

6,000 Shanghai Students Hold Pro-Democracy March

By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF and SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES MAY 3, 1989

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Thousands of students marched through Shanghai today, in the first indication that China's pro-democracy movement had spread in a major way to the nation's largest city and economic capital.

About 6,000 university students took part in the pro-democracy march, the official New China News Agency said, and some witnesses put the number at about 10,000.

While demonstrations have taken place in Shanghai on several previous occasions in the last two weeks, they never attracted more than a few thousand marchers. The march today, while consisting only of students, was far better organized than before and attracted much more support, witnesses said.

The march was significant not only because of Shanghai's size and historic ability to influence the rest of the country, but also because everyone remembers that two years ago it was in Shanghai, after a lag, that the student demonstrations were largest. Effort to Keep Workers Away

Those demonstrations in December 1986 and the beginning of January 1987 attracted tens of thousands of students and were starting to draw support from workers when the Government cracked down and imposed a campaign against "bourgeois liberalization," like Western democratic influences.

In a sign of the Government's apprehension that workers would again take part, officials allowed the marchers today to go to their destination, People's Park, but refused to let anyone in the park who did not have student identification.

Diplomats in Shanghai said the move appeared to be an attempt to keep workers from taking part.

Diplomats also said that in recent weeks Shanghai has sent hundreds of thousands of people out of the city, apparently to keep them from joining in any unrest. Those sent away were from the "floating population" of peasants who went to Shanghai illegally to look for work.

Until the mass eviction, at least 2 million of Shanghai's 14.5 million residents were members of the floating population, and because they are often young and unemployed without local family ties, the Government has been worried about the possibility of their provoking unrest.

"This is taking place against the background of extremely high popular discontent, and the authorities are worried about the possibility of a social explosion," said a diplomat reached by telephone in Shanghai. Calls for Press Freedom

The Shanghai students carried placards calling for more democracy, and particularly freedom of the press. The issue has been sensitive there because the editor of the Shanghai-based World Economic Herald was dismissed last week by Shanghai's Communist Party leader, presumably acting on orders from Beijing.

The newspaper was not owned or run by the Communist Party, so many intellectuals have complained that the party had no authority to dismiss the editor and reorganize the publication.

The diplomat said another poster read "We must answer the call of Beijing," and seemed to reflect a certain amount of concern that Shanghai students - after setting the pace of student unrest in 1986 - were being far outdistanced on this occasion by students in the capital.

Another diplomat in Shanghai said much of the inspiration and planning of the demonstration today seemed to come from a team of Beijing University students who arrived recently in Shanghai to exchange ideas about how to spread the pro-democracy campaign.

The authorities in Shanghai have issued repeated warnings to try to discourage student unrest, and a foreign resident of the city said that students at the Shanghai Foreign Languages School had been warned that if they took part in

demonstrations they would not be given a passport allowing them to go abroad, a dream that many Chinese students cherish. Other Demonstrations

In addition to Beijing and Shanghai, student demonstrations have occurred in the last two weeks in most other major cities in China, including Tianjin, Changsha, Xian, Wuhan, Chengdu and Nanjing. But none have come close to the scale of the protests in the capital, which have drawn more than 150,000 demonstrators at their peak.

In Beijing today, student leaders gave a 24-hour ultimatum to the Government to approve their conditions for talks, and warned of demonstrations on Thursday if the Government did not agree. About 70 student leaders rode their bicycles together to several Government and party offices to deliver letters outlining their demands.

The letter was a response to the Government's announcement last week that it would enter into a "dialogue" with the students. Since then, Government officials have held three of these dialogues with students, and some delicate issues have come up.

But most students appear dissatisfied. They complain that the students whom the Government chose to take part are mostly friendly to the Communist Party, and that the Government edited the videotape of the first dialogue before showing it on national television.

Of the 12 student conditions for talks, the three most crucial were that the students themselves choose their representatives, that the talks be broadcast uncensored on national television and that the Government be represented by officials at the level of Deputy Prime Minister or Politburo member.

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