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Crackdown in Beijing; For Students in U.S., Grief and Fury

By FOX BUTTERFIELD and SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES JUNE 5, 1989

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Chinese students in the United States reacted with outrage today to the army's killing of pro-democracy demonstrators in Beijing, saying in a letter to President Bush that the Communist Party had turned into an "evil fascist dictatorship."

The students, members of China's elite and in many cases the children of Communist Party officials, called on Mr. Bush and Congress to withdraw the Ambassador to Beijing, James R. Lilley; to bar further American investment in China, and to cut off military exchanges between the two countries.

"This is an unprecedented massacre, an atrocity," said Pei Min Xin, a graduate student at Harvard University from Shanghai. Mr. Pei is a member of a new group, the Chinese Students Autonomous Association, that plans to hold demonstrations in front of the White House on Monday and to present President Bush with a letter of protest. 'Never Before'

"Never before in Chinese history has the army killed peaceful students," Mr. Pei said.

"Chiang Kai-shek wasn't so bad," he said. "The Japanese didn't do it in World War II. Even the most notorious figure in Chinese history, the first Emperor, only buried 400 scholars alive, and his name is synonymous with despotism." Mr. Pei was referring to the first emperor of the Qin Dynasty, who ruled more than 2,000

years ago.

Mr. Pei and other Chinese students in Boston, New York and San Francisco said they would work to organize an independent student organization whose goal would be to overthrow the Communist Government. Such an openly proclaimed policy would have been unthinkable only a few weeks ago, and it indicated how the events in Beijing have changed the Chinese political equation, at least for students abroad. There are an estimated 27,000 Chinese students in the United States. Old Guard's Role Seen

One student in New York, who asked that his name not be used, said that his father and mother, both ranking Communist officials, felt betrayed by the killings and had told him by telephone today that they would quit the party.

According to accounts that many students said they heard by telephone from relatives and friends in Beijing, the crackdown seemed to reflect the enhanced power of Yang Shangkun, the 82-year-old state President and a leader of the party's old guard.

Mr. Yang, the only octogenarian left on the Politburo and a veteran of the Long March of the 1930's, is vice chairman of the party's powerful Central Military Commission. Deng Xiaoping, China's senior leader, is not a member of the Politburo, but he is chairman of the Central Military Commission. Yang Family's Strength

Though it is unclear which army units were involved in the killings, several students said their friends in China told them that the troops belonged to the 27th Army. That would be significant because the long-time political commissar of the 27th Army, Chi Haotian, is the army's Chief of Staff.

Mr. Chi is also widely believed to be a son-in-law of Mr. Yang. In addition, Mr. Yang's younger brother, Yang Baibing, is the chief of the General Political Department of the People's Liberation Army, a pivotal position.

Some analysts said President Yang was installed in his post by senior conservatives as a watchdog because of his relative good health despite his age. President Yang is thought to be skeptical of the economic changes instituted over the last decade by Mr. Deng. Possible Rivalry With Deng

While Mr. Yang worked under Mr. Deng in the 1950's and 1960's - he was director of the General Office of the Party Central Committee when Mr. Deng was General Secretary - there could be a rivalry between the men, both personal and ideological.

The analysts noted that Mao Zedong called the 27th Army to Beijing from Central China in 1972 at a time when Marshal Lin Biao challenged Mao's control. In recent years, the 27th Army had been stationed in Inner Mongolia.

Mr. Chi was political commissar of the 27th Army in the 1970's, when it was summoned to the capital. In 1976, after Mao's death, Mr. Chi played a pivotal role in seizing newspaper, radio and television offices in Beijing to thwart Mao's followers, the Gang of Four.

Mr. Chi's career had been in decline in recent years, but in 1987 he was unexpectedly named Chief of Staff of the army, perhaps because of his ties to Mr. Yang. A question being asked by American analysts, as well as by Chinese students in the United States, was whether the army's crackdown in Beijing would mean increased power for Mr. Yang and his relatives, who might constitute a powerful new faction. **Horror Accounts**

But for Chinese students in the United States, the political intrigue behind the army's brutal repression was for now secondary to the horrifying accounts of violence filtering in.

Three students in Boston and New York, speaking separately, said their relatives in Beijing, all of them leaders of the pro-democracy movement, told them by telephone that a brutal moment came when soldiers surrounded a last group of several thousand demonstrators in Tiananmen Square.

According to those accounts, which were impossible to verify, the students realized that they were trapped and negotiated a withdrawal with army officers. But the troops provided only a narrow exit for the students to walk through, and before the final 1,000 could retreat, soldiers started to shoot or bayonet them as they lay on the ground, according to those accounts.

Zheng Ling, a student in Boston, said he was told that soldiers then poured gasoline on the demonstrators and burned them. A tape reporting this version was played to Chinese students gathered in protest today at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

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