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This book covers Zhao Ziyang's assumption of acting General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party from the beginning of 1987, to the end of the Tiananmen Incident in 1989, when Zhao's tenure was virtually terminated. Research details the most dramatic social and political events in China, as well as the twist and turn, ebb and flow of Zhao's political career during these turbulent years. This project attempts to challenge the prevailing views that Zhao was a liberal-mind communist, and his downfall in 1989 was owing to his disagreement with the Chinese paramount leader Deng Xiaoping's decision to crack down on the protestors by force. Instead, the investigation argues that Zhao was a circumspect and opportunist politician, rather than an idealistic reformer.

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