



Testimony of Liu Tianai, widow of Xiao Bo

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Xiao Bo, male, born in June 1962, was a native of Longshan County, Hunan Province. He was accepted to Beijing University in 1978 and received a master's degree in 1985. He stayed on there to teach in the chemistry department. He was killed in the late hours of June 3, at Muxudi. A bullet hit him in the left side of his chest and ripped through his aorta. His body was identified on June 5, at Fuxing Hospital. He was only 27 years old. His ashes are kept in Longshan, at his family's home.

As June Fourth victims' families, we have had to endure our suffering in silence for a long time....I only want to ask, "When can we get justice?"

Testimony of Liu Tianai, widow of Xiao Bo:

At the time of Xiao's death, I was in my hometown in Hunan, recuperating after the birth of twins. I received news that he and an old classmate of his had arranged to meet at Muxudi on the night of June 3. Xiao had heard that the situation there was very tense. As the advisor to all chemistry students in the class of 1989, he was concerned that some of his students might be in danger. According to the friend who accompanied him, shortly after they got to Muxudi, the street lights went out. The crowd became restless, and there was a burst of gunfire. The two got separated, and Xiao's friend ended up spending the night hiding under Muxudi bridge. When he went back to Beijing University, he discovered that Xiao Bo had not returned. He quickly gathered a group of students to search for him. They searched until June 5, when they found his body at Fuxing Hospital.

Xiao died of a gunshot wound to the chest. The bullet severed his aorta, causing him to lose a lot of blood. Fuxing Hospital had not made preparations to provide emergency care for gunshot victims, so there wasn't enough blood for transfusions. The hospital had only prepared large quantities of eyedrops and gauze, thinking that, at worst, the troops would use tear gas to disperse the crowds. A significant number of victims died in the same way that Xiao did, because there was not enough blood. A nurse at the hospital said that before he was shot, he had helped bring another victim to that very hospital for emergency treatment. The nurse said that she was very impressed by Xiao Bo, and never thought that he would be shot himself and be brought back to the hospital on a stretcher. Before he died, he kept his hand firmly pressed against his chest wound, trying to stop the bleeding. He also told the people around him that he had a pair of new-born twins, and asked people to tell Beijing University to look after them...

On June 16, in deep grief, I managed to hurry from my hometown in Hunan to Beijing. I was accompanied by Xiao's father, uncle and my younger brother. Two days later, we said our final farewells to him at Babaoshan. After the cremation, his ashes were placed at Laoshan Memorial Hall. Then in 1992, they were brought to his family's home in Hunan.

Xiao Bo's death struck me like a thunderbolt from nowhere. I had given birth to twins just 70 days earlier. In my state of sorrow and shock, I stopped lactating and soon after found out that my older child had developed a mild brain disorder. I searched everywhere for effective treatment, to little avail and great expense. I've suffered much hardship due to Xiao's death in the so-called "turmoil." The relevant offices at Beijing University ignored my requests to use one of their empty campus apartments while I sought medical care for my child. They also warned me not to take my children for walks in the campus grounds. If anyone asked, I was not to say that Xiao Bo was the father of my children. They also rejected my requests to receive the proper subsidies for my child's medical costs. Although I graduated from the Central Minorities University Department of Dance in 1987, I still have not been allowed to complete my application for cadre status because no one would verify that Xiao was "wrongfully killed." The whole situation causes me great sorrow.

It has been ten years since his death, and we still have not received an "explanation." As June Fourth victims' families, we have had to endure our suffering in silence for a long time. We never speak a single word about these painful matters, particularly not in front of our elders and children. I only want to ask, "When can we get justice?"

Liu Tianai
January 19, 1999