



□ 485 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10017-6104 TEL (212) 972-8400 FAX (212) 972-0905
□ 1522 K Street, NW, Suite 910, Washington, DC 20005-1202 TEL (202) 371-6592 FAX (202) 371-0124

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UPDATE ON ARRESTS IN CHINA No.3¹

INTRODUCTION

Starting in January 1990, Chinese officials began releasing dissidents arrested in connection with the spring 1989 pro-democracy movement, but the repression is by no means over. Public Security Minister Tao Siju told Hong Kong reporters that the nation-wide search for "wanted" dissidents would remain in effect (*Hong Kong Standard*, March 27, 1991). Arrests, trials and sentencing continue, and Chinese authorities still refuse to issue a list of those detained, arrested, tried or released. Only a handful of released activists - most of them internationally known - have been officially identified. Of the thousands arrested since June 1989, fewer than 1000 have been publicly identified, and few of those identifications come from official sources.

Asia Watch has only recently become aware of certain arrests that may have taken place as long ago as June 1989. In many cases, the first indication that an arrest had occurred was official acknowledgment of trial and sentencing. A worker awaiting sentencing in Beijing for unspecified "counterrevolutionary" involvement was previously unknown to human rights organizations and even now there is no information about his background or activities during the 1989 pro-democracy movement. Workers in particular have had little opportunity to make their arrests known outside China. In another instance, a dissident released in Beijing on March 8, 1991 were never officially listed as in detention. All this suggests that the true figure for the total arrested after June 4 may be much higher than earlier estimates.

¹ The current series of updates began with Update No.1, January 30, 1991. The updates should be read in conjunction with two 1990 Asia Watch reports, *Punishment Season and Repression in China Since June 4, 1989: Cumulative Data* and with a shorter report, "Rough Justice in Beijing," issued in January 1991.

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CONDITIONAL RELEASES

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EXECUTIONS

■ HAN Weijun, 24, was executed on March 14, 1991, for burning an army personnel carrier in June 1989. This marks the first execution for involvement in the pro-democracy protests since the early months of the government crackdown. A large notice outside of the Beijing Intermediate People's Court reported that Han had committed "serious crimes." The notice bore a large red check mark, indicating that the death sentence had been carried out. Han was described as a paroled robber whose actions linked him to the "counterrevolutionary rebellion" of June 1989 (*South China Morning Post*, March 19, 1991).

SENTENCES ANNOUNCED

Hong Kong and Macao Chinese

■ LUO Haixing, LI Peicheng and LI Longqing,² all Hong Kong residents, were tried by the Guangzhou Intermediate People's Court on February 26, 1991 for "harboring criminal elements."³ On March 4, 1991, the court sentenced Luo and Li Peicheng 1991 to five years imprisonment and Li Longqing to four years. Although the court said Luo's "cooperative" attitude mitigated his punishment, the five year sentence was unexpectedly harsh when compared to those of some prominent pro-democracy activists.⁴

The Guangdong Higher People's Court rejected Luo Haixing's appeal on March 22, but did not give reasons or notify his family (*South China Morning Post*, March 28, 1991). Luo's wife said the purpose of the appeal was not to obtain a more lenient sentence but to expose the irregularities of legal procedures in China (*South China Morning Post*, March 27, 1991). Luo has appealed his case to the Supreme People's Court.

The trial court ruled that all three were part of an "underground railroad" effort to assist the unsuccessful escape of Chen Ziming, recently condemned to 13 years' imprisonment by Beijing as one of the organizers of the democracy movement. Luo allegedly carried information between persons in Guangzhou and the Hong Kong Alliance in Support of the Patriotic Democratic Movement in China (an umbrella organization for pro-democracy groups in Hong Kong) as to Chen Ziming's hiding place. Li Peicheng and Li Longqing, allegedly paid by the underground railroad to help dissidents evade a nationwide dragnet, were accused of acting on Luo's information to try and assist Chen Ziming.

The trials lasted a total of two and a half hours. The authorities did not notify family members in time to attend, but Luo's younger brother, who happened to be in Guangzhou, was able to hear the proceedings from the public gallery. It was the first occasion the brothers had to see each other since Luo was picked up on October 14, 1989, by border guards in Shenzhen. He was not formally arrested until December 18, 1989. In spite of repeated requests from the Hong Kong government, the authorities have allowed Luo no visits. His wife received her first letter from him in August 1990. According to Chinese authorities, Hong Kong residents arrested in China for criminal offenses should be dealt with in

² In Cantonese, Lo Hoi-sing, Lai Pui-sing, and Li Lung-hing (*Hong Kong Standard*, March 5, 1991).

³ See News From Asia Watch, "The Case of Wang Juntao," appendices VI and VII, (March 11, 1991), reprinting the bill of prosecution and verdict against Luo Haixing, Li Peicheng and Li Longqing.

⁴ Compare, for example, the release of Xie Zhenrong (Tse Chun-wing), a Hong Kong resident arrested for assisting student leader Zheng Xuguang's unsuccessful escape, or the four year sentence of Wang Dan, formerly number one on the list of "most wanted" student leaders (*Updates* Nos. 1 & 2).

accordance with Chinese Law. Luo, who holds a Hong Kong British passport, is originally from Guilin, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region.

Luo's case was originally handled not by the Guangzhou Public Security Bureau, but by a special group sent to Guangzhou directly by the Ministry of State Security to track down "pro-democrats on the run" (*Ming Bao*, December 22, 1989; in *FBIS* December 22). All three cases were handed back to the Guangzhou authorities sometime in April 1990 (*Hong Kong Standard*, June 26, 1990; in *FBIS*, same date).

Luo was the Beijing representative of the quasi-governmental Hong Kong Trade Development Council in Beijing from 1986 until March 1989, when he began to operate his own import-export business. He is the son of Luo Chengxun (also known as Luo Fu), former editor-in-chief of the Hong Kong newspaper *Xin Wan Bao*. In 1983, Luo's father was sentenced by the Beijing Municipal Court to ten years' imprisonment for spying for the United States, but was quickly released and took up residence in Beijing. During this year's Chinese New Year festival, Luo Chengxun was refused permission to visit his family in Hong Kong.

Li Peicheng, 34, entered China on October 12, 1989 and was picked up in Zhanjiang, Guangdong Province on the following day. According to the bill of prosecution, his arrest was authorized on December 16, 1989 and he was formally arrested on December 18. Li, a high school graduate and worker is originally from Dongwan in Guangdong province. Li Longqing, 33, originally from Guangzhou, is a junior high school graduate and worker. He was detained on December 5, 1989 in Shenzhen. On January 25, 1990 his arrest was authorized, on February 12 he was formally arrested.

Students and intellectuals

■ LI Guiren, 48, was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for counterrevolutionary propaganda and incitement. He was the editor-in-chief of Hua Yue Publishing House in Shaanxi Province, which published essays by Liu Binyan before the authorities shut it down. Li was arrested in June 1989, tried on March 1, 1990 by the Xi'an First Criminal Court and sentenced in February 1991. He has appealed (*South China Morning Post*, March 19, 1991). Li was arrested for trying to organize a strike of publishing house employees (*Shaanxi Legal Weekly*, July 12, 1989). He allegedly called a meeting the day after the June 4 military crackdown in Beijing, saying that "hundreds of thousands of soldiers had perpetrated a terrible massacre in Beijing" and urging workers to sign a protest declaration and go on strike. Li reportedly also was accused of organizing four demonstrations during the month of May 1989, writing "provocative" slogans calling for the removal of Li Peng and Deng Xiaoping, and "promoting chaos." He was formally dismissed from his post on June 25, 1989. In Li's defense statement, published recently in *China Spring* (September 1990), the magazine of the U.S.-based *Chinese Alliance for Democracy*, he did not deny any of the activities attributed to him during the pro-democracy movement but emphatically denied he ever intended to overthrow the government of the People's Republic of China.

■ MA Hongliang, a leader of the Shaanxi Province Students Autonomous Federation and a student at the Xi'an Institute of Metallurgy was sentenced to four years' imprisonment for counterrevolutionary propaganda and incitement (*South China Morning Post*, March 19, 1991). He was arrested on June 7, 1989. A *Xi'an Radio* broadcast on June 12, 1989, suggests that Ma engaged only in peaceful protests. He allegedly incited people against the provincial government, plotted to set up a radio station at Tiancheng Square in Xi'an to spread rumors and "poison people's minds," sabotaged traffic and instigated students and shopkeepers to strike. Ma was active in Xi'an from mid-April, 1989 on.

- ZHANG Yafei,⁵ 24, a graduate of Qinghua University, was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for leading a counterrevolutionary group and editing the underground publication *Iron Current*, which attacked the Tiananmen Square crackdown. Zhang was arrested last September and had a preliminary hearing at the Beijing People's Intermediate Court on February 5, 1991 (*South China Morning Post*, March 19, 1991).

Workers⁶

- GAO Zhiyuan was sentenced to death with a two-year reprieve by a Beijing court (*Amnesty International ASA 17/07/91*). The date of his sentencing is not known. Gao surrendered to police in Lanzhou, Gansu Province, after a television report showed him burning a bus in Tiananmen Square during the 1989 demonstrations there.
- PENG Ditang, a factory worker and member of the Xi'an Independent Labor Union, was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for counterrevolutionary propaganda and incitement (*South China Morning Post*, March 19, 1991).

AWAITING SENTENCING

Students and intellectuals

- LIAN Danming, a student in Xi'an, is awaiting sentencing after court hearings (*South China Morning Post*, March 19, 1991).

Workers

- HAN Binglin was tried by the Beijing People's Intermediate Court on March 8, 1991 on charges of counterrevolution, according to a *Shijie Ribao* report from Hong Kong (March 9, 1991).

APPEALS

Hong Kong and Macao Chinese

- LUO Haixing (see p.3), a Hong Kong businessman has appealed the five-year sentence he received on March 4 1991 for "concealing counterrevolutionary elements" to the Supreme People's Court (*Hong Kong Standard*, March 5, 1991).⁷
- The family of CHEN Ziming, who was sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment as an alleged

⁵Zhang Yafei was listed as a worker, Zhang Yawei, on *Update* No.2. The correct spelling of his name is still unknown.

⁶For further information on the sentencing of workers who participated in the 1989 democracy movement, see the March 1991 Asia Watch report, "Chinese Workers Receive Harsh Sentences."

⁷ See p.3 above.

organizer of the democracy movement, has petitioned the National People's Congress and the courts for a review of his case. The Supreme Court already turned down his appeal and that of WANG Juntao (*South China Morning Post*, March 28, 1991). The High Court's "final verdict" on Wang's appeal said that the government had proven its case. Sources said that the "final verdict" was almost identical to the original verdict (*South China Morning Post*, February 23, 1991).

ARRESTS

Students and intellectuals

- CHEN Pokang, about 30 years old, a teacher from Zhongshan University in Guangzhou, was arrested in August 1989 and charged in February 1990 with writing a "counterrevolutionary proclamation." Chen was honorary president of the Students Autonomous Federation at his university (*Amnesty International*, ASA 17/66/90).
- GUO Yue, HE Libin and ZHANG Jianchao, all probably students, were accused of helping plan a memorial meeting in Wuhan on June 4, 1989, commemorating those who died that day in Beijing (*Amnesty International*, ASA 17/66/90). The arrest and sentencing of Li Haitao in connection with the same event was previously reported by Asia Watch. MIN Yue was also involved with Li and was arrested for making counterrevolutionary speeches in the streets of Wuhan with him. Arrest dates are unknown.
- WANG Xuezhi, from the Beijing College of Chinese Traditional Medicine, was arrested in Beijing in June 1989 while he was trying to help a wounded student. There are no further details (*Amnesty International* ASA 17/73/90).
- YU Shiwen, a 23-year-old philosophy student at Zhongshan University in Guangzhou, was arrested in mid-July 1989 for allegedly "creating turmoil." As chairman of the Zhongshan University student association, he organized demonstrations on campus and in Guangzhou from April to June, 1989.

Workers

- FENG Zechao, ZHOU Yiming and LU Zhanbiao were arrested in Guangzhou prior to July 20, 1989 for counterrevolutionary activities. Feng and Zhou allegedly engaged in counterrevolutionary propaganda. Lu, a 30-year-old independent businessman, is accused of engaging in "counterrevolutionary disturbances" (*Amnesty International* ASA 17/66/90).

Tibetan Activists

- NGAWANG SAMTEN (Ngag-dbang Bsam-gtan), a 25 year-old monk from Drepung ('Bras-spungs) Monastery, was arrested on March 1 or 2, 1991 for putting up pro-independence posters inside the monastery. A native of Lhundrup county, Ngawang Samten entered Drepung a year ago.

HOUSE ARRESTS

Government officials

- LIANG Xiang, a former governor of Hainan Province and a vice-secretary of the Chinese

(March 1, 1991), investigation into his activities is incomplete. Liang was arrested on alleged corruption charges, however it is believed his detention stems from his close connection with Zhao Ziyang, the deposed Secretary-general of the communist party (*Shijie Ribao*, March 1, 1990). Liang, who has high blood pressure and other ailments is currently in Fanyu Hospice in Guangdong Province.

RELEASES

Students and intellectuals

- DONG Xiang, a friend of Wang Peigong with whom he was arrested, was released on March 8, 1991 (*AP*, March 9, 1991). According to the report, Wang's wife had given money to Dong to help student leader Wuer Kaixi, now in France, to escape. Wuer Kaixi had stayed briefly at Dong's house.
- DUAN Xiaoguang has been released from prison according to an Asia Watch source and will, for the present, continue to work at Nanjing University's Department of Philosophy where he is an Associate Professor. Duan, in his early 30's, was seized by the authorities in Shenzhen around August 30, 1989 while attempting to leave for Hong Kong. His arrest was ordered directly by the Ministry of Public Security in Beijing. On September 22 at 9:00 p.m., the authorities searched his room at the university without warning. Although Duan was never formally charged, the authorities considered him one of the organizers and planners of the peaceful Nanjing demonstrations, and more than just a local leader. During his incarceration Duan was held incommunicado at the Nanjing Detention Center.
- FANG Ke, 33, was released in October or November 1990 (*Amnesty International ASA 17/07/91*). According to a Beijing television broadcast (*FBIS*, June 15, 1989), he turned himself in to authorities in his native city of Wuhan on June 12. Fang, a member of the Standing Committee of the Beijing Students Autonomous Federation, was a doctoral candidate in philosophy at Beijing People's College and a teacher at a university in Wuhan.
- GAO Yu, Deputy Chief Editor of *Economics Weekly*, arrested on June 3, 1989, was released on August 28, 1990 (*Amnesty International ASA 17/73/90*).
- HU Ji, who allegedly gave speeches in Xin Cheng Square in Xi'an in support of demonstrating students, was released in late November 1990 (*Amnesty International ASA 17/07/91*). He reportedly was arrested on September 16, 1989, and was held incommunicado in a building which was not a regular prison. Ji had been a professor of history at the Communication University in Xi'an and before that at Northwest University. He is the author of two books on Shaanxi Province history and served as Secretary of the Tang Dynasty Historical Studies Society.
- LI Yuqi, probably a student leader, was acquitted on January 5, 1991 (*Amnesty International ASA 17/08/91*).
- TIAN Qing, distinguished music historian and Deputy Director of the Research Institute of Music in the Chinese Academy of Arts, Beijing, was released in early 1991. He was arrested on September 23, 1989, according to an Asia Watch source, and held incommunicado in the Erlong Detention Center in western Beijing. Tian, a Tianjin native in his early 40's, had been under investigation since he was denounced for giving a lecture on June 4, 1989 at the Shanghai Music Conservatory describing the events he witnessed in Beijing on June 3. No information about the conditions of his release are available.
- TU Haiying, a 46-year-old lecturer at the Acoustics Research Institute of the Shaanxi Teacher's University and a Xi'an intellectual, was recently released (*South China Morning Post*, March 19, 1991), he

had been arrested in July or August 1989 for making speeches at student rallies, writing and posting big-character posters on the campus and serving as an inspiration to students in Xi'an.

■ WANG Peigong was released on March 8, 1991 (*Reuters*, March 10, 1991) after spending almost 21 months in isolation in Qincheng prison. According to reports, the 46-year-old renowned playwright is tired and extremely thin. Arrested in Guiyang, probably on June 30, 1989, Wang was reportedly charged on June 7, 1990, with "counterrevolutionary activity and the harboring of student leader Wuer Kaixi" (Hong Kong Asia Television, June 7, 1990; in *FBIS*, same date). Police allegedly discovered documents belonging to Wuer Kaixi at Wang's Beijing home. Although Wang was never tried, a police report at his release said that investigation had established his guilt. He was exempted from prosecution because of his "good attitude" (*AP*, March 9, 1991). Wang, who publicly renounced his membership in the Communist Party to show support for the democracy movement, wrote a play called "WM" about the Cultural Revolution. In it he described the ordeal of young urban men and women sent to the countryside to learn from the peasants. The work was banned in 1985 and according to a *World Journal* report (February 27, 1991), the propaganda department has told all news media to continue to criticize "WM."

■ WANG Zhihong, 32, formerly Deputy Director of the Center for Human Resource Evaluation in Beijing, was released in mid-November 1990 after being held for a year without charge. She was arrested in November 1989 near Guangzhou during an escape attempt with her husband, Chen Ziming, who was recently sentenced to 13 years' imprisonment.⁸ Eight months pregnant at the time of her arrest, Wang gave birth prematurely in prison. Her child did not survive.

■ WU Rangyuan, 46, formerly a research fellow at the Chinese Academy of Social Science, Institute of Semiconductivity, was released sometime before August 22, 1990 (*Amnesty International ASA 17/93/90*). She was arrested on June 9, 1989, for allegedly spreading rumors and instigating people to burn vehicles in Beijing in early June 1989 (*Beijing Ribao*, June 17, 1989).

■ YE Maoqiang, a leading member of the Shanghai Students Autonomous Federation and a lecturer at the Fudan University Center of Culture and Media Studies, was released on August 15, 1990 (*Amnesty International ASA 17/73/90*). Considered by many the most influential intellectual leader of the democracy movement in Shanghai, Ye organized an intellectual group, "Seven Gentlemen of Fudan" (*Fudan Qi Junzi*), to prepare the groundwork for the 1989 pro-democracy movement there. He was arrested on July 21, 1989.

■ YU Guolu, a 33-year-old student member of the Research Institute for Economic, Technological and Social Development at Beijing University, was released in mid-November 1990 (*Amnesty International ASA 17/73/90*). He was first briefly detained in June 1989, then re-arrested in November 1989, after the arrest of his brother-in-law Chen Ziming.

■ ZHANG Zhong, a retired deputy factory manager and amateur history writer, was released on August 9, 1990 (*Amnesty International ASA 17/73/90*). He had been detained on September 22, 1989 for "shelter and investigation", a form of detention which does not require charges. Zhang allegedly had written an "anonymous" letter to the Communist Party in which he made "serious political mistakes."

■ Four students from Shanghai's Fudan University reportedly were released, according to the school's vice-president (*Hong Kong Standard*, December 19, 1990). All were accused of engaging in "counterrevolutionary criminal activities", such as setting up roadblocks. No additional information is available.

⁸For background on Chen Ziming, see "Rough Justice in China."

- Five pro-democracy activists were released sometime during the week of March 3, 1991 (*AP*, March 9, 1991). The report to *AP* came from the sources who reported the releases of Wang Peigong and Dong Xiang. There is no additional information available.

CONDITIONAL RELEASES

Students and intellectuals

- LUO Anyi, deputy head of the director's office in the Research Institute for the Reform of the Economic Structure [RIRES] and in charge of its personnel files, was released around September 1990 from Qincheng prison. YANG Xiao, another RIRES member, was released around the same time. Both men are now under house arrest (*Amnesty International ASA 17/66/91*). Luo, who joined RIRES in 1985, had previously worked in Guizhou Province. During the Cultural Revolution he was a Red Guard "faction leader" and was subsequently imprisoned for ten years. He reportedly was arrested in 1976 after the first Tiananmen Incident and then again in 1980-81. Yang, a 28-year-old graduate of Beijing University's sociology department and secretary to Chen Yizi, performed work at RIRES that brought him into close contact with students.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Democracy Wall Activists

- WEI Jingsheng, the renowned Democracy Wall dissident who will be imprisoned twelve years on March 29, 1991, went on a hunger strike on or around February 4 to protest his treatment (*South China Morning Post*, March 1, 1991). He will only drink liquids provided by his family. According to the report, "Ordinary police and prison guards have no authority over him...(he) is watched over by a team of special security officers. (His) condition is reported directly to Deng Xiaoping's office". Wei reportedly is now in a prison in rural Hebei and is assigned to work in the surrounding salt fields. Prior to the move, he was in solitary confinement in Qinghai Province.

Catholics and Protestants

- SHA Zhimei, a 72-year-old woman and active member of an independent Protestant church, is experiencing increasing health problems as a result of prison conditions. She has been incarcerated in Shanghai since her arrest on June 3, 1987. In November 1987, she was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for various "counterrevolutionary" offenses, including encouraging her son to escape. She was imprisoned during the Cultural Revolution for religious activism. Her son was wanted by the police for demonstrating for religious freedom in November 1986, and for publishing a family history. Reports of Sha's ill-treatment have arisen several times, including reports she was beaten at the time of her arrest, and several times since 1987 for failing to complete her work assignment when she was ill (*Amnesty International ASA 17/24/91*).

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Asia Watch is an independent organization that monitors and promotes human rights throughout Asia. The Chair is Jack Greenberg. The Vice-Chair is Orville Schell. The Executive Director is Sidney Jones. The Washington Director is Mike Jendrzejczyk. Asia Watch is part of Human Rights Watch, which includes Africa Watch, Americas Watch, Helsinki Watch, Middle East Watch and the Fund for Free Expression.