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UPHEAVAL IN CHINA; CHINESE STUDENTS URGE END TO SIEGE OF BEIJING SQUARE

By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF and SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES MAY 28, 1989

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China's student leaders today called for an end to their two-week occupation of Tiananmen Square, in the center of the capital, but said that they would continue to hold large-scale demonstrations to press for greater democracy and the resignation of Prime Minister Li Peng.

The announcement represented a major success for Mr. Li. In effect, the Government will have evicted the students not by politically embarrassing means such as brute force, but by waiting until the square was so fetid as a result of lack of garbage collection and the students so malodorous that they chose to leave on their own. 'We Have Responsibility'

"It is very difficult to continue our sit-in," a student leader, Wuer Kaixi, told a press conference. "As leaders, we have responsibility for students' health, and the difficulties are obvious. Hygiene is extremely bad and the food is insufficient." [In a report from Beijing on Sunday, Reuters said that thousands of students took to the streets of the capital to renew their call for democracy and to protest the purge of reformers in the Chinese leadership. Students set out in five columns from the city's northwestern university area toward central Beijing. Some carried banners reading, "I can die, democracy cannot die," Reuters said.] The call to leave the

square is only a proposal, and it must be voted on by the students who are occupying it. But most seemed ready to go, and some students are leaving even before the official pull-out date of Tuesday.

Mr. Li today gained further support in the power struggle within China's ruling circle when former President Li Xiannian warned that "people in the leadership" of the Communist Party had created confusion in China. It was a clear reference to the party leader, Zhao Ziyang, who is now being criticized in preparation for an attempt to dismiss him.

Mr. Zhao, a proponent of more rapid economic and political change in China, apparently is being ousted because he challenged senior leader Deng Xiaoping and because he favored conciliation with the pro-democracy movement. Ironically, the students' departure from Tiananmen Square will remove a major cause of the leadership fight. While there were long-standing tensions among top officials, it was disagreements about how to deal with hunger strikers on the square that apparently led to the downfall of Mr. Zhao. While Mr. Li and Mr. Deng took a hard line against the students, Mr. Zhao favored meeting some of their demands to get them to leave peacefully.

The students have been occupying the square for two weeks, first to hold a hunger strike and then to stage a sit-in. Even before the hunger strike, however, student demonstrators had occupied the square almost continuously since mid-April to demand more democracy and less corruption from Government leaders.

Now, most of the 15,000 students at the square are from outside Beijing. Fewer citizens and local students are turning out to support them, both because there seems to be less threat of a military crackdown and because of the growing odor of garbage and unshowered college students.

"It's not necessary to stay here any longer," said Shang Baojin, a 20-year-old student from the nearby town of Longfang. "The Government ignores us so completely. That it's not worth wasting our time and energy here."

Zhang Guodong, a 20-year-old student from the northeastern city of Shenyang, offered similar reasoning:

"The Government ignores us, so it won't do any good to stay. If we stay, we'll just exhaust and injure ourselves. There are problems in getting food. The place is filthy. Sanitation is very bad. There are risks to our health. Every afternoon, it's so hot that if we continue we'll get sunstroke. I've already had a nosebleed."

Daytime temperatures in Beijing have been in the 90's for the last few days.

Mr. Zhang, in fact, was so fed up with the sit-in that he was planning to return to Shenyang later tonight. **Students Plan to Carry On**

Yet if the Government manages to drive the students away simply by boring them, it is not a complete success. The students feel they have successfully defied martial law, so their spirits are high, their skills are sharpened and they say they will carry out their movement in many other ways. Many are taking back to their hometowns not only a new enthusiasm for democracy but a sense of how to organize a local movement and how to keep in touch with organizers in Beijing.

"The whole Government is too busy with its power struggles to pay any attention to us," said Yue Jie, a 21-year-old student from the central Chinese city of Wuhan. "If they won't listen to us, what's the point of staying here? But, of course we'll continue the democratic movement. We'll go to factories to spread the word about democracy. We'll organize ourselves into small propaganda units. We'll distribute leaflets. We'll hold some demonstrations."

The student leaders from Beijing took a similar approach. They said that they would continue to hold demonstrations, including large ones on Sunday and Tuesday, and that they would focus on propaganda work and on building a network of student organizations around the country.

In addition, they said that while they would no longer hold a sit-in on Tiananmen Square, they would open what they called "Democracy University on the Square." They did not go into details, but apparently it would consist of a few tents and a loudspeaker system so that students could make political speeches to those in the area. **Government Gains More Backing**

The Government also seemed to win crucial support tonight from Wan Li, the head of the National People's Congress and an associate of both Mr. Zhao and Mr. Deng. Mr. Wan gave his support in a written statement that was read on the evening news program, so it could not be determined if it was genuine or if it was given voluntarily.

Mr. Wan, who previously had praised the student movement, today endorsed the military crackdown declared by Prime Minister Li a week ago. He called on the people to cooperate with the army and police, and said that Mr. Deng had personally led the reform movement in China. That appeared to be a hint that Mr. Zhao should not get any credit. **A Small Group Singled Out**

The former president, Li Xiannian (pronounced lee shyen nyen), was much harsher in his comments. While former President Li said that the Government

would not punish the student demonstrators, he harshly attacked an unnamed group of people, presumably Mr. Zhao and his associates:

"Recently, a very small minority of people plotted behind the scenes, fabricated rumors, instigated agitation and deliberately aggravated the situation so as to realize their political purposes of negating the leadership of the Communist Party and the socialist system through turmoil."

It seemed significant that former President Li criticized only "a very small minority of people." Mindful of rumors that widespread reprisals are imminent, officials have been trying to convince people that only Mr. Zhao and his associates need fear.

However, Mr. Li also said that the "anti-bourgeois liberalism principle" had not been fully observed recently. That could be interpreted as a call for a clampdown on intellectuals.

A campaign against "bourgeois liberalism" - principally Western and democratic influences in artistic and intellectual circles - resulted in tighter controls on the press and the expulsions of several dissidents from the Communist Party in early 1987. That campaign quickly fizzled, but in the last few days the apparent purge of Mr. Zhao has made many intellectuals fear that a new campaign against Western influence may be imminent.

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