

turmoil and that we must rely on law to bring a halt to it as soon as possible.

Deng Xiaoping: I completely agree with the Standing Committee's decision. This is no ordinary student movement. The students have been raising a ruckus for ten days now, and we've been tolerant and restrained. But things haven't gone our way. A tiny minority is exploiting the students; they want to confuse the people and throw the country into chaos. This is a well-planned plot whose real aim is to reject the Chinese Communist Party and the socialist system at the most fundamental level. We must explain to the whole Party and nation that we are facing a most serious political struggle. We've got to be explicit and clear in opposing this turmoil.

Li Peng: ... Shouldn't we organize an editorial in the People's Daily right away, in order to get the word out on what Comrade Xiaoping has said?

That afternoon the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Central Committee General Office telegraphed the decision to Zhao Ziyang, party general secretary, who was on an ill-timed official visit to North Korea. Zhao wired back: "I completely agree with the policy decision of Comrade Xiaoping with regard to the present problem of turmoil."

Excerpt from the People's Daily,

April 26, 1989, editorial, "The necessity for a clear stand against turmoil":

This is a well-planned plot to confuse the people and throw the country into "turmoil." Its real aim is to reject the Chinese Communist Party and the socialist system at the most fundamental level. This is a most serious political struggle that concerns the whole Party and nation.

The editorial re-ignited the waning student movement, which mounted huge next-day demonstrations in major cities. In Beijing, 50 thousand students from many campuses marched, carrying banners, including one bearing quotations from Deng Xiaoping and Lenin favoring democracy. With irony, they sang the song "Without the Chinese Communist Party There Would Be No New China," and they elicited tears from bystanders when they shouted, "Mama, we haven't done anything wrong."

In the three days after publication the State Security Ministry and Xinhua News Agency sent 36 reports to Zhongnanhai on the reactions of various social strata. Many citizens felt that the editorial was too harsh-that it "defined the nature of the incident at too high a level of seriousness" and that it was not helpful for resolving the problem. The reports described widespread sympathy and protective feelings for the students among university presidents and other high-ranking party and administrative officials. One official revealed that on his campus, two-thirds of faculty members were refusing to attend meetings to study the editorial. Others pointed out that the blame for the demonstrations ultimately lay in the failings of the party itself, without which the students would have no need to protest.