

On June 3 and 4, 1989, the Chinese People's Liberation Army brutally suppressed a prodemocracy demonstration in Beijing's Tiananmen Square, killing several hundred people. Students and workers demonstrating against Communist rule in China had occupied Tiananmen Square and other locations. When the demonstrations continued despite government condemnation, troops began to assemble around the square and, on the morning of June 4, moved into the square and opened fire.

The Tiananmen Square protest was the culmination of a series of demonstrations that had begun April 15 in memory of Hu Yaobang, former Communist party general secretary and reformer. By May these demonstrations had evolved into demands for the removal of Communist government officials. On May 4 approximately 100,000 students demonstrated in Beijing demanding democratic reforms. The demonstrations continued in spite of several government orders to cease and the declaration of martial law. Some students went on hunger strike. The suppression of the Tiananmen Square protest was followed by executions, trials, arrests, and censorship.