

Four: Villain Holding Sway

4: A Turf War



After the 4th Plenary Session of the CCP's 14th Congress, now that Jiang Zemin indeed secured his political power, he proceeded to get rid of dissidents. Beijing had always been the target of power struggles. Without controlling the Beijing Garrison, the Beijing Municipal Government and the Central Security Guard Regiment, a top CCP leader could never feel secure.



To gain full control of Beijing, Jiang Zemin felt his greatest obstacle was Chen Xitong. When Chen Xitong was Mayor of Beijing, the city successfully hosted the 1990 Asian Games, and completed constructions of the Second and Third Ring Roads, which considerably improved the city's infrastructures.

On the issues of the Tan An Men Massacre, Chen Xitong suggested bold actions, and acted with constancy.

He had a very good relationship with Deng Xiaoping.



After becoming China's emperor, Jiang Zemin spared no expense to remove anyone who had followed Zhao Ziyang.

Under the banner of "resisting an alleged attempt, by the West, quietly change China", Jiang Zemin began purging reformers, and those who had a close tie with Zhao Ziyang.

When Zhao fell from power, with him went Hu Qili, a member of the Politburo Standing Committee.



Rather than trying to avoid trouble, Chen Xitong arranged a secret meeting with Hu Qili and Wan Li at the Capitol hostel.

A Japanese reporter accidentally saw the three together, and leaked the news of the meeting. The affair took Jiang Zemin by surprise, and triggered much anger. Jiang was afraid that Deng Xiaoping would reinstate Hu Qili.



Chen Xitong advocated for Deng Xiaoping's reform.

This agitated Jiang Zemin. One time, Deng Xiaoping visited Capital Steel and gave a speech, in which he said whoever opposed him would have to step down. Upon hearing Deng's word, Jiang Zemin shuttered, almost as if thunder is rolling overhead. He then blamed Chen Xitong, for failing to

notify him of Deng's visit in advance. Chen replied that Jiang's general office itself should seek information about Deng's activity from Deng's office, rather than blame Beijing. Rebuffed and angered, Jiang Zemin grew more determined to remove Chen Xitong.



Chen had reasons to believe he stood above Jiang. When he saw Jiang Zemin played tricks and cheated his way to become the General Secretary, he was full of contempt. Thus in 1995, Chen Xitong blew the whistle on Jiang Zemin in a letter to Deng, co-signed by 7 provincial party heads. Deng Xiaoping didn't make any comment after reading the letter, and handed out to Bo Yibo, to let him see, what kind of a person he had recommended.



Bo Yibo was notorious among high ranking officials, for his maltreatment of others, opportunism, ingratitude, and duplicity. After reading the

accusatory letter from Chen Xitong, Bo Yibo instead, grew happy, that he had something he could hold against Jiang.

The letter, he believed, now gave him means to manipulate Jiang's power. He could now blackmail Jiang into promoting his son, Bo Xilai along with his trusted circle of friends.



Bo then summoned Jiang to his side, and handed him the letter, not saying a word. Jiang Zemin began to sweat and turned pale upon reading the accusatory letter, visibly shaken.

He pleaded with Bo Yibo to pitch-in a few good words to Deng Xiaoping on his behalf, allowing him to keep his post as General Secretary. Bo replied that he would do his best. He then instructed Jiang Zemin that in order to remove Chen Xitong, Jiang should begin with those positioned around him.



The off-springs of China's top officials were busy making fortunes, by way of loopholes in the current policies, while the aged Party bosses gradually lost their grip on power.

As long as Jiang held aloft the banner of fighting corruptions, the royal offsprings would swear their allegiance, so as to avoid punishment and prosecution, from police and judiciary and central disciplinary committee. The real purpose of Jiang Zemin's fighting corruption, was to get rid of dissidents.



In 1995, the former chairman of Capital Steel's board, Zhou Guanwu, fell from power, owing to financial misconduct.

His son, Zhou Beifang, was arrested and put in prison. The sentencing of Zhou Beifang even prompted Deng Xiaoping to contemplate: what would happen after he passed away, whether his children would stand to become the target of Jiang Zemin's purging?



In 1995, a case of bribery, involving secretaries in Beijing Municipal Government, was exposed. Jiang Zemin sent agents murdered deputy Mayor of Beijing, Wang Baosen, and claimed that Wang killed himself due to fear of exposure of his bribery scandals.



Next, Jiang made an all-out effort to take down Chen Xitong. Ultimately, what he used to incriminate Chen Xitong was a claim that Chen's corruption totaled 565 thousand Yuans. For a leader, at the Politburo level, such as Chen Xitong, the charge was really nothing in effect. A person could even make the case that Chen was relatively clean. Even so, Chen was sentenced for a 16-year prison term.



After the episode of fighting corruption was over and some of the posts left vacant, Jiang Zemin named his sons, Jiang Mianheng, Jiang Miankang, and his relatives, close and far-fetched alike, to fill in those vacancies to further consolidate his power base.



At the end of 2003, Chen Xitong was released on bail, so that he might undergo treatment for bladder cancer. Upon his release, Chen wrote a 50 thousand word plea letter, in which he accused Jiang Zemin of persecuted him politically. He also accused one of Jiang's sons, Jiang Mianheng, of having illegally transferred 50 million Yuans of state's fund. The CCP's corruption has penetrated every level of the system, top to bottom. Any of its crusade against corruption was merely a pretext, a weapon in its prolonged power struggle.