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TURMOIL IN CHINA; Moderates Appear on Beijing TV, Easing Fears of Wholesale Purge

By NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF and SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES JUNE 14, 1989

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Several high-level Chinese officials resurfaced in public tonight on the national television news program, amid signs that the purge in the nation's Communist Party leadership might not be so sweeping as had been feared.

Official news organizations also devoted significantly less energy today than in the previous few days to attacks on the dissident Fang Lizhi and on the United States Embassy, which is giving him refuge.

But the authorities seemed as determined as ever to sustain the mass arrests of those involved in the recent democracy movement, for the national television news program tonight broadcast a wanted list of 21 student leaders who are apparently in hiding. Out of Sight for 2 Weeks

The officials who appeared on television had not been shown or mentioned in the national news media in more than two weeks, and they had not been aligned with the hard-line elements believed to have been responsible for the military crackdown on June 4.

The appearance of these officials suggested that they would probably not be purged. In addition, their comments were not polemical, suggesting that they did not feel that to retain their jobs they had to echo the hard-liners who describe

participants in the democracy movement as "thugs" bent on "counterrevolutionary rebellion."

Some of these officials had been associated with the Communist Party leader, Zhao Ziyang, and with his more conciliatory approach to the pro-democracy movement. Aside from Mr. Zhao, only two members on the Politburo have still not reappeared in the national news media. What Party Documents Say

The Politburo has 16 full members and one alternate, and so if public appearances are an indication of job security, the shake-up in the party leadership would leave the great majority of careers intact in the top tier.

Internal party documents now circulating among senior officials criticize Mr. Zhao but do not accuse him of being a counterrevolutionary, a Western diplomat said today. The relatively mild accusations against Mr. Zhao suggest that he will be dismissed from his position but that he will not face criminal charges and that he will be able at least to retain his party membership.

While rumors are everywhere, almost nothing is known authoritatively about the power struggles now under way in the Chinese leadership. Nevertheless, diplomats said the reappearance of so many officials suggested that hard-liners were having difficulty winning support within the party and had agreed to a relatively modest purge of the leadership as a compromise.

"The campaign against bourgeois liberalism itself can't be softened," an Asian diplomat said. "But milder criticism of the leaders is a compromise the hard-liners need to make with the pro-reform people within the party. It's a necessity if they want to convene the Central Committee." Search for Show of Unanimity

The Central Committee, many of whose members were selected by Mr. Zhao, must ratify the dismissal of Mr. Zhao for it to become formal. The difficulty is probably not so much persuading a majority of the 175 committee members to go along with Deng Xiaoping, China's senior leader, in dismissing the party leader as it is achieving something close to unanimity. The leadership would presumably like unanimity to show that it is united again after a period of turmoil.

Mr. Zhao was last seen on May 19, talking with student leaders on Tiananmen Square, and there has been almost no official mention of him since then. He is believed to have been stripped of his powers and he may be under house arrest, but it is not clear whether he retains his title.

The documents that criticize Mr. Zhao and are now circulating among high officials make three specific complaints. First, they assert that he helped organize

the student mourning of the former party leader Hu Yaobang, whose death on April 15 was the catalyst for the movement. Second, they say that his words and actions encouraged the student movement. Third, they accuse him of violating party discipline, by making unauthorized statements about the party leadership.

The last item is probably a reference to his disclosure on national television, during his meeting on May 16 with Mikhail S. Gorbachev, the Soviet President, that there was a formal policy of consulting Mr. Deng on all important matters.

Comment Prompts Criticism

This comment prompted widespread criticism that the 84-year-old Mr. Deng, whose only title is chairman of the Central Military Commission, should still have the ultimate say on major issues.

These three accusations against Mr. Zhao are serious ones, but they would perhaps allow him to remain in the party and conceivably on the Central Committee. They would also not rule out the possibility that the 69-year-old Mr. Zhao might return to power at some point if the leadership changes.

The parade of officials on television tonight - local and national television news programs have been extended from 45 minutes to two hours so as to incorporate all the new propaganda - was another indication that some members of Mr. Zhao's faction may survive the purges.

Among the officials who appeared today on television were the Politburo members Wu Xueqian and Song Ping and an alternate member, Ding Guangen.

Other Zhao Supporters

The two Politburo members who, in addition to Mr. Zhao, have not resurfaced in recent weeks are both associated with the party leader. One is Hu Qili, who is regarded as likely to be dismissed along with Mr. Zhao, and the other is Yang Rudai, the Sichuan Province party leader, whose prospects are unknown.

If all three - Mr. Zhao, Mr. Hu and Mr. Yang - are dismissed from the Politburo, it would be a major realignment but not so startling as some had feared over the last few weeks. For a time it had appeared that Mr. Zhao's entire faction might be dismissed.

In addition to the Politburo members, supporters of Mr. Zhao who appeared on television included Zhu Houze, a leader of the Government-affiliated national trade union, and Li Changchun, the Governor of Liaoning Province.

And others who previously had been reported to be in trouble - including Central Committee officials like Wen Jiabao and Yan Mingfu, Defense Minister Qin

Jiwei, and the Politburo member Tian Jiyun - again appeared on television as they already had once or twice before. Qiao Gets Prominent Play

The man who is generally regarded as the most likely candidate to succeed Mr. Zhao as party leader is Qiao Shi, a Politburo member in charge of security matters. Mr. Qiao seemed to get a public relations boost today, when he was seated at the right of Prime Minister Li Peng and given the job of reading a speech by Mr. Deng to high-level officials.

In what appeared to be intended as a mildly reassuring signal to the West, Prime Minister Li told the meeting that China would maintain its open-door policy and its independent foreign policy. He urged foreign countries not to do anything "to hurt the feelings of the Chinese people at this time."

The official news media today continued their criticisms of Mr. Fang and his wife, Li Shuxian, but at a much reduced intensity. People's Daily published two articles about the couple on page 2, attacking them for fleeing to the United States Embassy, where they are now in hiding, but the two dissidents were scarcely mentioned on the television news.

In a sharp contrast to the last few days, news organizations also hardly criticized the United States and the Voice of America. The news organizations had attacked Voice of America, accusing it of spreading rumors. #21 Students Are Shown on TV The 21 students whose mug shots and biographical details were shown on television included the two most prominent leaders of the democracy movement, Wang Dan and Wuer Kaixi. Others shown on television were Chai Ling, the leader of the students occupying Tiananmen Square, and her husband, Feng Congde, and a 28-year-old graduate student, Liu Gang, who is said to have assisted the students from behind the scenes.

The television showed lengthy film clips of Mr. Wuer, apparently so that viewers could identify him and turn him in. The clips also showed the extent of Government surveillance of the student leaders; it seemed that three different video cameras were used to record one visit by Mr. Wuer on May 29 to a restaurant in a Beijing hotel. One camera was trained on him from above while he ate, another showed him leaving the restaurant, and a third caught him as he left the building.

Unconfirmed reports reaching Beijing today hinted at two previously unknown conflicts within the military over the recent crackdown in the capital. Last week there were repeated reports of skirmishes among different armies, but the incidents remain murky. The army is one of the institutions that has been most

difficult for foreigners to learn about, and army officers, like other Chinese, have recently been wary of contacts with foreigners. Rumors From Inner Mongolia

One incident, recounted to a Western diplomat by a Chinese with high military connections, was said to involve an army unit in Inner Mongolia that rebelled last week after the attack on civilians in central Beijing.

It is not certain which unit was involved, but it is noteworthy that the 27th Army, which was responsible for most of the killings, has been based in Hebei Province but most of its soldiers have been in Inner Mongolia.

The report said about 30 officers had been shot after the incident, and President Yang Shangkun secretly flew to the capital of Inner Mongolia to inspect the situation. Other diplomats said they had not heard of the report and could not verify it.

There also were reports that the radio in the northeastern city of Changchun had reported that "a certain military unit" had pledged to obey orders and "to learn from troops supporting the crackdown." The soldiers also agreed in writing "to fulfill the tasks imposed on them by the party and the people at all times."

Such unusual pledges seemed to indicate that some soldiers had perhaps objected to the crackdown, but diplomats said they knew nothing further about any discontent among units there.

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