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TURMOIL IN CHINA; Legions of Soldiers Encircling Beijing: Loyalty to Whom?

By BERNARD E. TRAINOR and SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES JUNE 7, 1989

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Administration officials estimate that elements of 10 People's Liberation Army units, totaling 100,000 to 150,000 troops, have been deployed in and around Beijing.

But with the exception of three units, the officials are uncertain to whom the troops profess allegiance.

Army groups identified in Beijing include the 27th Army, normally based at Shijiazhuang, southwest of Beijing. It is one of four armies assigned to the Beijing Military Region. The 15th Airborne Army, part of China's strategic reserves based in Wuhan in central China, is also in the capital. It and the 27th conducted the attack on the students on Sunday. Other Beijing region units around the city are the 28th, 38th, 63d and 65th Armies. The 38th refused to use force against the students when martial law was declared three weeks ago and is reported to be one of the units now in a stand-off with the 27th and the paratroopers who hold the city.

Units brought in from other of China's seven military regions are the 16th, 64th and 39th armies from Shenyang region in the northeast and the 12th from Nanjing. Army of 3 Divisions

A Chinese Army numbers from 40,000 to 46,000 and is usually made up of three infantry divisions plus artillery, armor and support units. The American officials said the units had probably been moved to the capital from outlying provinces on orders of Deng Xiaoping, China's leader, and President Yang Shangkun. But the officials are certain that the shooting of the students over the weekend, upset many of the army's leaders and they said some of them may now be refusing to take orders from political leaders. A senior American official said today that Washington believed that the attack in Tiananmen Square was led by Yang Baibing, the head of the army's General Political Department. The official said Mr. Yang is a nephew of President Yang, not a brother as has sometimes been reported.

The official said the American Embassy in Beijing was unable to determine exactly what is happening, since diplomats could not move freely around the city.

One official said "Our information is spotty, but we don't think the Chinese know what's going on either." Not Believed at Full Strength

With the exception of the 38th Army, stationed near Beijing, military experts doubt that the nine other units sent to Beijing are at full strength. "China still has a primitive logistic and resupply system and they simply could not move or support so many full strength units without a severe dislocation of their system," one logistics specialist in the Pentagon said.

American officials refused to give precise locations of the units around Beijing, nor would they estimate the size or identify the accompanying equipment of specific units.

Chinese armies vary in size and equipment depending upon where they are stationed and at what stage they have reached in China's military modernization program. Units in the Beijing and Shenyang Military Regions, where most of the units sent to Beijing are stationed, are heavy in tanks and armored personnel carriers, because they guard the northern and western borders adjacent to the Soviet Union. The 12th army from Nanjing along the coast is more lightly armed.

Experts who have examined the photos of equipment used by the mechanized 27th Army said the unit must be one of China's elite because it was armed with China's most up-to-date tank, the T-69.

Administration officials refused to discuss what role China's nuclear arsenal would play if full-scale civil war broke out. China's Second Artillery Corps is said to control the nuclear missiles under the direct command of the Central Military Commission headed by Mr. Deng. But one expert said that intercontinental

missiles would be of no use to Chinese forces fighting one another. He would neither not speculate on the existence or utility of Chinese short-range nuclear weapons.

Correction: June 9, 1989

Friday, Late Edition - Final Because of an editing error, a military analysis article on Wednesday about the Chinese Army described the relationship between a military official and China's President incorrectly in some copies. The official, Yang Baibing, head of the army's general political department, is a brother of President Yang Shangkun. Gen. Yang Jianhua, a nephew of the President, commands the 27th Army.

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