



*(The Statue of Liberty on Tiananmen Square prior to massacre. Photo courtesy 64memo.com)*

**June** 4th 2019 is the 30th anniversary of the bloody Tiananmen Square Massacre where an estimated 10,000 unarmed students and democracy activists were slaughtered by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) on the orders of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

Since that time, the CCP has desperately tried to conceal its crimes against humanity by strict censorship and intimidation of witnesses. Most of the Chinese population do not know the truth as the CCP tries to rewrite history.

### **Peaceful protest**

In the spring of 1989, college students in China led a movement calling for freedom and democracy. They asked for more transparency and less corruption from their government. Their peaceful protest soon gained widespread support, attracting intellectuals, journalists, and labor leaders. Millions of people in Beijing joined them, and almost all classes of Chinese society-from all over China-sympathized with their aims.

On the night of June 3, 1989, PLA tanks and troops swept into the square and opened fire on students.

The demonstrations of 1989 were an expression of a spirit that has always been present in the

people of China—a spirit that is present in all of humanity. The struggle that began in Tiananmen Square 29 years ago continues today.

It gave birth to an era of the rise of human rights consciousness among the Chinese people. For the first time in history, the Chinese government faced massive international criticism for its human rights record. Rising dissent at home and pressure from abroad have together helped bring about significant developments in the area of human rights, though much work remains to be done.

The success of the Beijing propaganda leaders in spoon-feeding "fake news" to the people of China is no more apparent than in the lack of a collective memory of what Time magazine referred to as "one of the most influential images of all time"—the photograph of "Tank Man." Time noted that "on the morning of June 5, 1989, (Associated Press) photographer Jeff Widener was perched on a sixth-floor balcony of the Beijing Hotel.

It was the day after the Tiananmen Square massacre, when Chinese troops attacked pro-democracy demonstrators camped on the plaza. As he photographed bloody victims, passers by on bicycles and the occasional scorched bus, a column of tanks began rolling out of the plaza. Widener lined up his lens just as a man carrying shopping bags stepped in front of the war machines, waving his arms and refusing to move. The tanks tried to go around the man, but he stepped back into their path, climbing atop one briefly. Widener assumed the man would be killed, but the tanks held their fire. Eventually the man was whisked away, but not before Widener immortalized his singular act of resistance."

Widener later commenting in 2014 on the photo to Mother Jones said "it's a bit like David and Goliath . . . it's so overpowering—it's like an ant against an elephant . . . Many people would like to know who he is, and personally, my feeling is that it's kind of neat that we don't know who he is, because he's sort of a representative of the unknown soldier." To this day the identity of Tank Man and his ultimate fate remain unknown.

Tank Man was certainly one of the most compelling photographs to come out of twentieth-century China. Yet, according to a story that made the rounds among congressional staff, a number of years later Democratic congressional leader Nancy Pelosi visited China with a copy of the iconic photograph. However, when she asked Chinese students in a meeting to identify the "Tank Man" figure, the students were clueless, thinking it was a photograph from Burma, Thailand or somewhere else overseas.

## Big brother

Interviews conducted by an Associated Press journalist on the June 4, 2014, anniversary date confirmed that Chinese students have learned virtually nothing of the Tiananmen events from their teachers or textbooks. Information on this seminal event in modern Chinese history has been successfully censored by Beijing authorities. Big Brother has successfully whitewashed Chinese history.

George Orwell, wrote in his classic work 1984 that "who controls the past controls the future." Never has this been truer than in the age of the internet. The communist leaders in Beijing, spiritual soul mates of Orwell's shadowy but omnipotent "Big Brother," realize the critical need to rewrite history for ideological purposes.

On this 30th anniversary of this massacre of innocents, it is more important than ever that the CCP is held to account by free societies everywhere and that its attempts to cover up are called out for what they are, so that the Chinese people can know the truth of this evil authoritarian regime.

[Warning: graphic photos](#)