

Standoff At Tiananmen

How Chinese Students Shocked the World with a Magnificent Movement for Democracy and Liberty that Ended in the Tragic Tiananmen Massacre in 1989.

Relive the history with this blog and my book, "Standoff at Tiananmen", a narrative history of the movement.

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Tuesday, December 23, 2008

Winston Lord Recalls His Days in China

In anticipation of the coming thirty-year anniversary of the normalization of relationship between China and the United States, the National Committee on United States - China Relations hosted a panel discussion, *Once Upon a Time in Beijing*, attended by five former U. S. Ambassadors to China, on December 9, 2008. The program was broadcast on C-SPAN and available on YouTube.

Near the beginning, at about the 11:45 mark, Ambassador Winston Lord, who was in China between 1985 and 1989, recalled one of his highlight/lowlight moment:

It was in June of 1988, a year before the Tiananmen, meeting with Chinese students, hundreds of them in what came to be known as the Democracy Salon and see their passion and their eagerness. It was a highlight, but also a lowlight. I have to elaborate this because a few days later Deng Xiaoping sent me a personal message to not to meet Chinese students.

The "Democracy Salon" he referred to here was the one organized by Liu Gang and had been in weekly session by that point. It was held at a grass lawn in Peking University and regularly attracted dozens to hundreds of students.

Winston Lord's visit to the Salon drew a big audience that day. Later in the day, a graduate student was killed in an apparent isolated violence off-campus. A small-scale student movement broke out for the occasion and Liu Gang, by the time no longer a student, was banned from the campus. The initial outdoor "Democracy Salon" was therefore interrupted but later resurrected by Wang Dan in his dormitory building.

In this panel discussion, Winston Lord proceeded to describe the incident when Fang Lizhi was forbid to attend a banquet hosted by visiting President George H. W. Bush as another lowlight of his time in Beijing.

Much later in the program, at about 1:07:30 mark, Winston Lord's successor James Lily gave an interesting account on the maneuvers involved in getting Fang Lizhi out of China after he had taken refuge in the American embassy following the Tiananmen massacre.

Recollections of 1989

Posted by Eddie Cheng at [10:22 PM](#)

Labels: [Democracy Salon \(民主沙龙\)](#), [Fang Lizhi \(方励之\)](#), [James R. Lilley](#), [Liu Gang \(刘刚\)](#), [Wang Dan \(王丹\)](#), [Winston Lord](#)

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About the book

In 1989, students in Beijing, China, rose against the tyranny of their own government. In the short span of two months, the spectacular movement evolved from petitioning to loyal opposition and then, in the face of military suppression, to seeking a change in the communist regime. This book is a narrative history of that magnificent time when they experienced joys of mass demonstrations, sorrow of a prolonged hunger strike, disillusionment with their own rank and file, and the deep anger over a massacre. It is a compelling human story that is being told for the first time.

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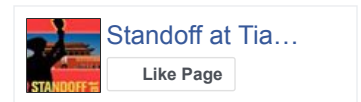
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