three thousand hunger striking students and inflicting martial law upon a peaceful populace. It warned Li Peng against the further, even more serious crime of using deadly force against the people. The Chinese government immediately condemned the article as a “vicious counterrevolutionary political program.”

Continuing demonstrations outside Beijing

On May 26 Zhongnanhai received thirty-one reports showing that demonstrations continued, though they were tapering off, in twenty-one provinces. In Shanghai the number of demonstrators on the streets had dwindled, but campus activity had increased. Teachers and students were making speeches calling for the student movement to expand, especially by forming alliances with workers and farmers. In Harbin some students had resumed their studies even though classes had not resumed and demonstrations continued. Many students showed concern for their academic careers, but student leaders continued to be successful in agitating for student strikes.

In Shijiazhuang the size of student protests increased for the third consecutive day, but in Taiyuan teachers said that the majority of students were losing interest and that the number of demonstrators had declined visibly. Hohhot had seen no demonstrations for three days, but fewer than a third of students remained on campus. In Xi'an more than ten thousand students and teachers held a public rally at which speakers called for continued struggle for freedom and democracy and announced the formation of a provincial autonomous student federation. In Xining fifteen

⁴Text in Oksenberg et al., *Beijing Spring*, 328–331.

students who had just returned from Beijing began a hunger strike in front of the provincial government building. In Nanjing a day of peace was followed by a day on which more than five thousand students took to the streets. In Hangzhou five thousand students gathered in Wulin Square and vowed to carry their student strike to the end. In Kunming more than a thousand students continued a sit-in, and in Guiyang 80 percent of students remained on strike.

Overseas reaction

A few of the seventeen reports on foreign comment that arrived at Zhongnanhai on May 26 drew special notice from the top Party leadership. One was an ABC-TV interview with Henry Kissinger, who characterized the "fierce dispute" in China's leadership by saying that whereas Deng Xiaoping wanted both economic reform and strong central power, Zhao Ziyang believed that economic reform had to be matched by a measure of political pluralism. Kissinger said the dispute was "tragic" because the two leaders actually shared the same goals of reform. When asked if reform in China was dead, Kissinger predicted that the economic reform would continue and even accelerate. He also believed that the Chinese authorities would take some actions against official corruption, but he did not know whether they would do it the traditional authoritarian way or by establishing some means of popular participation. Kissinger praised President Bush for his personal knowledge of China and his handling of events and noted that the Chinese government appreciated U.S. support.

The *Washington Post* commented that the ongoing political and social unrest was greatly diminishing China's influence in international affairs. It noted that many Western diplomats in Beijing had warned that if bloodshed were used to resolve the crisis, it would become impossible for their governments to maintain friendly relations with China's government. In addition 160 UN employees from seventy-four countries had written to the UN secretary general expressing their deep concern about the possibility of bloodshed and urging utmost restraint upon the Chinese government. By contrast the U.S. embassy had expressed concerns only about martial law, and Chinese officials had sent out signals indicating their special regard for the U.S. government reaction.

May 27

Wan Li's "written chat"

Wan Li's speeches during his official visit to the United States showed he understood the need for democracy and hinted at his hope he might be able to help resolve the crisis through the NPC. But he was under virtual house arrest in Shanghai, and through Jiang Zemin he had received Deng Xiaoping's demand that he express his support for the decisions of the Elders and the Politburo Standing Committee. Torn between his loyalty to the Elders and his sympathies for the people, Wan opted to abandon his political ally Zhao Ziyang and hew to the line of the Elders.

In a "written chat"⁵ sent to Party Central on May 27 and published the next day by Xinhua News Agency, Wan explained that he had cut short his overseas trip for health reasons and that he was currently receiving medical treatment in Shanghai. He expressed his appreciation of the sincerity of the majority of the demonstrating students, who, in his view, only wished to promote democracy and to curtail corruption. Then he acknowledged that there was indeed a tiny minority of people who were taking advantage of the students' patriotism and conspiring to overthrow the government. He called for exposing these people while protecting the majority of the students and people.

Wan stated his support for the decisions of the Standing Committee of the Politburo and for the May 19 speeches in which Li Peng and Yang Shangkun announced martial law. He held that martial law was constitutional and was necessary to end the turmoil and restore order. He said the Standing Committee of the NPC would meet June 20 to consider all the issues the students had raised, and he hoped all patriotic citizens in China would unite under the leadership of the Party and the government.

⁵A statement written in an informal style.

Li Xiannian convenes a meeting of the CPPCC Presidium

On the afternoon of May 27 Li Xiannian convened the eighteenth meeting of the Presidium of the Seventh Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.⁶ Wang Renzhong, the meeting chairman, asked that all members express support for the decisions of Party Central and the State Council. Ma Wenrui, a vice chair of the CPPCC Standing Committee, "resolutely supported" the Party and government decisions against the turmoil. While conceding that some of the student demands were justified, Ma criticized their "extremism" and called for strong measures to restore order. Sun Xiaocun, the leader of the China Democratic Construction Association, supported the Center's decisions but pleaded that the students not be prosecuted. Yan Mingfu, who had negotiated extensively with the students, praised their patriotism but criticized their emotional radicalism. He urged the Party to heed the students' complaints about social injustice and official corruption, but he ended by expressing support for Party Central. Qian Xuesen⁷ argued that China should focus on economic development, contending that the pursuit of superficial democracy would result in neither real democracy nor economic development.

Li Xiannian delivered the concluding speech. He reported receiving letters from members of the CPPCC and expressed appreciation for their concern and their constructive suggestions. He conceded that the students meant well, that corruption was a problem, and that democracy and law were needed. Yet he called the demonstrations counterproductive and said they sprang from a counterrevolutionary conspiracy that had been able to gain a foothold because of Zhao Ziyang's negligence. He called on the CPPCC to unite around Party Central, to support martial law, and to help the government end the turmoil.

⁶The Presidium of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference consists of its chair and vice chairs.

⁷Qian earned a Ph.D. in aviation and mathematics from the California Institute of Technology in 1939 and then taught at CalTech and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before returning to China in 1955. He joined the Communist Party in 1958 and later became the key figure in designing the delivery systems of China's nuclear weapons.

Who ordered the arrest of Bao Tong?

Bao Tong, Zhao Ziyang's secretary and closest confidant, was arrested even before the crackdown on the student movement was ordered. The reasons for the arrest were kept secret, and Bao himself was never told what they were. The handful of top leaders who were privy to the background rallied around the formal charge that Bao had "leaked state secrets." The story began on May 27 with a fax, whose full text follows, from the State Security Ministry to Li Peng.

Coded telegram from State Security Ministry to
Premier Li Peng, May 27

After extensive investigation, it has been proven that on the night of May 17 Bao Tong called a meeting of some members of the Office for Research on Reform of the Political System. Bao revealed at the meeting that "Party Central has decided to enforce martial law in Beijing, and although Zhao Ziyang is opposed, the decision has been made and will be difficult to reverse. I hope we are all prepared for the grave situation we face; Ziyang may not last long." In his "parting words" at the meeting Bao enjoined the others "not to sell out their consciences" and not to become a "traitor" or "Judas." Hence it is clear that the secrets about martial law and the fall of Zhao Ziyang were leaked through Bao Tong.

On the morning of May 19 Bao Tong sent Gao Shan to the IER to meet with Chen Yizi and others. Gao briefed the group on the internal workings of Party Central since early May, and the discussion led to the "Six-Point Emergency Statement on the Current Situation," issued in the name of the "three institutes and one association,"⁸ which stirred up a big reaction in society. In an effort to avoid further exposure, Bao

⁸See footnote 30 in Chapter 5.

Tong instructed Gao Shan, Chen Yizi, and others to “protect the reform forces and never to make the IER, or its superior commission,⁹ look bad.” On May 20 Gao Shan, Chen Yizi, and others called an emergency meeting of persons concerned to pass along what Bao Tong had said.

In addition, Bao Tong has worked closely with Yan Jiaqi, who has been highly active during the student movement, who has claimed many times to be part of “Zhao Ziyang’s think tank,” and who has openly proclaimed the phrase “Down with Deng and up with Zhao.”

After reading the telegram, Li Peng penned the following message on it.

Li Peng’s handwriting in large, clear characters¹⁰
at the top of the document

Please send to comrades Xiaoping, Xiannian, and Chen Yun. The document shows that Bao Tong leaked top-level state secrets about martial law in order to confuse people’s minds. I suggest he immediately be punished according to law.

The Party Elders approved Li Peng’s suggestion at their meeting that night, and with their approval in hand, Li Peng issued an order to arrest Bao Tong. On the morning of May 28, while on his way to a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, Bao Tong was arrested. He was sent directly to join the Gang of Four and others at Qincheng Prison. Zhao Ziyang was put under house arrest the same day, and his staff met a variety of related fates.¹¹

⁹Apparently referring to the State Commission for the Restructure of the Economic System.

¹⁰Probably so that the Elders could read his inscription more easily. The telegram was marked “only one copy” (*zhi yifen*).—Comp.

¹¹Zhao had five secretaries during his tenure as premier of the State Council and general secretary of the Party.

The Elders appoint Jiang Zemin

On the night of May 27 Deng Xiaoping, Chen Yun, Li Xiannian, Peng Zhen, Deng Yingchao, Yang Shangkun, Wang Zhen, and Bo Yibo met for about five hours at Deng Xiaoping's residence to determine a successor to Zhao Ziyang as CCP general secretary.

Excerpts from Party Central Office Secretariat, "Minutes of important meeting, May 27, 1989," document supplied to Party Central Office Secretariat for its records by the Office of Deng Xiaoping

Bao Tong, the leader in the area of political reform, was the best known. At the time of his arrest Bao was a member of the Thirteenth Central Committee, director of the Office for Research on Reform of the Political System, and secretary of the Standing Committee of the Politburo. The Beijing Intermediate People's Court sentenced Bao to seven years' imprisonment (plus an additional two years' deprivation of political rights) for the crime of revealing state secrets.

Bai Meiqing was Zhao's secretary most familiar with economics. He served as first deputy general secretary and deputy Party secretary of the General Office of the State Council, where he was known as a meticulous analyst and skillful administrator. After Zhao's fall from power, Li Peng moved Bai Meiqing out of the State Council into a post as vice minister of commerce.

Zhang Yueqi in 1989 was deputy director of the General Office of the CCP Central Committee but lost this post after Zhao Ziyang fell. He remained unemployed until late 1990, when he was sent to Jilin to serve as deputy secretary of the Provincial Party Committee. He later became a vice chair of the provincial CPPCC.

Li Shuqiao, who had edited the Party theoretical journal *Red Flag* before coming to work for Zhao, also became unemployed after Zhao's fall until Liu Suinian, the minister of goods and materials, gave him a nonpolitical job as deputy general manager of the China Container Company in late 1990.

Li Yong was a grandson of the senior Party leaders, now deceased, Li Fuchun and Cai Chang. An unconfirmed rumor among the top leaders alleged that Li was responsible for passing news of the impending martial law to students in Tiananmen Square. Li lost his job with the fall of Zhao but soon left Beijing to be deputy general manager of the Tianjin Economic and Technological Development Zone.—Comp.

Deng Xiaoping: "Let's begin by discussing a new leadership team for the Center. Let me give you my view and see if you think it's correct: New leaders for the Politburo, the Party Secretariat, and especially the Standing Committee should be chosen for their commitment to reform and opening. The new leaders should do some things to show we will persist with reform and opening so that the people can feel reassured that the new team is sincere about carrying out the policies of the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee. We must consider public perceptions when we choose the new leaders, must not let emotion sway us, and must set aside all personal grudges, even to the extent of choosing people who have once opposed us. We must take the high road of the statesman and choose people who are seen as committed to reform and opening and who have made achievements in their careers. We should be bold about putting these people into new leadership positions so that the people will see we really mean it when we talk about reform and opening."

Chen Yun: "I agree with Xiaoping's view and will add just one point. The new leaders do need to win the trust of the people and show records of real achievement. But one essential criterion is that they must dare to oppose bourgeois liberalization and uphold the Four Basic Principles. On this point we cannot compromise. Can China do without the Four Basic Principles? Can we do without the people's democratic dictatorship? Are we going to stick with these things—the people's democratic dictatorship, Marxism, socialism, and Communist Party rule—or not? These are the fundamental questions."

Li Xiannian: "We're all waiting to hear your views, Comrade Xiaoping, on the selection of the next general secretary."

Deng Xiaoping: "After long and careful comparison, the Shanghai Party secretary, Comrade Jiang Zemin, does indeed seem a proper choice. I think he's up to the task. Comrades Chen Yun, Xiannian, and I all lean toward Comrade Jiang Zemin for general secretary. What do the rest of you think?"

Wang Zhen: “If that’s what the three of you think, then that’s it. I don’t know Jiang Zemin very well, but I trust Comrade Xiaoping to get it right. So let’s have Jiang Zemin be general secretary.”

Deng Yingchao: “I haven’t had much contact with Jiang Zemin, but from what the rest of you say about him, he seems fine. I agree that he be general secretary.”

Li Xiannian: “It’s true that Jiang Zemin lacks experience at the Center. But this man has a political mind, is in the prime of life, and can be trusted.”

Yang Shangkun: “It’s hard to overstate how important it is that the new leadership team maintain the image of reform and opening and win the trust of the people. The country is watching us closely on this. We can’t close our doors just because we’re switching general secretaries. China must never again seal itself off, never go back to the closed and locked door. To do that would be frightening: The economy would not grow, people’s lives would not improve, and the overall strength of the country would suffer. I agree to have Jiang Zemin as the next general secretary and also agree with Comrade Xiaoping’s suggestion that Li Ruihuan from Tianjin join the Standing Committee of the Politburo. Li Ruihuan is strongly associated with reform and opening, and he really does get things done for the people.”

Bo Yibo: “No one is perfect, and we’re not going to find flawless people. We have to face the fact that the new leadership team will have weaknesses in its experience with politics and struggle. But the new team must be able to win confidence both within the Party and among the people. This doesn’t mean we have to be happy with every member of the team—only that we should be happy with the team as a whole. Jiang Zemin and Li Ruihuan are good choices. They’re both eager to go, and as long as we stay out of the way and let them go, I think they’ll do well.”

Chen Yun: “I think Comrade Song Ping is a good choice for the Standing Committee. He has rich political experience, knows both the

Center and the localities, acts strictly on principle, is strong in Party loyalty, has high standards, and has influence. The new team should include one or two somewhat older comrades with more experience.”

Li Xiannian: “I think Jiang Zemin, Song Ping, and Li Ruihuan all are appropriate selections for the Standing Committee. We shouldn’t draw all the leaders from the provinces; we need some from the Center, too. Comrade Yibo is right that Jiang Zemin and Li Ruihuan both lack experience at the Center. But they are highly motivated and are ready for our support. Comrade Song Ping’s rich experience should make him easily capable of meeting the challenge of membership on the Standing Committee.”

Peng Zhen: “I hope the new team can be relatively stable, and that means it should have at least some continuity with the old team. We can’t keep replacing people as if we’re running a merry-go-round, or the new team will never be able to establish its authority or win the people’s confidence, and that would hurt the Party. We must do our best to establish the authority of the leadership core. We must let them take responsibility and delegate power as necessary. Establishing a leadership core is no easy task.”

Deng Xiaoping: “I agree with Comrade Peng Zhen. Our Party didn’t have a stable and mature leadership collective until the Mao, Liu, Zhou, Zhu¹² days. Before that, the leadership was always unstable and immature. Starting from Chen Duxiu and going all the way up to the Zunyi Conference,¹³ none of the leaderships were really mature. During one stretch it was said that we should emphasize the leadership of the working class, so we bent over backward to find workers to be leaders. Our really mature leadership began only with Mao, Liu, Zhou, and

¹²Mao Zedong, Liu Shaoqi, Zhou Enlai, and Zhu De; a stock phrase of four last names that are commonly run together.

¹³Chen Duxiu was one of the founders of the CCP in 1921. At a January 1935 conference in Zunyi, in Guizhou Province, the CCP for the first time put Mao Zedong clearly in charge of the Red Army, which before then had suffered severe losses under KMT military attacks.

Zhu, and the early period of that group's leadership was fine. In the later period, with the Cultural Revolution, it was a disaster. Hua Guofeng didn't get much going—only his 'two whatevers.'¹⁴ So the actual second generation of leadership is ours, and the people have been basically happy with us primarily because we've pursued reform and opening and aimed at the Four Modernizations, and because we've made real achievements. Now we're moving to the third leadership generation, and if we want this new leadership generation to really get started and win the people's confidence, the only way is to stick with reform and opening."

Yang Shangkun: "If our new leadership team is stodgy, rigid, or mediocre, one the people won't trust and Party members won't respect, we're only asking for more disturbances—constant disturbances—down the road, and we can forget about economic growth. The students haven't gone back to classes yet; the whole thing is continuing, and if we don't pick a leadership team the people like, I see us headed for more trouble. That's why the leadership team and the reform and opening policies are so crucially connected. Comrade Xiaoping has pointed out that almost every conceivable slogan has appeared during this protest, but nobody protests reform. That's why it's crucial to stick to reform. If we don't, there's no way the country is going to live in peace."

Deng Yingchao: "Sticking with reform is our Party's guiding principle and primary focus; of course we can't give that up. But I'd like to make another point. The new Standing Committee team has to be firm against corruption. We can't face the people if we don't go after corruption, bribery, and embezzlement. We really have to get serious about this, or there's no way on earth we can explain ourselves to the people. A team that won't fight corruption doesn't measure up."

¹⁴The "two whatevers" were "We must resolutely uphold whatever policies Chairman Mao adopted, and we must steadfastly abide by whatever instructions he gave." The slogan first appeared in a *People's Daily* editorial of February 7, 1977.

Deng Xiaoping: "I've checked with Comrades Chen Yun and Xiannian, and they completely agree with my view that the new leadership team must continue to carry out the political line, principles, and policies of the Third Plenum of the Eleventh Central Committee. Even the language should stay the same. The political report of the Thirteenth Party Congress was approved by all representatives at the time. Not a single word of it can be changed. The policies of reform and opening must not change, not for several decades; we've got to press them through to the end. This should be what we expect and require from the new generation of Central leadership. Unless someone objects, I move that the new Standing Committee of the Politburo be made up of the following six comrades: Jiang Zemin, Li Peng, Qiao Shi, Yao Yilin, Song Ping, and Li Ruihuan, with Comrade Jiang Zemin as general secretary."

At this point the Elders apparently voted.

Deng Xiaoping: "The new Standing Committee team is now determined, but we don't need to announce it right away. Let's wait until the Fourth Plenum of the Thirteenth Central Committee to publicize it officially, together with the cases of Zhao Ziyang and others."

Chen Yun: "I think we should do two things before then. The first would be to have Comrade Jiang Zemin come up to Beijing to get familiar with things here. The other would be that Comrade Xiaoping may want to notify certain members of the current Standing Committee about our decision."

Yang Shangkun: "Today in Shanghai Wan Li came out in favor of the Politburo decisions. I wonder if we should consider having Wan Li come to Beijing together with Jiang Zemin."

Peng Zhen: "Wan Li has been in Shanghai for medical treatment. There's no need to hurry him back to Beijing. If we did there'd only be more rumors about him."

Deng Xiaoping: “Let’s have Jiang Zemin come first; he needs to get familiar with things. And I accept Comrade Chen Yun’s suggestion that I should represent all of us to have a chat with the continuing Standing Committee members. The main purpose will be to unify thinking so the new team can get started with a clear focus and really get down to work on a few practical things that will please the people. I need to tell everybody something else, too. Li Peng has sent me materials showing that Bao Tong was the one who leaked the secret about martial law in Beijing. I’m not familiar with this man Bao Tong, but he won’t get away with it—leaking Party and state secrets. Comrade Li Peng is requesting immediate prosecution by law.”

Li Xiannian: “I know the man. He’s over fifty but follows fashions like a youngster. He wears gaudy jackets and blue jeans inside Zhongnanhai—what kind of Party official is that? His head is full of bourgeois liberalization. Some time ago he pulled together a group of young people and called them a ‘Zhao Ziyang think tank.’ Our Communist Party doesn’t have think tanks—never has. This is pure bourgeois stuff. A few days ago I learned from Li Peng and Yao Yilin that Bao Tong was the one responsible for that statement by the three institutes and one association. Now the truth has come out. Bao Tong has broken the law by leaking the martial law secret and should be arrested. When we arrest Bao Tong, his think tank will leak dry, and that will help end the turmoil.”

Wang Zhen: “I agree with Comrade Xiannian. This guy should be arrested—arrested immediately! This is a matter of principle and we can’t mess around! It’s irrelevant whether he’s a Central Committee member or not, secretary of the Standing Committee or not, known to us or not. What’s the big deal about arresting a guy like this? We arrested Jiang Qing and the Gang of Four, we arrested the diehard followers of Lin Biao,¹⁵ and we can’t arrest him? The question isn’t even

¹⁵Lin Biao was deputy chairman of the CCP and Mao Zedong’s “closest comrade in arms” and designated successor during the Cultural Revolution in the late 1960s. He

worth discussing. The facts speak for themselves. Just tell Li Peng to arrest him tomorrow and put him in Qincheng.”¹⁶

Bo Yibo: “The situation in Beijing and around the country has been improving in the last few days, but we can’t rule out the possibility of backsliding. Many comrades feel it’s a problem that we have martial law troops poised outside the city but allow the students to stay put in Tiananmen Square. Now that we’ve got the problem inside the Party solved, we should turn to ending the turmoil. We should take action, I think, but it’s not easy to say just what we should do.”

Deng Yingchao: “Let’s take a moderate approach. We can persuade the students to go back to their campuses, use the PLA in the city to maintain order, and show the common people and the majority of the young students that the Party and government are determined to address their concerns and are confident of success. This will make us popular. I hope we can restore order quickly.”

Yang Shangkun: “We’ve always said that the PLA’s move into the city will not be aimed at Beijing residents or at the masses of students. At first people didn’t believe us, but now they do. We must be equally firm about stopping the turmoil and about avoiding bloodshed in doing so. These two things aren’t contradictory. We do, of course, need a timetable. We can’t let things drag on forever.”

Chen Yun: “Yes, we must do our best both to end the turmoil quickly and to avoid bloodshed. It would be great if we could do it by the end of the month. Stability and unity of thought are the most important things.”

Deng Xiaoping: “I suggest that the Standing Committee of the Politburo quickly make a decision to restore normal order in Beijing

died in an airplane crash in 1971 while apparently fleeing China after what is officially described as a coup attempt against Mao. The persons referred to as his diehard followers were Chen Boda, Huang Yongsheng, Wu Faxian, Li Zuopeng, Qiu Huizuo, and Jiang Tengjiao. They were tried and sentenced along with the Gang of Four in 1980–1981 for crimes of counterrevolution.

¹⁶That is, Qincheng Prison; see footnote 23 in Chapter 6.

and to set a date for the Fourth Plenum of the Thirteenth Central Committee. We can't delay any longer."

The motion to appoint Jiang as general secretary and to add Li and Song to the Standing Committee had been approved by the Elders by a show of hands. But this violated the Chinese Communist Party Constitution, which stipulates that the Politburo Standing Committee should make such decisions.

Support and opposition

On May 27 and 28, Zhongnanhai received reports from the Military Regions of Jinan and Guangzhou and from the provincial Party committees of Tianjin, Zhejiang, Fujian, Jiangxi, and Inner Mongolia. All expressed support for the Center's decisions on ending the turmoil.

Meanwhile, in the Square, May 27 reports from the State Security Ministry, the Public Security Ministry, and the Beijing Municipal Government described continuing demonstrations. The student public-address system focused on Li Peng, accusing him of trying to stage a coup and refusing to recognize him as a representative of the government. Although many student demonstrators from outside Beijing had been persuaded to go home, others continued to pour in by train. One student leader forecast that calls from Chinese in the United States for a Great Global Chinese Protest Day the next day would stimulate demonstrations in Beijing of as many as three hundred thousand people. In the evening the student leaders issued a call for one more demonstration, on May 30, after which they said they would withdraw. But there were other, conflicting news releases that suggested student leaders disagreed about whether to withdraw or not.

The most notable event on May 27 was the appearance of a "Ten-Point Statement on the Current Situation"¹⁷ from a new joint organization of protest groups called the

¹⁷Excerpted in Suzanne Ogden, Kathleen Hartford, Lawrence Sullivan, and David Zweig, eds., *China's Search for Democracy: The Student and the Mass Movement of 1989* (Armonk, New York: M. E. Sharpe, 1992), 329–331.

United Conference of Patriotic Beijing Organizations in Support of the Constitution. It criticized Li Peng and his allies and praised Zhao Ziyang, but it also stated that the democracy movement was not just a reflection of intra-Party struggle, so any attempt to stop the movement by resolving the intra-Party struggle would prove futile, and anyone who stood in opposition to the movement would lose legitimacy and eventually power. It said the demonstrations would last at least until the NPC meeting scheduled for June 20.

The State Security Ministry said that Bao Zunxin had drafted this statement and that the United Conference of Patriotic Beijing Organizations in Support of the Constitution, with Wang Juntao presiding, had approved it by a show of hands. Wang had been in regular contact with student leaders, the report said, and was involved in many covert activities to organize and manipulate the student movement. This report later became the basis for the arrest of Wang Juntao, Bao Zunxin, and others as black hands, or manipulators of the student movement, behind the scenes.

May 28

Demonstrations in and outside of Beijing

Despite Great Global Chinese Protest Day activities overseas, reports from the State Security Ministry and the Public Security Ministry on student activities in Beijing May 28 said that day's demonstration was less impressive than others recently: Only about fifty thousand students participated at peak times. But Beijing residents cheered as the students continued to protest martial law and official corruption and to call for freedom of speech, for Zhao Ziyang's restoration to power, and for the dismissal of Li Peng. Demands for Deng Xiaoping's resignation seemed to have disappeared.

Most of the students on the Square, especially those who had just arrived from outside Beijing, were opposed to the idea of withdrawing by May 30. Handouts

calling for another hunger strike were distributed, although it was not clear how much support such an action would have. Leaders of the AFS held a meeting and decided that despite the sharply declining numbers of demonstrators, they would remain in the Square until the opening of the NPC meeting on June 20. Bao Zunxin and Wang Juntao met secretly with student leaders at Peking University and decided to shift the focus of the movement toward mobilization of workers, farmers, soldiers, and others.

On May 28 thirty-three reports to Zhongnanhai described demonstrations in thirty-six cities. In Shanghai more than ten thousand people joined the Great Global Chinese Protest Day. In Nanjing, where more than thirty thousand people turned out, Deng Xiaoping and Li Peng were the main targets. In Hangzhou there were demonstrations on both May 27 and May 28. In Harbin about three thousand individual entrepreneurs and retired workers joined students in a demonstration in front of the provincial government building.

In Shenyang more than three thousand students took to the streets, and in Shijiazhuang students delivered a petition to the provincial government opposing martial law and demanding dialogue with provincial leaders. In Xi'an students withdrew from the city square but continued to boycott classes. In Changsha students demanding an emergency meeting of the NPC demonstrated in the rain; they called for workers to join them but got little response. In Hefei four hundred or so workers and demobilized soldiers joined more than three thousand students in a Great Global Chinese Protest Day demonstration. There were tens of thousands of onlookers.

Reactions overseas

On May 27 and 28 fifteen reports on overseas Chinese demonstrations reached Zhongnanhai. In the United States five hundred students and scholars demonstrated in front of the Chinese embassy demanding abolition of martial law and calling for an NPC meeting to resolve the crisis through democracy and law. Professor Wu Jingsheng of the University of Maryland said the Chinese associations he represented would stop cooperating with the Chinese government because of its ill-advised

treatment of the demonstrators. Another report said that more than five hundred Chinese scholars and professors in the United States had signed an open letter in support of the student movement and that the letter would be published in the *New York Times* on May 30.

Hong Kong newspapers continued to cover the student activities in Tiananmen Square. On May 26 two hundred thousand young people joined a rally at Victoria Park. The next day a twelve-hour marathon concert to show support for the student movement in Beijing was held in Hong Kong.

In Taiwan the *United Daily News* conducted a public opinion poll that showed increasing popular demand for the government to issue a statement against suppression of the democracy movement on the mainland. At a seminar held by the ruling party's Research Institute on Revolutionary Practice, four panelists from Taiwan and the United States agreed that the Taiwan government's open-door policy toward mainland China had contributed to the rise of the democracy movement there.

Among twenty-four foreign media reports received on May 27 and 28, one from Britain's *Sunday Telegraph* reported on Li Xiaoqing, a granddaughter of Mao Zedong who was now living in Australia. It said Li, once a fanatic Red Guard and now twenty-nine years old, had abandoned Communist asceticism in favor of a free and extravagant lifestyle. She studied English, was dating a wealthy and handsome Australian man, and frequented fancy restaurants and social clubs in downtown Sydney. She agreed with the Beijing protesters in condemning official corruption and calling for democratization in China.