

TURMOIL IN CHINA; State Dept. Making Plans for Airlift of Americans

By THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN and SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES JUNE 7, 1989

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The State Department began making arrangements today for a charter airlift of Americans from Beijing should commercial flights be halted, while defense planners drew up contingency plans for a possible military evacuation.

Under the present conditions, American officials said any sudden evacuation could be handled by the commercial carriers Northwest Airlines and United Airlines supplementing their regular service to China with charters.

"Right now there is not a need to lay on charters," the State Department spokeswoman, Margaret D. Tutwiler, said. "But the State Department and our embassy have been in touch with both airlines. Both airlines will make 747's available to us if needed."

The Chinese authorities, Ms. Tutwiler said, have already approved such charter flights. Americans in China

There are 1,400 Americans in Beijing who are not associated with the United States Government and 8,800 in all of China. There are also 428 embassy and consulate personnel and dependents in China, as well as about 4,000 American tourists on any given day.

At the same time, United States military forces in Japan have been making contingency plans for an emergency evacuation of American diplomats and citizens

from Beijing, but have not received orders to begin any operations, Administration officials and military officers in Tokyo said.

The officials said that for several days Marine and Air Force personnel stationed in Okinawa and at Yokota Air Base, near Tokyo, have been making plans to fly up to 2,600 United States citizens from Beijing.

"At this point we are waiting to see if the conflict between the Chinese troops heats up," said a United States Embassy official in Tokyo. If fighting increases, he said, "we expect that an evacuation might be ordered." Airport Reported Jammed

In all likelihood, the Americans would be brought to Japan, although officials said they had not yet consulted the Japanese Government about how to handle a large influx of foreigners based in Beijing. Travelers arriving at Narita Airport near Tokyo from China today reported that the Beijing airport was already jammed, as travelers without reservations tried to get aboard flights.

While officials would not comment about the details of any evacuation plans, one military officer said there were several ones under consideration. Under most, the United States would request China's permission to land aircraft there to evacuate Americans. But the official suggested that some scenarios include "rescuing Americans under hostile fire."

Two months ago, Marine troops in Okinawa were training how to evacuate an embassy, including one under fire. But no large-scale rescue effort has been undertaken from Asia since the Communist takeover of Saigon at the end of the Vietnam war. Last year, during the intense street fighting in Rangoon, troops moved into Thailand to prepare for a rescue operation in Burma, but it was called off.

Should the embassy have to be evacuated, it might not be only Americans flying out. A State Department official said a leading Chinese dissident, Fang Lizhi, and his wife, Li Shuxian, a physics professor, sought refuge in the embassy on Monday and are being allowed to stay. Considering Delaying Agreement

The official said Mr. Fang, a 53-year-old astrophysicist who had been denied permission by the Chinese authorities to attend a dinner with President Bush when he visited China in February, "took refuge for his own safety," but would not elaborate.

At the same time, Administration officials said the Administration is considering holding up an agreement to launch American satellites into space on Chinese rockets.

Under the agreement, approved by the Reagan Administration last year, American satellites would be sold to two foreign consortiums, which would arrange for the launching of the satellites by the Chinese. The consortiums are Asiasat of Hong Kong, a British-Chinese consortium, and Aussat, an Australian company.

President's Measures

In fleshing out the measures announced Monday by President Bush, the Administration has also decided to allow all Chinese nationals - not only students - in the United States to remain in this country after their visas expire, Ms. Tutwiler said.

Attorney General Dick Thornburgh later issued a statement saying that the visas of all Chinese nationals in the United States had been extended for one year. This would affect about 73,000 Chinese students attending American schools and nearly 250,000 Chinese visitors or business executives now in the United States, he said.

On Capitol Hill, the House voted 406 to 0 to condemn the Chinese Government's "excessive and indiscriminate" use of force and express sympathy for the victims.

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