

Democracy Wall Movement, 1979

The people need no longer suffer the wearisome drivel of 'class struggle.' Now it is the Four Modernizations that have become the new panacea. Nevertheless, we still must obey the orders of the central authorities. Follow the guide dutifully and all your beautiful dreams will materialize....

I beg you all -- do not let these political swindlers cheat you once again.... The cruel experiences of the Cultural Revolution have opened our eyes.... The people need democracy.... Who can really believe that this socialist way contains any recipe for the happiness of the people....

Wei Jingsheng 1979, "The Fifth Modernization: Democracy"

You have doubtless heard of the so-called Democracy Wall in Beijing. I may have made a mistake in agreeing to let it last for so long. For despite the good intentions of some who put up posters on the wall, it has been used to manipulate public opinion with distorted rumors and outright falsehoods... The wall came to be controlled by people who preferred troublemaking to working at their jobs. Foreigners who regarded the activities at the Democracy Wall as a barometer of the political climate in China were quite deceived....

These people did not represent the aspirations of the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people....

What we call the April Fifth movement [4/5/76, marking death of Zhou Enlai and attacking Gang of Four] was a movement launched by our young people. But a few troublemakers engage in ultra-individualism and anarchy. Toward this small number we must take a very stern attitude, for the purpose of educating the majority. That is why we passed such a heavy sentence on Wei Jingsheng.

It is imperative that while emphasizing socialist democracy we must strengthen the application of socialist law.... For the Four Modernizations to succeed we must maintain an attitude of unity and tranquillity.... China has finally reached this stage of tranquillity and now a few people are making trouble.

Deng Xiaoping quoted by Gibney, The Pacific Century, 318

Democracy Movement and Response 1986-1987

"Chinese intellectuals should straighten up their bent backs. They should not be completely obedient to the higher level or wait for orders from above when dealing with things."

Fang Lizhi, 11/86 speech quoted LA Times, 1/4/87, I-13.

"Our means of expressing criticism should be in the interests of stability and unity. Otherwise good things will turn bad."

Fei Xiaotong, author of Peasant Life in China, 1936, quoted in LA Times, 12/27/86
I-10.

"No democracy, no modernization."

Placards in Shanghai marches, reported in LA Times, 12/26/86, I-12.

"We should bravely study and attract the advanced management techniques and technology of the West, but we absolutely cannot do a complete Westernization. Western things are not all good. Their electoral system and elections, in fact, are controlled behind the scenes by a handful of financial monopolies."

Workers' Daily quoted an engineer, 12/25/86.

"Without Democracy, There Is No China."

"Abolish Authoritarianism."

"The Marcos Government Was Overthrown by a Mass Uprising of the People."

Posters at Beijing universities, reported in LA Times, 12/31/86, I-17.

"They believe they know a lot, but in fact they know little.... They are the sons and daughters of new China. We take great care of them. God allows young people to make mistakes. When we were young, we basically did the same thing."

He Dongchang, vice-min. of Education, in LA Times, 12/31/86, I-17.

"We must insist upon the people's democratic dictatorship, enhance our vigilance a hundredfold and expose and punish those who try to destroy the socialist system..."

"We intend to warn the small group of elements: You will be seriously punished if you dare to make trouble in the capital of our socialist country."

People's Daily commentary, quoted in LA Times, 1/1/87, I-5.

"Wang Shouxin's [a local party secretary who stole more than \$150,000 of public money] corruption has been exposed, but how about the social conditions that allowed Wang to exist? Have there been any changes?"

Liu Binyan, People or Monsters?, 1979.

"Literature is a mirror. When the mirror shows us things in life that are not very pretty, or that fall short of our ideals, it is wrong to blame the mirror. Instead we should root out and destroy those conditions that disappoint us... Smashing a mirror is no way to make an ugly person beautiful, nor is it a way to make social problems evaporate."

Liu Binyan, twice expelled from the CCP, in LA Times, 4/4/88, V-2.

"I don't think Lei Feng is at all a perfect model. He has serious, even fatal defects. His imperfection lies in the fact that he only follows orders from above."

Liu Binyan, A Second Kind of Loyalty

"As far as I know, no writers will oppose the government, because all writers agree that the present government is a good one."

Liu Binyan, 1985 press conference after being named writers assoc. v-p.

"We should prepare more knives and forks, buy more plates and sit around the table to eat

Chinese food in the Western style, that is each from his own plate. By doing so, we can avoid contagious diseases."

Hu Yaobang, Long March veteran and party sec. 1981-87

"No Party member is allowed to advocate bourgeois liberalization... There will never be freedom to air different views as regards issues concerning the need to uphold the four cardinal principles... All Party members are equal before the disciplinary board of the Party."

Xinhua commentary the day before Hu was sacked as gen. secretary, quoted in LA Times, 1/15/87, I-11.

Deng Xiaoping on Suppression of Tiananmen Square Protest

[Excerpts from speech made to commanders of martial law troops on June 9, 1989. Source: Beijing Review, 32.28 (July 10, 1989): 18-21.]

"You comrades have been working hard..."

"This storm was bound to happen sooner or later. As determined by the international and domestic climate, it was bound to happen and was independent of man's will... It has turned out in our favor, for we still have a large group of veterans who have experienced many storms and have a thorough understanding of things... Although some comrades may not understand this now, they will understand eventually and will support the decision of the Central Committee."

"The April 26 editorial of the People's Daily classified the problem as turmoil... The main difficulty in handling this matter lay in that we had never experienced such a situation before, in which a small minority of bad people mixed with so many young students and onlookers..."

"The key point is that they wanted to overthrow our state and the Party. Failing to understand this means failing to understand the nature of the matter..."

"The US berates us for suppressing students. But when they handled domestic student unrest and turmoil [during the 1960s and 1970s] didn't they send out police and troops to arrest people and cause bloodshed? They were suppressing students and the people, but we are putting down a counter-revolutionary rebellion. What qualifications do they have to criticize us?"

"They had two main slogans: to overthrow the Communist Party and to topple the socialist system. Their goal was to establish a bourgeois republic entirely dependent on the West..."

"What is important is that we should never change China back into a closed country..."

"By the way, I would say that in the future, we must make sure that our weapons are not taken away from us."

"In a word, this was a test, and we passed... When I talked about passing muster, I was referring to the fact that the army is still the people's army..."