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PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA: - Wang Youcai - Ren Wanding

> Zhang Ming Zheng Xuguang - Guo Haifeng Ma Shaofang

Kong Xianfeng Chen Tao Zhang Qianjin Li Chenghuan

Yao Junling

Xue Jianan

At least 14 dissidents, including four student leaders, went on trial in Beijing in the past few days for their role in the 1989 pro-democracy movement. Most were detained since June 1989 and had been held without charge until recently.

Nine of them were convicted of "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation" by Beijing Intermediary People's Court after a two-hour trial on 5 January 1991. Seven of the nine were sentenced to prison terms ranging from two to four years, while two others were "exempted from criminal punishment".

Four student leaders, who were on a list of 21 "most wanted" students issued by the government after the 4 June 1989 crackdown, were among those sentenced on 5 January: Wang Youcai, a 24-year-old physics graduate from Beijing University, was sentenced to four years' imprisonment; Zhang Ming, aged 25, from Qinghua University, and Ma Shaofang, aged 26, from the Beijing Film Institute, each received a three-year sentence; and Zheng Xuguang, 21, from Beijing's Aeronautics University, was sentenced to two years' imprisonment. Zhang Ming and Zheng Xuguang were among a group of detainees against whom trial proceedings started in November 1990 (see UA 485/90, ASA 17/71/90, 30 November 1990).

Three other defendants were sentenced on 5 January: Kong Xianfeng to three years' imprisonment, and Zhang Qianjin and Xue Jianan to two years each. Two students, Li Yuqi and Pang Zhihong were exempted from criminal punishment because they had shown "willingness to repent", according to a report on the trial by the official New China News Agency (NCNA).

NCNA reported that some 60 "local residents" had reportedly attended the trials, though according to other sources they were given admission tickets in advance. The relatives of some of the defendants were present, but foreign journalists were denied access to the court. The defendants were reportedly restricted in their choice of lawyer and had to submit their defence statement to the court in advance for approval.

Trial proceedings against Ren Wanding, a 45-year-old accountant and veteran human rights activist, started in Beijing on 8 January 1991. Hearings of his case continued on 9 and 10 January, but no details of the proceedings are known. Arrested in June 1989, he was charged nine months later with "counter-revolutionary propaganda and agitation". Ren Wanding has previously been in prison for 4 years for taking part in a previous democracy movement (see UA 485/90).

Four other people charged with "counter-revolutionary sabotage" also went on trial in Beijing on 9 January for their activities during the 1989 protests. They include Guo Haifeng, a student leader from Beijing University, who was on the government list of 21 "most wanted" student leaders. At one time the secretary general of the Beijing Students Autonomous Federation, Guo Haifeng had been involved in the student movement from the beginning and was a member of the hunger strike group set up during the occupation of Tiananmen Square. He is not known to have used or advocated violence prior to the army intervention on 3 June 1989. According to official sources, he was arrested by martial law troops during the night of 3 to 4 June 1989 while allegedly trying to set fire to an army armoured vehicle. Sources who know Guo Haifeng doubt the validity of this accusation. Guo was reportedly badly beaten after his arrest.

Three other people, identified as Yao Junling, Chen Tao and Li Chenghuan, also face trial on the same charge as Guo Haifeng. "Counter-revolutionary sabotage" carries a minimum sentence of 10 years' imprisonment for serious cases, or at least three years in "relatively minor" cases. These trials have not yet been concluded.

There has been, as yet, no news about the trials of other student leaders and intellectuals who were charged recently with "counter-revolutionary" offences (see UA 485/90, and UA 487/90, ASA 17/72/90, 3 December 1990), though it is believed they will go on trial before the end of February 1991.

Amnesty International is concerned that some of the detainees are prisoners of conscience held for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights and that those sentenced recently were denied fair and open trials in accordance with international standards for fair trials.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Telexes/faxes/airmail letters:

- expressing concern that Wang Youcai, Zhang Ming, Ma Shaofang, Zheng Xuguang and Ren Wanding are held for the peaceful exercise of fundamental human rights, and urging the authorities to review their cases and release them unconditionally;
- expressing concern that the recent trials fail to meet international standards for fair trial and urging the authorities to make public a full transcript of the trial and evidence on which the charges are based;
- urging the authorities to ensure that the current and future trials are open to the general public and conducted according to international standards for fair trial, and to allow international observers to attend the trials.

APPEALS TO:

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(Please forward to Cai Cheng Buzhang)

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COPIES TO: Diplomatic representatives of the PRC in your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 28 February 1991.