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TURMOIL IN CHINA; Foreigners Scramble to Leave Beijing

By **SHERYL WUDUNN** and **SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES** JUNE 7, 1989

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As gunfire continues to echo in the capital, thousands of foreigners are preparing to leave and the United States Embassy here is urging all Americans to get out of the country.

Tourists, diplomats and business executives and their families have left their homes and hotels for the eastern part of the city, which is near the airport. Throughout the city today and Monday, convoys of embassy cars of many nations could be seen shuttling their citizens around barricades and down deserted streets.

Although the city seems to have quieted down a little since the military crackdown over the weekend, constant shuffles of troops and columns of rumbling tanks suggest that there could be clashes between military units. This seemed to be a factor in the decision of several embassies to urge their citizens to leave.

An advisory issued by the United States Embassy this evening said, "Because of the deteriorating security situation in Beijing, the American Embassy urges American citizens in Beijing to make every effort to depart China at the earliest possible opportunity." The State Department earlier had been warning Americans against travel to China.

The embassy said that even with the advisory, its embassy staff will remain in Beijing. The British Embassy issued a similar statement. Embassies Collecting

Students

There are an estimated 1,400 Americans living in Beijing who are not associated with the United States Government and 8,800 in all of China. There are also 428 diplomatic personnel and dependents in China, as well as about 4,000 American tourists on normal days.

Several embassies have begun collecting students of their countries from universities here because it was rumored that troops were planning to enter the schools.

Prominently displaying their national flags, convoys of embassy cars from Japan, West Germany, the United States and Australia drove across the city to the university district in the west.

The United Nations has ordered its staff to relocate from diplomatic compounds to a hotel in the eastern part of the city, and to fly to Hong Kong on Thursday.

The Philippine Embassy has ordered an evacuation of its citizens, including some of its embassy staff, and it will charter a plane to fly citizens back to the Philippines.

The Canadian Embassy said that in addition to advising its citizens to leave, a majority of its staff will also depart, leaving a small group of 15 diplomats.

Even without the warnings, many citizens seemed anxious to leave. 'Like the Twilight Zone'

"It's like the twilight zone here," said Michael J. Petron, a 40-year-old New Yorker who has been teaching English in Beijing for the last nine months. Eight Chinese students at the school where he teaches have been missing since the weekend, and Monday night, he said, troops shot someone on the streets outside his room just half an hour after he had left the scene.

"At least if people shoot you in the Bronx, you can go out and buy a gun on the street corner and shoot back," he said. "But you can't do that here."

Mr. Petron, unlike other Americans who already had plane reservations, was waiting for a Chinese official to return with his ticketing arrangements.

"I'm ready to go to Karachi," he said, "anywhere but Teheran."

When rumors spread that troops were going to invade the university district, a group of European high school students attending a Chinese school nearby unanimously decided they would evacuate their premises, a diplomat said.

They marched about a mile to one of the most expensive hotels in Beijing, the

Shangri-La, and told the hotel that their embassy would pay the bills. After settling in, they called their ambassador to come pick them up. The embassy sent its cars, paid their bills and put them up at the ambassador's residence.

Foreigners throughout the capital have turned to their embassies for guidance and safe passage out of Beijing. Ticket Offices Packed

"We watched as all the other embassies came to pick up their students at the schools," said a 21-year-old student from Bangladesh. "So we called up our embassy and asked them to take us away."

Foreigners packed into the airline ticket offices of hotels, and some made their way past the thicket of burned-out cars to the main office of China's airline, near where some of the shooting has taken place. But most flights to destinations like Hong Kong and Tokyo are fully booked, so some foreigners are buying plane tickets to any city for which a seat is available.

"I've been waiting here for three hours and I haven't even been able to get into the door," said a middle-aged man who was standing outside the ticket office of the Polish airline. The office, normally empty, was full and there was a long line outside, as people who could not get tickets to Hong Kong developed an interest in Warsaw.

The lobby of the Lido Hotel this morning was frenzied as people sat with their suitcases around them, waiting almost desperately for their tickets to come through. Women clutched their babies, and some weeped as families came to the hotel for refuge.

Down the main road outside the hotel was a unit of troops, their trucks clustered in the field by the roadside and almost camouflaged by the tall grass and trees. As most of them rested, chatting with each other, several others remained on guard, their automatic rifles in ready position. Buildings Facing Tanks Vacated

As more than 25 tanks pointed their cannons in every direction off a bridge near the Jianguomenwai diplomatic compound, foreigners were making preparations to vacate buildings with windows facing directly toward the troops.

Foreigners so far have not been singled out by the troops or by ordinary Chinese, except when they take pictures. At the Beijing Hotel, just east of Tiananmen Square, foreigners have been searched for film, and if any is found it is confiscated. One photographer was roughed up when he refused to give up his film.

In the last two days, foreigners have rushed to verandas and the rooftops of the tall buildings in the diplomatic compound to peer at the troops, tanks and

armored personnel carriers below.

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