

## EIR Feature

# China struggle, a turning point for the world

by Linda de Hoyos

After an absence from public view of 21 days, Deng Xiao-ping, the “paramount” leader of the People’s Republic of China, reemerged on Chinese national television June 9 to extol the People’s Liberation Army troops who had carried out the slaughter at Tiananmen Square June 3-5. Deng was flanked by President Yang Shangkun, who, it was rumored by the media, had attempted his own power play against Deng; by Prime Minister Li Peng, the stolid Communist who publicly issued the order for martial law on May 19; Wan Li, chairman of the National People’s Congress who had assured President George Bush May 31 that he would return to ensure the moderates’ victory; senior Vice Premier Yao Yilin, a pro-Soviet ally of Li Peng; state Vice President Wang Zhen, another elderly veteran of the Long March; and various military chieftains.

Speaking as the *primus inter pares* of China’s collective leadership, Deng spoke of the massive slaughter in Beijing in the following terms: “Our officers and troops in the face of mortal danger did not forget the people, did not forget the guidance of the party, and did not forget the interests of the country. They [the unarmed student movement] wanted to transform the People’s Republic of China into a bourgeois republic. . . . Our basic direction, our basic strategy and policy will not change. China will move forward in a more stable, better and even quicker way after passing this test.”

With these words, Deng Xiao-ping took credit for the Beijing massacre, and placed his personal imprimatur on the repression and purges that are now beginning—contrary to all expectations of the Bush administration. The misperception that Deng would be found to be “above it all,” a mere unwilling or dying spectator of the week’s grisly events, has been the justification for the Bush administration’s morally tepid response to the slaughter of unarmed students and citizens in China.

In a display of wimpish equivocation, even at the point that the State Department had ordered all Americans out of the P.R.C., President Bush, who considers himself a personal friend of Deng, told a press conference June 8 that “What I



*The Chinese Revolution, 1989: centers of resistance to the Communist regime.*

want to do is preserve this relationship as best I can. We don't have totally normal relations unless there's recognition of the validity of the students' aspirations. And I think that will happen. What I want to do is take whatever steps are most likely to demonstrate the concern that America feels. And I think I've done that. I want them to know that I view this relationship as important and I view the life of every single student as important."

Bush may have been listening to the assurances of Soviet agent of influence Armand Hammer, who has said that once Deng reemerged, the violence would stop. According to sources at the Inter-Action Council of Helmut Schmidt and Henry Kissinger, "The U.S.-Soviet condominium is in full operation vis-à-vis China; the U.S. and the Soviets are in hourly contact on China—that is a fact." As one of the early implementers of Henry Kissinger's China card policy, operating in Beijing in 1972, Bush has a personal commitment to maintaining good relations, even at the cost of America's humiliation worldwide. Bush admitted he was not even able to get Deng or any other Chinese leader on the phone.

Both Moscow and Washington are clinging to a world strategic framework that no longer exists. For Moscow, after months of assiduous effort to woo the Chinese into agreement for normalization of relations, Gorbachov went to Beijing, only to have the entire summit blow up in his face at Tiananmen Square.

Aside from the foreign-policy debacle, Moscow is clearly quaking in its boots at the fear of the contagion of popular rage against Communism. European analysts, with the view

sian control, and in the East bloc, believe that the Chinese democracy movement will be sweeping its way the entirety of the Eurasian land mass. The impetus is the same in China as in the East bloc: Communism has lost its credibility; it cannot feed its people. Therefore, just as Bush has met with humiliation in regards to Beijing, unless he readjusts policy to the reality that is emerging, he will commit dangerous blunders of judgment that could bring the world to the brink of catastrophe.

### Coverup

In the service of Bush's commitment to maintain relations with Deng, the U.S. media has distorted news to fit the policy:

- The maximum number of people killed in the Beijing slaughter has been listed by the Western press as 3,000. Sources from Beijing, however, report the toll is far higher, closer to 20,000. Not only were the students killed who stayed in Tiananmen Square. Throughout the city, the military was involved in street fights, shooting on unarmed citizenry incensed with their attacks on the students. Bodies were cremated as quickly as possible, to hide the evidence, and therefore counts from hospitals are far below the actual number killed. In addition, the military pursued a "black list" of students in the universities, shooting them on sight, along with any witnesses. The killing in Beijing has slowed down as of June 10, but it continues.

- The Western media was also eager to play up divisions within the military, in the hopes that a rival faction to the

hardliners would rescue the situation. This is a chimera. Many hopes rested on the 38th Army, based in Beijing, which had refused to act against the students in the early days of martial law in May. However, in the meantime, the 38th was purged of all officers and soldiers who rejected orders to kill unarmed students, and the commander of that army is under house arrest.

To be sure, even after the purge of the Zhao Ziyang, reformist faction, there are sharp conflicts with the Communist leadership on many issues. These include conflicts among the military on such issues as: How far will China go toward the Soviet Union? Will the Soviet Union maintain its military enemy status for the military? How will economic reform continue, or will it be brought to a halt? How will or will not leadership attempt at all to alleviate the massive food problem China faces?

However, once the Communist leadership felt its existence threatened as the sole leadership and premier institution of the country, the Communist leadership closed ranks, like a herd of enraged dinosaurs. In the active leadership now are the octogenarians of Deng's stripe, who remember the many sacrifices they and their comrades suffered in order to achieve the People's Republic of China. To them, the wanton slaughter of students who pose "a mortal danger" to the regime is justified by the sacrifices of the past. And despite the fact that almost all of these leaders—including the most rabid "anti-bourgeois pollution" crusaders such as propaganda chief Bo Yibo—were victims of the Cultural Revolution, they have acted with insane ferocity against any who might want to achieve a "new China" of science and democracy.

These leaders are encompassed within the Central Advisory Commission, which includes President Yang Shangkun, who controls sections of the military through his brother and nephew; Chen Yun, the political godfather of Li Peng; former president Li Xiannian; Peng Zhen; Wang Zhen; and Deng Yingchao, widow of Chou En-lai and adoptive mother of Li Peng.

This grouping, as the collective leadership of China, will now unleash harsh repression throughout the country, as announced by Li Peng June 8. In his first televised appearance since his May 19 declaration of martial law, Li, wearing a Mao suit, congratulated the military: "On behalf of the State Council, I bring you greetings. I hope you will continue to work hard to preserve peace and order in the capital."

Earlier in the day, the Communist Party's "Discipline Inspection Commission," headed by the spartan security chief Qiao Shi, order the party's 47 million members to combat the "counter-revolutionary threat." The martial law command further decreed that the unofficial student and worker unions were "counter-revolutionary organizations," while the television repeatedly broadcast telephone numbers for finks to use to inform on union members or students. Then on June 9, the government warned student leaders to give themselves

up, or be killed.

But the real tone of this crackdown, which will reach millions of people, was indicated by Jia Zhijie, provincial governor of Gansu province, who proclaimed over Gansu radio that: "It is necessary to form a deterrent force against them, so that when a rat runs across the street, everybody cries, 'Kill it!'" He claimed that there was massive looting and rioting in the province, which he blamed on the "dregs of society." And in the city of Chengdu in Deng's home province of Sichuan, the imposition of martial law has resulted in the death of at least several hundred. Foreigners who have left the city describe piles of corpses in the city's hotels. Similar crackdowns are taking place in other cities—while the expected repression in Shanghai, where citizens and students control most of the streets, undoubtedly is awaiting the final negotiations of the army in Beijing.

### **A nation's suicide**

Despite their heritage as victims of the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese ruling gerontocracy will, perforce of its own commitment to power, revert to the suicidal campaigns of Mao's assault on the intelligentsia.

As one its first unified acts, the leadership ordered the shutdown of the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Despite its woeful inadequacy in shaping China's reformist economic and social policies, the message was clear: The intellectual elite of the country will be hounded out of any positions of power and purged, if not killed. The Beijing University has also been sealed off. The intelligentsia has now become the "dregs of society."

Second, the Chinese Communist leadership has not accorded foreigners any politeness. Beijing's major hotels have been shut down, after being shot at. To stop foreign reporters from viewing the city through their windows, the windows were boarded up. On June 7, a diplomatic compound was shot up. The chasing out of foreigners is reminiscent of the Boxer Rebellion of the dying Manchu dynasty. The mass expulsion of foreigners—mostly Americans and Japanese involved in joint economic and military ventures—further indicates that the Chinese leadership is willing to lose up to billions of dollars in investment, in order to defend its Neanderthal existence. Deng's "Four Modernizations" have been violently superseded by the "Four Cardinal Principles"—that is, the party, the party, the party, and the party.

This is a prescription for China's destruction. The dynamic now in operation was aptly described by Hong Kong reporter Marlowe Hood. The China crisis, said Hood on June 8, "conforms in most important ways, to the end-of-dynasty syndrome that has punctuated 3,000 years of Chinese history." This trend, he says, has been visible for at least two years, in the collapse of central authority, the growth of corruption, and "hundreds of incidents of peasant violence against local officials and attacks by workers on factory man-

agers. . . . Repeated efforts to reverse the process of disintegrating central power failed.”

If a more benign leadership is not soon installed, Hood warns, “the alternative is truly terrifying. If the government persists in trying to bludgeon the Chinese people into submission, China could face a large-scale popular rebellion. The full fury of China’s semi-literate population is still below the surface. Should it emerge in opposition to the government, it could engulf the country in violence far greater than Beijing’s.”

### **Light after the darkness?**

Deng’s reemergence to congratulate Beijing’s butchers brutally dampens hopes that the Communist leadership might

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choose sanity. Some facts of the Beijing slaughter indicate the truth of Hood’s perception of the fury in the population. On June 4, at the height of the massacre in Beijing, Mable Chan of Hong Kong Asia television reported this incredible description of unarmed citizens fighting the military: “Guarding the square . . . are two rows of troops and one rank of tanks. . . and facing them is a wall of human barricades, and every time after troops open fire at the people, they disperse, but after 10 to 15 minutes, people go back there again. They form the human barricade again and face the troops. They are defiant. . . . We are seeing very stubborn crowds here. They are shot, they disperse, they run away, and they go back, and this is an ongoing hourly routine.”

It is believed that many of the student leaders have fled Beijing, dispersing to the countryside and also to Shanghai, as they go deeply underground. From Taipei, Taiwan, General T’eng Chieh (see also below, page 35) commented on the prospects of the democracy revolution, in a speech June 5. There are four levels to the current revolution in the People’s Republic of China, he said.

The first level is the awakening of China, after years of disastrous conditions. The second level is the call for democracy and freedom by the students. These are only the surface

demonstration of what is really going on inside China.

The third level is the organization: The student leaders in China are very well organized. They are using the organizing methods of the Communists—against the Communists. Many of the leaders are very young, but they were five to six years old during the Cultural Revolution. They know how tightly, top down, the Communists organize their movements. Now the students are using these methods—for a very different cause. Each phase of the revolution is well-planned and understood by its leaders. First they called for democracy and freedom. Now, the revolution is out in the open, and the leaders are demanding the end of Communism.

The fourth level, General T’eng said, is the great change within China. All the controls of the Maoist period are gone. In those days, 10 years ago, Chinese society was totally controlled. There were only local newspapers; no national newspapers. If you lived in one city or town, you had no idea of what was happening in another city or town. You were tied to your “Iron Ricebowl.” You had to be registered at one job all your life, or you would not get food coupons, and you would not eat. There was no choice, there was no other way to get food. People also could not travel. To go from one place to another in China, you had to have a “passport.”

But now, this has broken down in the past decade. People travel, they read national and some international newspapers, the “Iron Ricebowl” is gone. There is no way the government can now re-impose such controls; the population will not go back to the past. China is profoundly changed, and this is the basis of the revolution.

### **International support required**

The government has not only lost credibility as capable of solving the nation’s problems; now, with the slaughter in Beijing, it has lost all moral authority. It is viewed by the populace as a fascist, authoritarian regime. However, if this revolution is to succeed, over the long-term, and China is to avert a long dark age, it will take massive international support “to keep the fires going,” said a Chinese veteran. That is the hope and expectation of the Chinese students who died at Tiananmen Square.

On June 1, two days before the slaughter that would kill her, student leader Cao Ling published a statement in the *Sing Tao Wan Pao*, on the earth-shattering importance of the student movement. Beijing, she predicted, would stage a “maniacal revenge on everyone concerned, because the Chinese have a strong mentality for revenge.” But she went on to state, “This movement’s great meaning is that it is a history chapter unfolded by the masses themselves. The darkest day hasn’t come yet. . . . Our generation needs the courage to die for our fight . . . but we won’t go after death, we must live to victory and see our republic come under a bright sky. This work must be continued for . . . this is a matter of life or death for our country.”