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To The Editor:

The City's recent forcible clearance of Zuccotti Park was less brutal than Beijing's June 1989 military crackdown in Tiananmen Square. But there are striking parallels: protesters in both Beijing in 1989 and in New York City in 2011 occupied an important public space for seven weeks to voice disapproval of prevailing political and economic conditions. In both cases, diverse protesters, through signs, slogans, and artwork attempted to create a democratic alternative. The occupations, simply by enduring, garnered widespread support.

On June 4, 1989, tanks rolled over occupied tents and toppled a student-made "Goddess of Democracy" -- modeled after the Statue of Liberty. This past Tuesday morning in New York City, the NYPD no less effectively, albeit less violently, shut down a democratic expression of opposition to an economic/political system of, by and for elites, in the shadow of the Statue of Liberty, no less.

Jim Li

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Li, Jinjin (Jim Li) was an organizer and legal advisor of the Beijing Autonomous Workers Union in Beijing in 1989.

Theodore Cox is an immigration lawyer.