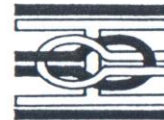


**PHILIPPINE PERSPECTIVES
ON TIANANMEN**



**CHINESE STUDIES
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(PACS)

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1991

THE PHILIPPINE ASSOCIATION FOR CHINESE STUDIES is a non-political and non-profit professional association committed to increasing understanding of China and the Chinese.

The Association was incorporated in October 1987 with the following objectives:

1. To promote, encourage and support academic studies and research on China and the Chinese through discussions, lectures, seminars, publications and international exchange.
2. To identify the gaps in research subjects and methodology and stimulate work in these areas.
3. To set up a resource center for the documentation and the collection of information and materials in order to develop serious interest in Chinese studies.
4. To establish and maintain contact with other professional national and international organizations in the interest of mutual enlightenment in the field of Chinese studies.
5. To offer to government, business, and other sectors, when deemed appropriate, assistance in research and education, policy formulation, and program development that may lead to a better understanding of China and the Chinese.
6. To assist persons engaged or interested in Chinese studies with respect to opportunities for work or studies and similar information, such as the strengths of various training institutions and the availability of grants and scholarships here and abroad.
7. To encourage the establishment of Chinese studies as a part of the curriculum or as a program of study in the different institutions of learning.
8. To promote understanding of the Philippines and the Filipinos among the Chinese.

Introduction

IT HAS BEEN A YEAR since the slaughter of unarmed civilians at Tiananmen Square, an event that left most of the world aghast with horror as well as shock. It was clear to all that Tiananmen in June 1989 was a turning point in the history of modern China; for some, perhaps a turning back too, if we are to judge its consequences on the reform project begun in 1978. Now it seems that it was a turning point in the history of socialism as well, as we see the multitudes of youth, intellectuals and workers overrunning the streets and squares of Eastern Europe, raising many of the very same banners we saw at Tiananmen.

From the moment the first news of student unrest in China appeared in Philippine newspapers, the issue caught the imagination of various sectors of the Philippine public. Was it a Chinese EDSA, many asked. What did the students want? How much were the Chinese leaders prepared to give? Was it possible to have socialism and democracy at the same time? How would the subsequent crackdown in China affect our relations with her?

From among the hordes of questions and the din of confusion stood out the voices of our friends from PACS (the Philippine Association for Chinese Studies). Originating from different perspectives, beholding different dimensions of the reality that was Tiananmen, we sought humbly to try to comprehend what it all meant, in the process hoping to enlighten others. We discussed, gave lectures, wrote in newspapers, and debated among ourselves. The articles in this collection represent many of those views expressed in immediate reaction to the tragedy that befell the Chinese pro-democracy movement. What perhaps distinguishes them from many others is the fact that they are written from a Filipino perspective, or at least with a Filipino audience in mind.

Theresa Cariño's article, "The Democratization Movement in China", is a preliminary assessment of the democratization movement in China. It gives us much of the background information we need to understand the sentiments and the behavior of the dissenters. "China after Tiananmen" by Aileen San Pablo-Baviera tries to envisage the post-massacre era, daring to dwell on the historical significance of a movement not quite yet belonging to history. Lily Rose Tope transports us to Beijing last spring, and through her eyewitness account, entitled "The Spring of Discontent", we begin to hear the chanting and to feel the elation, followed by dark despair, of the clamoring crowds. Mario Miclat writes an allegorical piece that uses symbols as old as Chinese civilization itself to dwell on the bitter ironies of life in modern China, in "Beijing . . . The Other View".

The article, "Politics and Polarization" by Teresita Ang See examines the reactions of the sector in Philippine society we would expect to be most affected by the recent developments — the local Chinese community. But she reveals the most unexpected observations. The final article, which I also wrote, explores some of the implications of the events of the "Beijing Spring" on Philippine-Chinese relations as well as on domestic Philippine politics.

We have also decided to reprint in this issue an interview from the new journal, *Echoes from Tiananmen*, published by a Hong Kong-based group which calls itself Friends of Chinese Minzhu (democracy). The interviewees reply to the questions most commonly raised about the democracy movement, and their answers need no elaboration as they speak eloquently for themselves.

If there is one thing that binds together the articles in this collection, aside from the fact that except for the reprint, they were all written by members of the Philippine Association for Chinese Studies, it is perhaps the overwhelming sympathy for the Chinese people shared by the authors. These people, who have in their long history shouldered heavy burdens, and who have relentlessly tried to overcome them through great sacrifice, certainly deserve our admiration and more.

June 1990
Aileen San Pablo-Baviera
E D I T O R

The contributors

Theresa Chong Cariño was until recently chairperson of the Political Science Department, and coordinator of the China Studies Program of De La Salle University. She is president of the Philippine Association for Chinese Studies (PACS). She is the author of China and the Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia: 1949-82 (Q.C.:New Day Publishers, 1985), and editor of Transnationals and Special Economic Zones: The Experience of the Chinese and Selected ASEAN Countries (Manila, De La Salle University Press, 1989).

Mario I. Miclat is a professor in Chinese Studies at the Asian Center, University of the Philippines where he is also College Secretary and Assistant to the Dean for Administration. He spent sixteen years in China (1971-86) where he worked as a foreign expert with the Ministry of Radio, Film and Television. Since his return to the Philippines, he has received the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Award for Literature (for short story category, 1988) and the Gawad CCP Para sa Panitikan (1989). He is the author of Pinoy Odyssey: Stories and Kuwentos (Adarna Book Services, Inc., 1989). He holds an M.A. in Asian Studies from the University of the Philippines.

Teresita Ang See is editor-in-chief of *Tulay*, a Chinese-Filipino monthly digest. She is also president of KAISA para sa Kaunlaran, Inc., an organization of young Chinese Filipinos promoting integration. She is a lecturer with the China Studies Program of De La Salle University, and has delivered several lectures and addressed various conferences both here and abroad on her field of specialization — the Chinese in the Philippines.

Aileen San Pablo-Baviera is a lecturer of comparative government and politics with the Department of Political Science, University of the Philippines. She received her M.A. in Asian Studies from the Asian Center, U.P. and was an exchange scholar of Chinese language and contemporary Chinese history at the Beijing Language Institute and Beijing University, respectively, from 1981-83.

Lily Rose R. Tope is presently Assistant Chairperson of the Department of English, University of the Philippines and has an M.A. in Comparative Literature from the same university. She was a student of Chinese language at the Beijing Language Institute from 1988-89, and witnessed the height of the demonstrations during the 1989 democracy movement. Since her return, she has written several articles on her China travels for *Tulay*, and delivered a soon-to-be-published paper on "Filipino Chinese Literature".

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THE DEMOCRATIZATION MOVEMENT IN CHINA: A PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

Theresa Chong Cariño

INTRODUCTION

THE DEMOCRATIZATION MOVEMENT in the People's Republic of China is not entirely a novelty although its recent expression has been the most dramatic in terms of the scale of the mass demonstrations, the widespread and spontaneous public support it was able to generate in major cities and the brutal repression it provoked. Most observers would trace the origin of the present movement to the first Tiananmen incident in 1976 when spontaneous demonstrations erupted at the time of Zhou Enlai's death and the call for democracy was sounded. One may even stretch the sense of continuity to include the period of the mid-fifties when some of the key intellectual leaders of the present movement such as Liu Binyan cut their political teeth. It was in 1955 when the Party, under Mao's leadership, first called for a period of "blooming and contending" and then turned on the intellectuals who had criticized the Party by launching an "Anti-Rightist Campaign" (Goodman, pp.255-270). In other words, there is historical evidence to indicate that Chinese students and intellectuals have periodically engaged in attempts to effect changes in Party policies through public articulation of their criticisms. What makes the democratization movement of the 1980s different from the early expressions is the socio-economic and political context in which it is being generated, the increasingly organized nature of the movement and the growing interest and participation of the working class as well as the urban population in the movement. These will have significant implications for the prospects of the movement and the development of socialism in China.

NATURE OF THE DEMOCRATIZATION MOVEMENT

MANY OF THE INITIAL DEMANDS for democracy articulated in 1976, 1978 and again in 1981 were reactions to the Cultural Revolution and the most vocal advocates of these demands were former Red Guards who felt they had been tools in the power struggle between Party factions. The early phase of the democratization movement was thus led by the Red Guard generation who felt betrayed by the Cultural Revolution but still looked to the Chinese Revolution as their source of inspiration. Reacting to the extremist policies and State abuses unleashed by the Cultural Revolution, the Red Guard generation sought the socialist legalization of human rights, particularly the protection of individuals from these abuses. The primary aim of the early phase of the movement was thus the development of a legal system to control State violence. (Kagami, AMPO, vol.20, p.104)

This phase of the movement ended in the massive arrests of its leaders, some of whom fled abroad while a few went underground. The second phase of this movement erupted in 1986 and while it gained the support of some Party leaders (e.g. Hu Yaobang) and leading Party intellectuals (Liu Binyan, Fang Lizhi), the bulk of the movement consisted of a new generation of Chinese youth who had no direct experience of the Cultural Revolution and could not identify with the revolution of 1949. Raised in an atmosphere of "opening to the West", it is a generation that is looking "outward" for models to emulate rather than "inward" towards China's revolutionary heritage. For some of its leaders, the problem is how to transplant Western democracy to China. For most, however, the approach has been pragmatic rather than ideological; reformist rather than radical. One of the legacies of the Cultural Revolution has been the widespread distrust of ideology as an instrument of mass mobilization; student leaders have avoided or have been incapable of articulating their demands in any systematic manner. In this respect, "democracy" has functioned as a "catchword" for a variety of political demands.

Consistent demands of the students and intellectuals have been for improvements in the legal system, more spending on education, more press freedom and the freedom to demonstrate. The Communist Party

and the socialist economic system have never been targets of attack by the movement although in the latest demonstrations, individual leaders of the Party have been singled out for criticism and attack. In sum, the demands have focussed on more "democratic space" for individuals and mass organizations and the institutionalization of legal controls on State power.

To advance these demands, different tactics have been employed. For the Red Guard generation of reformists, the main strategy has been to work from within the Party either through direct membership of the Party or through influential advisory positions. For the younger generation of students and intellectuals with little access to the power centers, pressure tactics have been employed. It has been noted that the Red Guard generation regarded the second phase of the movement, which relied heavily on pressure tactics, as dangerous because it threatened both the system and the reform agenda. (Kagami, p.104). Their apprehensions proved correct. In many ways, the intransigence of the students in occupying Tiananmen in April/May 1989 gave the anti-reformists in the Party the opportunity to crack down on the reformists. One can anticipate that the current Party rectification campaign will seek to neutralize if not to destroy the reformist network within the Party that helped the students. It is doubtful, however, that this will prevent the recurrence of student demonstrations and public expressions of political dissent in the future. To the extent that the Party will continue to pursue economic reforms or simply maintain those that have already been undertaken, the same contradictions will remain that sparked the democratization movement. This will be particularly true of the situation in the urban areas.

INTELLECTUALS AND THE MOVEMENT

AS EARLIER OBSERVED, the bulk of the movement up to June 1989 has consisted of students and intellectuals. Their participation in the movement is rooted in their experience of downward social mobility over the last decade and the discontent stimulated by the "internationalization of the economy". While economic reforms have raised peasants' income by as much as 200 per cent over the last decade, those receiving fixed incomes in the cities have suffered spiralling inflation with no concomitant increase in their wages. Teachers have been protesting

about their poor status, bad working conditions and low pay for some time. A university professor earns about half the income of a street vendor, a surgeon less than a barber and one teacher discovered he could earn as much in three days selling tea as he was paid for a whole term teaching. Delegates to the National People's Congress expressed their concern about the plight of teachers and intellectuals in March 1988 but there was no decision to increase expenditures on education which is limited to less than 3% of China's Gross Domestic Product.

Increased dissatisfaction has also been generated by the tendency of intellectuals and students to compare their situation with their counterparts in Western countries. This has been compounded by increased opportunities for academic exchange. The Chinese government has admitted that fewer than 50% of the students it sent abroad for graduate studies have returned to China.

The discontent of the educated with their declining social status has been translated into demands for more participation in decision-making or at least for the expansion of the parameters for critical discussion and self-expression. It is interesting to note that despite economic problems and inflation, participants in the 1989 demonstration only listed political reforms in their demands. However, the single demand that probably struck the most responsive chord among the general public and which posed the strongest challenge to the regime was the call for an end to corruption.

CORRUPTION, LEGITIMACY AND DEMOCRACY

THE FRONTAL ATTACK launched by the students against corruption appeared to be a key element in mobilizing public sympathy for the democratization movement in the cities. It served to justify the demands for political reform and democracy by substantiating the need to check abuses of State power. Apart from expanding the base of support for the movement that began to include workers in the industrial and service sectors, the attack on corruption and simultaneous demand for democratization seriously called into question the regime's legitimacy which had hinged on promises of democracy, political stability (as opposed to the mobilizational demands of the Cultural Revolution period), increased material well-being and improved Party leadership as reflected in better work style and commitment of cadres. (See Goodman, *op.cit.*)

In consolidating his rise to power after the death of Mao, Deng Xiaoping had based his popular appeal both within and without the Party on these promises. The failure of the Cultural Revolution had rendered the Long March inadequate as a symbol of legitimacy for the Party among the youth. In his attempt to restore Party legitimacy among the people in the aftermath of the Cultural Revolution, Deng could no longer rely on the ideological norms and charisma that had fueled it. The first Tiananmen incident of 1976 provided Deng both the opportunity and the symbols to oust the Maoist faction from its position of dominance within the Party, to change the course of economic policies and to reestablish the bases of Party legitimacy. As a symbol of opposition to the politics of the Cultural Revolution and the Gang of Four, the Tiananmen Incident of 1976 has maintained a democratic and populist mystique. Deng capitalized on its potency both as a weapon against the politics of the Gang of Four and as one of the bases for restoring Party legitimacy which had been seriously undermined by the Cultural Revolution. The appeal to democracy was first emphasized at the 3rd Plenum and occasioned by the reversal of the verdict on the Tiananmen Incident of 1976 which had been described at that time as a "counter-revolutionary incident". By November 15, 1978, the Beijing Party Committee had decided that the Tiananmen Incident had after all been a "completely revolutionary event". The reversal of verdicts was presented as a triumph, not only for democracy, but for a democracy bereft of Party leadership or participation. (Goodman, p. 297-98)

This has subsequently posed a dilemma for the Party. By signalling its approval of the students' demands for democracy, the Party was demonstrating a responsiveness to popular demands that regained for it support from the urban population. Yet in doing so, it introduced the potential risk of losing its control and omnipotence in Chinese political life. The dilemma that the Party has been posed with is how to continue meeting popular demands, which is essential to maintaining regime legitimacy, and yet retain Party control.

As long as democracy remained ill-defined and abstract, the danger to Party control remained minimal. In more recent years, however, the demands for democratization have become increasingly concretised and have been linked to intra-Party disputes over decentralization, economic liberalization, and bureaucratic corruption.

ECONOMIC REFORMS AND DEMOCRATIZATION

IT IS CLEAR that experiments with market mechanisms, with the resultant two-tiered pricing system and the drive to attract capital and technology from the West have opened up the floodgates to bureaucratic corruption, growing economic disparities, inflation, unemployment and increased rural-urban migration. Party reformers see these as some of the inevitable side-effects of economic transition towards market socialism but contend that these problems are manageable and can be resolved through greater liberalization and decentralization. The more cautious reformers, however, including Deng Xiaoping, have deemed it necessary to hold back on decentralization plans and to resist any attempts to further loosen Party control in the cultural and political spheres. Those against rapid and "radical" reforms have argued that economic reforms have engendered corruption, the moral degeneration of the Party and Army, ideological erosion in the Party, the nurturing of decadent lifestyles, increased crimes, growing international dependency and the revival of feudal culture. Given this perspective, the democratization movement is regarded by those against further reforms as another indicator of the instability and turmoil the reforms have generated.

Within the Party, discussions about democracy especially during the late 70s had ranged from extolling the virtues of democratic elections to the desirability of a multi-party system. There were calls for a Chinese declaration of human rights, direct elections to the National People's Congress and even elections to the bureaucracy. (See Goodman, p. 298) The relatively open debate on democracy was brought to an end in March 1979 by Deng's speech on "The Four Cardinal Principles". His speech, delivered on the eve of the commemoration of the Tiananmen Incident of 1976 by students, was designed to check the democracy movement on the streets. It stressed the need for adhering to the four cardinal principles of keeping to the socialist road, the dictatorship of the proletariat, the leadership of the Communist Party and Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought. After 1979, discussions have been limited to "socialist democracy", that is, democracy under Party leadership.

At the 13th Party Congress in September 1987, the Party reaffirmed the need for political reforms including the separation of Party and government, the delegation of powers to lower levels (decentralization), the establishment of a professional civil service, and improvement of the socialist legal system. These reforms are clearly organizational rather than ideological and assume the supervision of the Party. It is doubtful, however, that even these reforms will be fully implemented given the continuing dissension within the Party between the radical reformers and the more conservative ones. For the leadership that belongs to the first generation of revolutionaries, Party control is primary. Political reforms are regarded as important only to the extent they will enhance the success of economic reforms. Among the leaders of Deng's generation, there is strong conviction that ballot box democracy cannot check abuses — citizens must entrust the Party in solving problems.

In this respect, whether the Party can in fact effectively stem corruption that has tainted not only the Party rank and file but also high level officials and leaders will be crucial to its credibility, moral authority and in the long run, its survival. Beyond the specific issue of corruption, however, the Party will also have to meet increasingly higher economic expectations from the people. This will not only be in the form of increased incomes and higher standards of living but also in terms of better working conditions, more workplace democracy and more government responsiveness to social needs. In the long term, one can expect more rather than less pressure from the populace to be allowed to organize themselves in order to have greater self-determination in their social and economic life.

The massive public support that students received in the major cities during the demonstrations of April and May 1989 revealed the extent to which the democratization movement had spread beyond the circle of students and intellectuals. In the citywide demonstrations of May 17 and 18 in Beijing, close to a million people participated. What was significant was that at points, the students were in fact outnumbered by workers. More important, the demonstrations provided the setting for the emergence of the Beijing Workers' Autonomous Federation which has subsequently been banned by the Chinese government.

Members of the union were mostly production workers, service sector workers and worker intellectuals. Among the core members

were steelworkers, railway workers, aviation workers, restaurant cooks, students and lawyers. Their action was the first open attempt by workers to set up an autonomous organization outside the official All-China Federation of Trade Unions. (Trini Leung. *Echoes from Tiananmen, Hong Kong*, p. 13) Even more interesting were the reasons they cited for organizing an independent union: they were extremely critical of government corruption and the existence of a privileged elite in China. They also complained about the wide wage discrepancy between the workers and plant managers, the lack of workplace democracy, the lack of genuine workers' representation in the policy-making process, poor labor protection and working conditions and the deterioration of workers' living standards in recent years.

Until the organization was banned in the aftermath of the June 4 Incident, its leaders were insistent that they would organize their Autonomous Federation through legal and constitutional means. There was no opposition to the role of the Party. Like much of the democratization movement, the Autonomous Federation did not question Party hegemony. What it did question, however, was the Party's monopoly of power.

There are no reliable reports as to how widespread the movement for independent unions is. Having been labelled "counter-revolutionary" by the Party, it no doubt has been driven underground. Nevertheless, its fledgling attempts at organization do indicate that the democratization movement has spread to include workers and a widening swath of the urban populace.

Beyond the cities, however, there is little immediate prospect for the movement to take roots among the rural population. The information and communication gap between the city and the countryside remains wide. Moreover, peasants as a sector have benefitted more from the economic reforms than the urban sectors and will undoubtedly count among the more "conservative" elements of Chinese society today. They would wish to preserve the material benefits that they have enjoyed from the reforms and would be against public expressions of dissent or unrest that might threaten the "stability" necessary for "socialist modernization".

COMPARED TO its spontaneous beginnings in 1976, the democratization movement has in its latest manifestations shown a greater capacity for being more sustained and organized despite recent crackdowns on it. Unlike the early phase of the movement which focussed on the institutionalization of a socialist legal system as a reaction to State abuse of power during the Cultural Revolution, the second phase has given expression to more concrete demands that are rooted in the contradictions arising from economic reforms. One key issue obviously has been the issue of widespread corruption within the bureaucracy and Party which threatens to undermine its political legitimacy and authority. The issue of corruption has also underscored the increasing distance between an entrenched and privileged Party elite and the masses. Unless the Party can effectively address this issue, it will continue to be a focus of the democratization movement and will serve to broaden the movement's appeal among the people.

Beyond the issue of corruption, the economic decentralization that is constitutive of current economic reforms will generate demands for more workplace democracy. On one level, there will be greater demands for less Party supervision in management where expertise and professionalism rather than ideological commitment and Party loyalty are being emphasized. On another level, decentralization has given more power and authority to enterprise managers but has not resolved the contradictions between management and workers. In the drive for higher productivity, workers now have less job security but encounter greater pressures and stricter labor discipline. There have been complaints about the large wage differentials between manager and workers and deteriorating work conditions. While there have been some attempts by the Party towards reinvigorating trade union leadership (a much younger leadership emerged at the Tenth National Trade Union Congress in 1983), Party-led unions have generally tended to function as organs for mobilizing workers to achieve goals determined by the Party. There has been growing worker dissatisfaction with the role that has been assigned to trade unions and one can anticipate that there will be a growing desire for more independent unions.

In general, the democratization movement has incorporated demands for improving and strengthening the socialist legal system, a

decentralization of Party-State control over the economy but retaining collective ownership, a greater role for mass organizations and more genuine representation in these organizations and in the bureaucracy. Up to this point, there has been no questioning of Party hegemony but at the same time there are expectations that other power centers will be allowed to emerge to counterbalance the excessive concentration of State power within the Party and the bureaucracy.

The democratization movement cannot be checked without a total reversal of the current economic reforms and a return to a highly centralized and planned economy. The reforms have provided the conditions for the emergence and spread of the movement in the urban centers. Its expansion to the countryside will be contingent on the increase in rural-urban exchange and interaction in the future.

The nature and objectives of the movement will determine the extent to which it will promote genuine socialism in China. This will also be dependent on how the Party will react or respond to the movement's demands. Recent developments in Eastern Europe seem to indicate that attempts to liberalize that are too little or too late could in the long run generate pressures for reform that would seriously undermine the bases for socialism, including the survival of the Party. Clearly, in the light of China's historical experience, change in ownership and economic planning were necessary but not sufficient conditions for the transition to socialism. Equally important is the process by which the forms of State or collective ownership become invested with the substance of mastery by the direct producers. (Selden, p. 25) To the extent that the democratization movement can achieve a greater role for mass organizations, more genuine representation of grassroots interests, and greater workplace democracy, its contributions to the development of socialist democracy can only be positive. A central issue in the struggle for more democracy is the overwhelming power of the State and the question of how to realize a socialist vision that involves the initiative and active participation in social change of the entire working population.

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CHINA AFTER TIANANMEN

Aileen San Pablo-Baviera

HOW OFTEN has it been said about China that the only thing that is permanent is change itself? From the first feudal empire of Shi Huang Di two centuries B.C., through Mongol conquest, through the milenarian anti-Manchu and anti-imperialist movements of the 19th century, through the birth pangs of an infant Republic torn by civil war and foreign aggression, metamorphosis into the largest socialist nation in the world has been a process pervaded at every twist and turn by upheaval and revolution.

No one, witnessing mass starvation and child-selling for survival in the 1940s, could have anticipated that forty years hence China would be able to feed and clothe a population of one billion, much less develop nuclear capability and be wooed by the two superpowers of this era. No one, suffering Gang of Four persecution for unproletarian origins in the late 60s, could have imagined Coca Cola and Western rock music invited in by the Communist Party a mere two decades later. None would envisage the brutality of units of the People's Liberation Army, unleashed upon young students and workers who many times past had emulated their spirit of heroism, service and sacrifice.

Change has not only been a permanent feature of Chinese history, it has also been unpredictable. And yet, given this unpredictability, China has attained such importance that we can not equivocate examination of the question: whither China from here? Ergo this attempt to forward this "fearful forecast", fearful only because of its tentativeness given the very short time that has elapsed since a new situation has developed in Beijing, but not necessarily because its projections for China are bleak.

THE WHY'S AND WHEREFORE'S of the protest movement in China have been discussed in many public fora. The bigger issue that has remained unaddressed is — why did the Deng Xiaoping regime react as it did — using artillery against a basically peaceful, unarmed civilian throng in a manner unprecedented in Chinese communist history?

How an individual or a government behaves under intensely critical conditions can perhaps be more clearly explained by studying its possible perceptions rather than the hard facts or circumstances. The protest movement began as a crusade for political reforms, led by intellectuals demanding freedom of expression and greater transparency and accountability of government. It snowballed into an outpouring of grievances by other sectors of society, scoring official corruption and inflation as threats to the prosperity they had only begun to taste or had yet to enjoy under China's economic liberalization program. Eventually the demonstrations involved not only students or intellectuals but groups representing various occupations and work units that had in recent periods been relatively politically dormant.

At that very moment, a historic meeting was taking place — the first Sino-Soviet summit since the fateful Mao-Khrushchev split that heralded the collapse of monolithic international communism. The Chinese communists would have proudly underscored the significance of the Deng-Gorbachev encounter as a watershed in history, an end to the divisions wracking the socialist world, a signal achievement for the once-belittled Asian socialists and a fitting apex of Deng's career. But Tiananmen was bursting with even greater drama, the student hunger-strikers capturing the admiration of the public and the attention of the international press. Deng's moment of glory was turning into a circus of humiliation — and the policy of restraint which had prematurely drawn praise and which may have greatly encouraged the demonstrators was challenged by hardliners within the leadership, resulting in the bloodbath.

FACTIONAL STRIFE

BY LOOKING at the factional struggles within the Party we can under-

stand why the crackdown took place. For years since the ascendancy of Deng, the Communist Party had struggled to establish inner-Party unity behind the economic liberalization program. There were differences of opinion on the pace and emphasis of economic decentralization reforms, with the highly innovative experiments in market regulation, stocks, coastal development and China's "Great Leap Outward" reflecting the Zhao Ziyang line while conservatives like Chen Yun pushed for a more cautious approach to the open-door policy, favoring readjustment of existing production systems with less new capital construction and prescribing strict financial controls to keep down trade deficits and price increases. Zhao, a protege of strongman Deng Xiaoping, was the chief architect of the bold reforms implemented over the last decade, with Chen Yun playing the role of conservative fiscalizer putting on the brakes when he felt things were getting out of hand. The rapid and reckless implementation of even the most prudent reform policies did begin to take its toll as inflation grew and corruption and income differentials became widespread. The conservatives in the Party put the blame on the reforms, particularly the open-door policy, while the reformers said it was precisely because the reforms were as yet "unfinished" that these problems came about.

An attempt to partially correct the situation was made when the September 1988 CPC Third Plenary Session resolved to "rectify the economic environment ... (and) promote planned, comprehensive and coordinated reform," indicating retrenchment of reforms by a sadder but wiser leadership. A consensus appeared to have been reached on more sober directions and a more realistic velocity for economic development, the cornerstone of the Deng government.

The issue of political *glasnost*, or *toumingdu* (transparency) as the Chinese would have it, proved to be far more contentious for the communist party. Hu Yaobang's dismissal was a warning to those inclined to tolerate "bourgeois liberalism" (which appears to refer to Western concepts of democratic freedoms based on individualism as opposed to concepts of socialist democracy emphasizing the common good and proletarian welfare above all). The fact that the Tiananmen protests precipitated intensification of the inner-Party struggle over political liberalization became more evident later with the dismissal of Zhao Ziyang and the appointment of Jiang Zemin, an economic pragmatist but political conservative.

Against this context, the students dug their own graves when they erected and installed in Tiananmen their "Goddess of Democracy", whose likeness to New York's "Liberty Enlightening the World" may actually have been more imagined than intended. Nevertheless, when western media and perhaps even China's top communists did in fact interpret it for what the Mother of Exiles symbolized, it was the final affront, the ultimate outrage, the last painful straw for the patriarchs, "old foggies" they may now be, but fervent nationalists and once upon a time valiant revolutionaries all.

Were the students and intellectuals so organized and unequivocally counter-revolutionary that the authorities explored no other, more moderate means to disperse them? The movement was largely spontaneous, had little organization and therefore lacked the strength to overthrow the Party, even if they had had the intentions to do so, which they did not. Clearly it was the prospect of workers organizing in sympathy and perhaps later to push for their own demands that had petrified the old communists. The experiences of Solidarity and Poland were historically too close for comfort. The ghosts of past "counter-revolutionaries", as well as the threat of Cultural Revolution-style extreme "left" adventurism, rose up to haunt the helmsmen at that moment. Thus the authorities initially labelled what was obviously a patriotic student movement as no more than a "turbulence" created by a "handful of hooligans"; then later as "counter-revolutionary", no less.

The greatest humiliation was that Tiananmen was happening on the front pages of newspapers, in radio broadcasts and on television screens all over the world. Did international media coverage embolden the protesters and strengthen their hand in dealing with the authorities? Or did it contribute to their Waterloo by painting a portrait of official weakness in the face of political chaos, thus forcing the regime to take drastic action in order to prevent loss of face?

From the perspective of the key decision-makers, we have this much to conjecture. At that critical moment, when the first shots were fired, the hardliners within the Party did not see the protagonists as helpless students versus soldiers and tanks. No. They saw it as a struggle between a stable, carefully planned course of socialist modernization, that can only be led by a united and respected communist party (if somewhat tainted by corruption and handicapped by geriatric orthodoxy) versus a freer, more open, and likely more precarious society.

A more open society would inevitably be more vulnerable to internal subversion as well as foreign pressure. In a more open society, the agenda of socialist modernization would be in danger of being transformed either by newly emergent alternative sources of power (such as, perhaps, an independent workers union) or by new cliques springing from intense factional strife within the Party itself. Then the visions of a modern and powerful China, which Mao Zedong and Zhou En-lai dreamed of and which Deng Xiaoping has come closest to achieving, would move farther and farther away from realization. The stakes were too high, and the communist party would not gamble on greater freedom and democracy.

AFTER TIANANMEN

WHAT, THEN, can we expect of China after Tiananmen?

Unpredictability, as stated earlier, is the only unchanging factor in Chinese history. Everything else seems variable. So then, let us defy the natural laws of Chinese history and try to forecast the future for China, using our tools of political analysis.

First of all, socialist modernization will continue to be the strategic objective of the Chinese Communist Party, post-Deng Xiaoping and certainly post-Tiananmen. From the perspective of the highly patriarchal leadership, the violent crackdown was a necessary measure undertaken precisely to preserve their power, and with power lies the capability of the Party to lead the struggle for socialist modernization. From their point of view, the momentum and widespread support of the demonstrations already constituted a threat to both the strategic goals of the Four Modernizations (modernization of agriculture, industry, science and technology, and national defense) as well as to the tactical readjustment period during which they hoped to curb both inflation and corruption as well as set up new outlines for more moderate reform.

Economic reforms will therefore stay, but be subjected to stricter assessment, periodic readjustments and renewed stress on planning. If it were up to the Chinese, the open-door and coastal development policies or special economic zones (SEZs) would also continue, albeit with more discriminate selection of joint venture partners and investment areas. Better incentives for foreign investment may even be

offered, including implementation of a provision proposed earlier granting foreign corporations insurance against political change.

The anti-corruption campaign will go on, this time with a vengeance. It might have some effects on the operation of joint ventures in SEZs, since so far a great number of offenders that have been punished seem to come from Guangzhou and these areas.

Moreover, the door remains open for foreign capital and technology but not for "decadent bourgeois" ideas. Contacts with the West may be further restricted to official representatives, with students and other citizens discouraged from befriending foreigners. Since the government is attempting to portray the Tiananmen condemnations as "anti-Chinese" expressions, they may well have created the rationale for an "anti-foreign" campaign among their people.

The Chinese are seething over so-called "foreign interference" in their internal affairs, referring to the condemnations and sanctions imposed by the United States and the EEC following Tiananmen. They might rely more on Japan for capital and technology or try to further utilize other sources of capital, including overseas Chinese communities and even Taiwan. Economic as well as political cooperation with the Third World is likely to increase as China has traditionally used its respected status among developing nations to help neutralize domestic dissent as well as Western pressure.

As the governments of US and the EEC try to distance themselves from China temporarily, China's cooperation with the Soviet Union on international issues (disarmament, environment, Asia-Pacific peace and security—including Kampuchea, Afghanistan and Korean Peninsula concerns) may increase. However, China realizes the relative unimportance of the USSR in the immediate term insofar as China's own modernization program is concerned. The Soviet Union is faced with similar problems, although its leaders have chosen to approach reform from the political angle first. Being in the same tempest-ridden boat, they cannot bail each other out.

But when the US and EEC have done with their customary expressions of horror at the human rights violations committed by the Chinese authorities, and when the realization sets in that they stand more to lose than to gain by alienating China at this point in time, they will hurry back to business with the Chinese. Perhaps there will be a more circumspect partnership between China and the West, but a partner-

ship nonetheless.

The best thing that can be said about the Chinese is that they know their history flawlessly and they learn its lessons well. If they feared a repetition of the chaotic and anarchic Cultural Revolution, they also know the inevitability of the struggle for a more meaningful people's democracy in China, and therefore the inevitability of political reform. Before Tiananmen, as early as 1987, the framework for political reforms had in fact already been laid by Zhao Ziyang. His report to the 13th National People's Congress outlined the blueprint for China's political reforms, including the following broad objectives: separation of Party and government; delegation of powers to the lower levels, change of functions and reform of the departments of government; establishment of a career public service; and improvement of the socialist legal system.

Moreover, delegates to the National Peoples' Congress were elected by secret ballot in 1988, the first such elections since 1949. The long-overdue transition to the "rule of law" was also underway, as evidenced by reports of foreign legal scholars invited to observe the institution of new legal processes in China. Meanwhile, dissident leader Fang Lizhi was allowed to leave for speaking engagements in Hongkong and Australia, although he was subsequently prevented from going on a similar trip to the United States.

We note that the political reforms were approached through organizational modifications rather than being doctrinal in nature. No mention is made of restoring "bourgeois" freedoms such as those demanded by the intellectuals, although these may be presumed included in the goal of "improving the socialist legal system". Thus the blueprint does not have to be incompatible with the goals of the new hardline dispensation. However, should the Party decide to pursue such a program even after Tiananmen, it will have to be at a much slower pace, instituting guarantees every step of the way that the Party's line will continue to be respected. We predict that there will be greater emphasis on developing the superstructural aspects of Chinese socialism, meaning more ideological and propaganda work, and more political study meetings especially for Communist Party members. As in the Soviet Union, any initiatives toward liberalization will come from and be wielded by the Center. No grassroots democracy movement as in South Korea or in Poland, or like what Tiananmen in fact presaged,

will be tolerated. "Transparency" such as in disclosing private bank accounts of government and party officials and their close relatives, will be long in coming, not because it is against socialist theories of government so much as because it is antithetical to Chinese feudal-authoritarian culture.

Will the democracy movement regroup and prepare for a bigger challenge to the Communist Party next time around? It is a distinct possibility, but more likely they will conduct clandestine political operations planned and led from outside Chinese borders, given the very repressive environment in China today.

Will they mobilize enough support from the Chinese workers and peasants to significantly threaten the faction in power? Not if the leadership convincingly succeeds in wiping out corruption, redressing imbalances in incomes and expenditures at both macro and microeconomic levels, instilling greater Party discipline, providing enrichment of culture and recreation, and reviving socialist consciousness among the Chinese people.

For in the ultimate analysis, what is the freedom to criticize but a figment of the imagination of poets and philosophers, finding no sympathy nor solace for as long as the stomach is content and the higher sensibilities appeased.

THE SPRING OF DISCONTENT

an eyewitness account by Lily Rose R. Tope

IT ALMOST NEVER RAINS in spring but Beijing had a downpour that afternoon, shielding everyone inside the building from external noise. No one would have noticed that something eventful was happening had it not been for the fact that the rain suddenly took on the beat of a chant or a cheer. Then the corridor broke into pandemonium. An American neighbor grabbed her camera and dashed into the rain. "The Beijing University students are marching!" she cried. That was April 15, 1989. Hu Yaobang had just died. The 1989 pro-democracy movement had begun.

The evening news from then on carried footages of students occupying Tiananmen Square. The number of students in the Square grew; so did the number of sympathizers. The government alternately praised and criticized the students. Tension mounted when students confronted the police at the national leaders' residential compound. Classes were disrupted in the universities. The students decided to go on hunger strike, intending to shame their leaders into giving in to their demands. China made the front page internationally. The student movement had caught the imagination of the world.

We foreign students could only watch the events unfold from the sidelines. Many of us sympathized with the demonstrators but we were advised not to meddle in something that did not concern us. Then censorship was enforced. The news blackout deprived us of our only means of keeping track of the events. The highlights, the world saw. The sidelights, what went on outside of Tiananmen, that is what we saw.

The fervor initiated by the Beijing University students spread rapidly throughout the university area. Days after the April 15 march, our small institute's placid campus rose from its complacency and

manifested a restiveness that could only have resulted from the previous days' events. A wall beside the volleyball courts was converted into a gigantic news board. A kaleidoscope of posters bannered the students' demands as well as the hourly reports that couriers brought back from Tiananmen. Called "democracy wall" (a term that was carried over from the similar student-led pro-democracy movement in 1986), this wall became our only link with Tiananmen.

A loud speaker was erected above the wall. The students conducted their own news broadcasts, their rendition of the news clashing with that of government television. People had taken to leaving their TV sets during broadcast time to converge before the democracy wall. Everyday, at six in the morning, a campus-wide radio news broadcast blared the events of the previous day. The students drowned the announcer's voice by playing the "Internationale" not only once but twice or thrice.

Photos taken of the Tiananmen demonstrators appeared and were sold at the foreign students' cafeteria. This despite warning from the authorities that unauthorized pictures of Tiananmen would be confiscated. Photo developers outside the campus never heeded the warning and inadvertently participated in the movement by developing the photos, knowing these shots would reach various parts of the globe.

The fact that we were Filipinos excited people outside the campus. They would talk about people power and Cory Aquino while they expressed their wish for a similar political success.

Our teachers began to talk, the younger ones more vocal about their ideas. They too became our link with Tiananmen. With typical Chinese caution, they explained the issues to us but tried not to incriminate themselves by avoiding categorical statements. Filling the gaps, though, was not difficult.

Two weeks after the boycott of classes, many schools resumed classes. Beijing University, the seat of dissent, did not. A group of us Filipinos decided to pay the campus a visit.

Beijing University has one of the most beautiful campuses in China, its sprawling grounds punctuated by pockets of gardens, pagodas and ponds. However, the serene picture it made belied the urgency with which its student leaders planned their next moves. Headquarters for the leaders meant either the publication office or a makeshift conference hall in one of the dormitory rooms. The location of both moved

periodically. After a couple of unsuccessful attempts, we finally located the publication office. Banners, being readied for student marchers, were strewn all over the floor. An antiquated mimeographing machine churned out hand-outs. A Caucasian woman journalist was already interviewing one of the students. The student leaders we spoke with enthusiastically answered our questions and from the babble of English and Chinese voices, the following positions came out loud and clear: One, the students are not against socialism, they still think this is the best system for China; two, all they want is that the Party institute reforms and that it be more responsive to current needs; three, change through violent means is feasible; four, Deng is too old and has wielded power too long; and five, Deng's economic reforms have brought about an improvement in the standard of living, but the political reforms are long in coming.

May 17 was warm and windy. It would have been an uneventful day had not Gorbachev chosen this day to visit Tiananmen. That afternoon, the teachers in our institute decided to throw their lot with the demonstrators. Despite the risk to job and limb, they marched to where Gorbachev was allegedly having a meeting with Deng. It was a festive march — the ladies donned their straw hats while the men tied red bands around their arms. My young teacher was there, that was expected. My elderly teacher was there, too. That was unexpected. We Filipino students decided we were not going to let history pass us by. In unexpressed solidarity with our teachers and Chinese schoolmates, we went to Tiananmen to be counted.

It turned out to be the biggest rally in Beijing since the 1989 movement began. Authorities prohibited buses from operating to prevent students and residents from reaching Tiananmen. But the people will not be denied. They went by bicycle or commandeered cargo trucks. We were lucky we caught a rare taxi. Ordinarily, we are wary of taxis because of drivers who are on the make. Our driver was different. When he learned that we were going to Tiananmen, he refused payment.

Nearly a million people gathered on Tiananmen that day. There were bakers just off their shift, nurses still in uniform, nursery school teachers, writers, taxi drivers, workers who came with their shift mates, movie actors, dancers, athletes, throngs of students, pedestrians and vendors. Policemen kept out of sight. Except for the students who were

waging a hunger strike and who occupied the base of the People's Monument, everybody was in a festive mood.

Students kept order by directing traffic, allowing ambulances which ferried fallen hunger strikers to reach the nearest hospitals. Medical tents around the Square administered first aid. Vendors found trade lucrative; they donated part of their profits to the students.

The camaraderie and the innocence of Tiananmen Square reminded me of EDSA in 1986. It would have been *deja vu* except for the fact that at EDSA we expected to be attacked by the Marcos forces; the people at Tiananmen believed that the People's Liberation Army would never fire at civilians. The Army loves the people, they said.

On our way home, our group together with a bunch of Chinese students, commandeered an empty bus whose driver was just too glad to accommodate Tiananmen veterans. Outside Tiananmen, people lined the streets. They clapped and cheered as our bus sped by. Students and pedestrians flashed the victory sign at each other. At that moment, we, too, despite our foreignness, felt like heroes.

Later, at about 2 a.m., we abandoned sleep and again joined the people in the streets. There was talk that soldiers were coming in from the provinces. The whole city seemed to be waiting for them. Students erected barricades at the nearby railroad track. If that did not work, they were going to lie on the tracks. A tragedy seemed imminent. However, no soldier arrived that day and tragedy struck two weeks later.

Then martial law was declared. Chinese officials went on television prohibiting people from joining or sympathizing with the demonstrators. A foreign TV network was ordered to pack up. Foreigners were not allowed to go to the Tiananmen Square. We had to reassure our families we were alright.

The democracy wall news told us of the official order to disperse the student demonstrators and the police's refusal to obey orders, of military trainees marching into the ranks of demonstrators only to be the object of the people's wrath, of soldiers' astonishment at the sight of the crowd and their ignorance of their mission, of Zhao Ziyang's fall from grace, of similar demonstrations being staged in various parts of the country in solidarity with the Beijing students and of the students' interception of a convoy of military trucks filled with guns.

Meanwhile, the students' month-long vigil was taking its toll. Con-

flicts erupted within the ranks. Many signified their wish to return home. We expected the movement to fizzle out any moment.

On the evening of June 3, the flyover in Jianguomenwai teemed with people blocking a long line of military trucks. A student stood on the hood of a truck and harangued the beleaguered students. Youths handed them old issues of newspapers to inform them of the real circumstances at Tiananmen. An old woman distributed sandwiches among the soldiers while berating them for fighting the students. The presence of the soldiers turned the night from heady to grim.

In the early hours of June 4, we were awakened by a rumbling sound. From the window, we saw columns of tanks rolling towards the direction of Tiananmen Square. Being in Jianguomenwai at that time, we knew it would only be a matter of minutes before the tanks reached Tiananmen. Sure enough, in about ten minutes, we heard bursts of machine gun fire. The gunfire lasted for about twenty minutes; it was followed by a deafening silence. We grabbed a shortwave radio, hoping to get some news from the foreign broadcasts. We heard about the attack on Tiananmen from BBC and Voice of America. Local stations were off the air.

The next day, there was a general rush to the airport. People feared a possible confrontation between army factions friendly to the students and those loyal to the government. The bigger stores were closed as a precaution against looting. Burnt trucks blockaded the city streets. The road partitions were flattened by tank tires. People converged in groups in street corners discussing the night's events or morbidly listening to the gory stories of someone who saw it all. Everyone talked in whispers. Tiananmen was just a stone's throw away.

By midmorning, our Institute's Chinese students had returned. Many were bedraggled and in tears. A student carried the lifeless body of a boy who had a bullet hole in his chest. The student grabbed the boy in the melee; the boy died in his arms. He did not know where the boy's parents were. The students silently paraded the boy's body around the campus, the dead boy an irrevocable testimony to the previous night's slaughter.

The crackdown had begun.

TODAY, months later, an uneasy peace reigns in Beijing. Soldiers have vacated Tiananmen Square and a semblance of normalcy has

returned. Executions have been effected and the crackdown continues to haunt student fugitives. Apparently, the lessons have been learned. Beijing University underwent intense political education before classes opened. The rumblings have abated. This was how 1989, like 1986, ended, like an open-ended chapter. Until the next season of discontent begins.

BEIJING . . . THE OTHER VIEW

Mario Miclat

NO, THERE WAS NO MASSACRE IN BEIJING. It was a most ordinary spring.

Springtime in Beijing was a real marvel. Early April saw the poplar trees lining the boulevards still in their hibernal state. Bare of leaves since October, they still carry their eerie look. Their flowers borne in catkins looked like worms, nibbling at the gnarled branches.

As usual, On April 15, the sun greeted the bare trees in the morning. At noon, the leaves popped out, as big as a child's palm. In the afternoon, Beijing was covered with green. Peach, apple and apricot blossoms, pink, red and white, competed with emerald willows. No one ever died on April 15. It was, in fact, traditionally celebrated as a day of birth. It was believed that on that day of spring in 563 B.C. Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, was born in China's neighboring Nepal.

Springtime was the time to fly kites. People from all over carried their kites to Tiananmen, the Gate of Heavenly Peace. Children with their dragonfly kites. Teenagers with their goldfish kites, The middle-aged with their eagle kites. The old with their dragon kites. Even some girls flew their butterfly kites.

Historically, of course, kites were flown in China, not for leisure but for war. It was said that during the Spring and Autumn period (770-476 B.C.) a carpenter named Gong Shuban mounted himself on a wooden kite to reconnoiter the capital of the kingdom of Song.

When Liu Bang of the Han kingdom and Xiangyu of the Kingdom of Chu were at war in the 3rd century, B.C., Liu Bang's general, Han Xin ordered that a big kite be made. One dark night, a man rode the kite flying over the barracks of Xiang Yu's troops. The man played a flute. He played melodies of the kingdom of Chu. The Chu soldiers felt

homesick upon hearing the music from their native land. They lost the will to fight. The Han army then attacked. The Chus were defeated.

During the Tang period (618-907), kites were used to send letters asking for reinforcement of troops.

But now was a time of peace. And kites were just for flying.

No one could remember exactly who started flying kites at Tiananmen this year. Perhaps, no particular person did. People just came, one after another. At Tiananmen, they discovered their single purpose. To fly kites. Flying kites was exhilarating. It made one feel like flying. And flying made one free.

And so they came. Hundreds. Thousands. Ten thousands.

Summer came a bit early. Each year, when the hot season came, people brought their mats and beds outside. They slept on the sidewalks, along Chang An—the Avenue of Eternal Peace, and at Tiananmen Square. They played cards before they slept. They sang songs. They told stories.

"I am the most proletarian of all," said one. "I live in a nine square meter flat, with my grandpa, grandma, father, mother, and a younger sister."

"Then I am more proletarian than you," said another. "I live in an eight square meter flat, with my grandparents and my parents. I have no sister and no brother."

"What made you more proletarian?"

"I have no sister, and no brother. My mother was called to the office when she was three months pregnant. They operated on her. And now I have no sister, and no brother."

"I am most proletarian, then," cried another. "I have no room of my own. I live in a crowded dorm. My wife lives in a woman's crowded dorm. We meet once a week in the park. And the police came when they saw us making love. Now I am jobless. And my wife is jobless, too."

"No, you are not proletarian. My family is the most proletarian of all. We live in a mansion. My father goes to office in his chauffeured limousine. My mother goes to the special supermarket in our other car, her maidservant at her beck and call."

"You say you are proletarian?"

"Why, yes. Both my parents are officials of the most advanced party of the proletariat."

"You're not one among us, then."

“But I want to be one. That’s why I came.”

And many more came. Hundreds. Thousands. Hundred thousands. Each one had a story to tell. Telling stories made them feel better. And feeling better made them free.

But freedom needed to be guarded. Anywhere. Anytime. If it was a most ordinary spring. If it was an early summer. In spring, rain never failed to come. In summer, thunderstorms. Indeed, they came again this year.

Lightning struck and burned the kites. Burning kites were always horrible to look at. They looked like tanks crushing at one another. They did not make one free.

Rain drenched the sidewalks, the avenue and the square. People scampered for shelter, trampling on the mats and beds. Trampled beds were often a terrible sight. They looked like corpses in an overstuffed morgue. They did not make people free.

And people who were not free often imagined more horrifying, terrifying things. Like there was a carnage at Tiananmen. The fact was that between 3:30 and 5:00 a.m. of June 4, when the people’s army came to clear the square, there was no living soul in sight in its 40-hectare expanse. How could the army kill non-living souls? No one, but no one, was there anymore to kill. What they saw were only carcasses of kites. What they heard were only the moans of storytellers. It was a time of peace.

Indeed it was a heavenly dawn that greeted everyone.

Waking up from this nightmare of peace, I returned to the real month of June.

SOME QUESTIONS, SOME ANSWERS, ABOUT THE CHINESE STRUGGLE

reprinted from *Echoes from Tiananmen*,

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(The following questions are the ones most commonly asked about the events in China. The publishers of *Echoes from Tiananmen*, who call themselves Friends of Chinese Minzhu, posed these questions to two activists of the democracy movement who choose to remain anonymous for obvious reasons — Ed.)

You say that you oppose the present regime in China, but does the democracy movement have a clear or unified picture of what form of government to put in its place which would be able to run such a huge country?

The question implies that the present structure of government in China is a somehow perfect, static formula which cannot be improved. It also suggests that the democracy movement wished to sweep away the old systems entirely and start building new political models from scratch.

Neither assumption is true.

A leadership which massacres unarmed, popular demonstrators who are voicing legitimate grievances and calling for peaceful change is not fit to rule any country. It is therefore legitimate to oppose such a leadership and to demand the removal and trial of those who committed crimes against the people, and to call for effective changes in the system of government that would prevent such a massacre from taking place ever again.

But it is not true that the demonstrators did not have concrete and

clear demands, and that those pledged to carry on the fight do not have a coherent and legitimate program of reform.

As early as April 28th, the student demonstrators had spelled out the following clear demands:

- To reaffirm the political achievements of Hu Yaobang, to reaffirm the merits of democracy and liberty.
- To repudiate the “anti-bourgeois liberalism” and the “anti-spiritual pollution” campaigns.
- To release details of the financial situations of all high cadres and their families.
- To grant freedom of the press and the right of all people to publish newspapers.
- To increase the fund for education and to improve the rewards to intellectuals.
- To remove the restrictions on rallies and demonstrations.
- To accurately report on the student movement.

As well as this, they made various demands as events and their campaign unfolded, such as the call for freedom to form independent unions, dialogue with government leaders, and the call for the withdrawal of hostile editorials accusing them of criminal acts.

The demonstrators believe that many of the most serious problems present in Chinese society result from a lack of popular participation in policy-making, and a lack (of checks and balances) in the political structure. Their core demands would therefore lay the groundwork for an important process of reform to solve these problems. The question of whether this could or should happen simply within the Party, alongside the Party, or in a new political structure is complex. Since the massacre many people have altered their opinion on the party's capacity for genuine reform, but the first demands are for measures that would enable much greater people's participation in the discussion, formulation, and assessment of these very issues. The original demands of the demonstrators point the direction for political reform in China. The extent and shape of that reform is a process, which the democracy movement believes must involve the participation of the people themselves.

If wise political reforms are not introduced soon, there is a great

chance that China will have to face ungovernable chaos, or miserable, deprived repression, or both.

Isn't it true that the CPC has succeeded in feeding, housing, educating and providing medical care for all the people in the largest and one of the poorest nations on earth. Don't these gains outweigh any mistakes made by the leadership and justify its retention of power by all means?

This question assumes both that the demonstrators were an absolute threat to the economy, law and order and the rule of government, and that, if they were, the threat could not have been removed without a massacre. Both are, of course, false assumptions.

Furthermore, it is simplistic and perhaps utopian to say that the CPC has achieved such tremendous improvement in the lives of all the Chinese people that today's leaders have the right to use any means necessary to remove perceived threats to their power.

Since the CPC achieved victory in 1949, there have been successes and failures. Many of the most important economic gains were achieved in the first few years of the revolution through land reform. People in and around large cities experienced the most improvement in their livelihoods.

The Chinese achievement of improving the basic living standards was impressive given the size of the country. While there has been greater material development in some other Third World areas in the last forty years, it occurred in smaller nations such as north and south Korea, Taiwan and Malaysia.

But despite advances, there have been also periodic famines in China since 1949 up to the present, and massive numbers of death and huge economic setbacks were caused during the Cultural Revolution. The image of China as a nation that has brought an acceptable basic living standard, and a secure life to all its people is an incomplete one, built on carefully prepared propaganda, often accepted far too uncritically by overseas intellectuals.

Earlier exaggerated claims of gains have since been discounted by the CPC itself. China is still a very poor nation with some areas of desperate poverty, illiteracy and disease. The government admits that a significant percentage of the population remains below the official poverty line.

China's progress has been impressive when compared to pre-revolutionary China. But that was forty years ago. Many other nations have also re-constructed in this time. Most of China's citizens were born since the revolution, and the "bad old days" before the revolution appear as a distant era to them, mythologized by the party. Development cannot be measured in a static way against a forty-year old yardstick. The Chinese people do not want to assess their situation against the first half of the century, nor, for that matter, against other Third World nations; they aspire for continued progress. The CPC cannot forever cite early achievements to justify its use of any means necessary to silence critics.

As the student demonstrators defied the party leadership, aren't they accurately described as counter-revolutionaries? Were they not part of an overseas conspiracy to cause trouble for the Chinese government?

Until a few days before the massacre, Chinese leaders themselves were calling the demonstrators "patriotic" and their demands legitimate. Only when the CPC leadership were preparing the brutal crackdown in the first few days of June were the demonstrators labeled counter-revolutionary. Even after the massacre, the leaders did not claim that they were organized from outside, simply that "outside elements [including Chinese people from Hongkong, which Beijing considers to be Chinese citizens] created the conditions for the chaos". Only later have some senior leaders and overseas apologists for the Beijing regime claimed that the actual movement was an "outside conspiracy" or that the early movement was penetrated and manipulated by an outside conspiracy.

There is an important difference between opposing the present leadership of the Party, and opposing the Party itself. Many members of the Chinese Communist Party, within China, supported the democracy movement, support socialism and now oppose the Li-Yang-Deng (Li Peng, Yang Shangkun, Deng Xiaoping — ed.) clique. Some believe that with the correct leadership, the party is capable of reform from within, others believe there must be independent, external mechanisms to check party power, and others feel that the introduction of a plural political system is the only guarantee against abuse of power. These debates existed within China, these debates were met with

arrests, solitary confinement and ultimately by tanks, machine guns and executions. Yet the movement working to revitalize these debates survives, and must be supported if China is to move forward.

Does the democracy movement support Zhao Ziyang, or do they perhaps look back to the leadership of Mao or Zhou Enlai for inspiration?

One of the great advances of the 1989 democracy movement over earlier Chinese reform movements is that most of its core members do not see their future lying with one particular individual emerging as a wise leader. Most do not put all their hope in the arrival of a "benevolent dictator" as people did in the time of the emperors. This feudal attitude towards leaders has permeated Chinese history and was not really eradicated when the Communist Party took power in 1949, and was even exploited by the CPC at some stages.

Does the democracy movement really have mass support in the cities? And what do the Chinese peasants, who after all represent 80% of the Chinese people, think about the government?

Those people who dared to be seen marching in the streets felt so strongly about the need for change that they risked almost everything to express their feelings. After Martial Law was declared, the hundreds of thousands, and sometimes millions, out on the streets in Beijing were marching illegally. At one point, more than one seventh of the entire city's population marched. They marched under foreign-supplied surveillance cameras in position at every intersection. They risked identification by the Public Security Bureau, they risked being reported by the street committees that monitor the activities of all residents, and they risked being reported by their work units, which control all the working and social life of all people. If you lose your job in China, you lose your home, you lose all welfare benefits, food allowances, school places for your children. Yet still the millions dared to march, and yet hundreds of thousands marched and demonstrated in all other major cities in China. For everyone who marched, how many also shared their frustration but remained too frightened to go onto the streets? That so many people took the unprecedented step of appearing at an unofficial

demonstration is an indication of the massive support for the demonstrator's demands for reforms.

In the countryside the situation is extremely hard to assess. If the average Chinese city-dweller lacks information about the rest of the world, the Chinese peasants lack information about the events in Chinese cities.

There are stories that in some distant parts of China there are Communist Party officials who have never heard of Deng Xiaoping, such is the problem of communication. The government organized demonstrations of peasants against the democracy movement in early June, but people said they were ordered into the cities, paid to attend, and had no idea what the issue was.

There are widespread reports of resentment and unhappiness within the rural population. These come from the impact of economic reforms rather than any desire for political change.

The reform of land ownership to a leasing system has given peasants more control over their own lives. However, corruption of grants, subsidies, tax and pricing system affects the peasants as much, if not more than the workers. The relaxation of price subsidies and crop planning has enabled some well-positioned peasants to grow rich, but a greater number have fallen victim to the resultant inflation and the unpredictability of the market system in agriculture. The publicity given to the few peasants who have grown rich has created a chasm between the official image of the situation in the countryside, to which all peasants are supposed to aspire, and the reality of their situation and its likelihood of improvement. Such frustration did not exist in earlier times, when the propaganda said that to be poor would be politically correct and noble. There are reports that due to more widespread economic management problems in China, the government have for the past two years paid some peasants for their grain in scrip [i.e., I.O.U] notes rather than cash.

Are not many right-wing and pro-capitalist groups using the democracy movement in China to argue that communism has failed, communism is in crisis throughout the world or that communism always leads to brutality by the State? Shouldn't the left therefore defend the Communist Party of China?

It is to be expected that right-wing, anti-socialist groups and governments will try to take advantage of these tragic events in China. This is why it is even more important for socialists everywhere to make their support of the people's movement in China loud and clear. Many socialists around the world moved quickly to develop a clear understanding and explanation of the events in China, and have pointed out the nature of the democracy movement as a genuine mass movement voicing legitimate demands. People should extend their support and friendship to the Chinese students and intellectuals outside China who are determined to continue the movement, and who need help. The Chinese people will one day win this struggle. If the left abandons them in their time of greatest need, they abandon them to the right-wingers. The reaction of the right-wing governments and groups to events in China is, historically speaking, only secondary. The primary issue is the democracy movement and its suppression by the CPC. At such a time, socialists must base their responses on these events. Some dogmatic sections of the left have issued statements in support of the Chinese leadership's violent crackdown on the demonstrators. These statements appear to be a response to the actions of other enemies: Western imperialist governments and the Western pro-capitalist media. They accuse the West of using the issue for their own political purposes. However, by basing their arguments on Western reactions rather than the primary event, are they not also using the tragic suffering of the Chinese people to fight their own separate battles? By applying the simplistic rule [maxim] that "my enemy's enemies are my friends", they are betraying the Chinese martyrs and endangering their own cause.

If the CPC has given the anti-socialist forces great opportunities for criticisms of socialism and communism, this is but another function of the errors committed by the CPC.

The capitalist governments and multi-national corporations are chiefly motivated by opportunities to do business and to make profits. Experience elsewhere in the Third World has taught them that they can achieve this regardless of human rights records of any country. Foreign capitalists are eager to utilize China's cheap, controlled workers, and to sell to the nation's vast market. Their memory of the Tiananmen massacre will therefore be very short. People must be there to support the Chinese people's movement as they come to learn who their true allies are.

Demonstrators in Tiananmen Square were singing the Internationale. At the same time, they erected a statue of liberty. Are they socialists, or are they influenced and inspired by the western capitalist ideal, foolishly believing that the American model of liberal democracy is the best for China?

The students and workers of China have grown up with an understanding of the benefits of a society which provides security for all and which cares for the young, the old and the sick. Socialism is their context; they know the strengths and benefits of collective organization.

At the same time, though, many people in China are dissatisfied with their standard of living and the level of their personal freedom. The enforced diet of political study sessions, slogans and mass campaigns of the past four decades, often very contradictory as the Party reversed its positions, has left most Chinese deeply cynical about abstract political theories, ideals and promises of a perfect society. Workers and peasants judge leaders and political systems by measurable results, particularly those affecting their own livelihoods. They have seen a real drop in spending power in the last few years. They now know enough about life in places like Europe and Japan to know that things in China could be much better. It is therefore undeniable that many ordinary people in China are disillusioned and dissatisfied with what the Chinese government has done in the name of socialism, and they have a growing interest in alternative systems.

But anyway, say, for example, that the demonstrators were singing a western pop song rather than the Internationale. To what extent would this actually diminish the accuracy of their criticisms of Chinese society and the justice of their cause. It is crucial to understand the isolation of the Chinese people, and their lack of balanced information on the situation in the outside world. They are unable to gain sufficient information and critiques of Western development models and societies. For decades the CPC has fed the people with a very black and white picture of the rest of the world, criticizing the West for decades, then praising it as a target to be "caught up with" by the next century. If the Chinese people hold some simplistic views of the world it is the fault of the leadership. The problem would be eased if the demonstrators' demands for freer press and debate were allowed.

The Burmese students and demonstrators were massacred in their hundreds, and again are now facing brutal suppression from the military regime in that country. Some demonstrators carried posters saying "down with socialism". Does this devalue the justice or truth of their cause? In their context, they oppose the government which oppresses them, and which calls itself socialist. Yet they are a popular movement opposing a brutal regime (away from the Western media cameras). Will socialists around the world turn their back on the students because of the terminology they use in the Burmese context?

Socialists concerned about China should not wait around looking for reassuring signs and symbols of "political correctness" within the Chinese democracy movement (singing the Internationale, quoting Marx, etc.) They should assess the legitimacy of the issues the movement is raising, they should examine the level of mass support the movement enjoys, and they should assess the implications of the government's reaction. It is on this basis that they should decide their support of the movement, and the way in which they will build contact with it, and engage it in debate.

The "Statue of Liberty" referred to by most of the demonstrators as the "Goddess of Democracy" actually more closely resembles the "White-haired Girl" from the cultural revolution opera. However, any symbolism used by the people's democracy movement in China must once again be considered fully in the Chinese social context. If America meant anything to the demonstrators, it was merely an abstract symbol of change rather than a concrete economic and political model to be followed.

Aren't the demands of the students Western-influenced bourgeois liberal ideas, such as freedom of speech and freedom of assembly? Such a vast and poor country as China cannot afford these luxuries. Such individual freedoms would create chaos.

Economic and political reforms are needed to prevent chaos in China. The economy is going badly because the political structure does not enable [the checks and balances] to ensure that reforms do not cause hardships and problems for certain groups. More channels for people's participation in the Chinese government are the only means

by which China can move forward as a nation, and the only way by which it can do this effectively, smoothly and without chaos.

Although Western societies may be labelled bourgeois democracies, universal suffrage, freedom of the press, freedom of speech and freedom of association were originally freedoms enjoyed only by the bourgeoisie.

The working class fought for the universal application of these rights, in the same way as they fought to establish the trade union movement. Many good people died during these struggles. It is therefore wrong to label these rights "bourgeois freedoms". What sort of "road to socialism" can be followed if the people are not free to hear contending views, to hold meetings, and to organize? Such rights are not luxuries, but the essential building blocks of socialism.

The justification for the Dictatorship of the Proletariat has always been that this state would be a transitional stage to give the people time to eliminate the residual power of the bourgeoisie, to build their own institutions, and to gain real control of the means of production; after which the state would gradually crumble away. How can the workers and peasants possibly achieve these goals if the party restricts their access to information, their freedom to hold meetings, and their rights to organize?

The situation in the West can be just as oppressive as that in China. If tens of thousands of students in Britain sat in the center of London and demanded a direct dialogue with Margaret Thatcher, or her resignation, wouldn't they, too, be forcibly dispersed?

In the West, and in many Third World countries, calls for resignation of political leaders ring out in the press and media daily. There are countless demonstrations filled with banners and chants against the leadership. The leaders face regular debate with political opposition in parliament, and with hostile journalists in the media. This situation is true even in countries like India and the Philippines.

Who believes that the governments in the West, or even most of the Third World, would disperse peaceful demonstrations with tanks and machine guns without ever resorting to teargas and clubs? The left in Western nations should not resort to childish fantasy that they "face similar oppression". They deny the gains won by generations of

courageous workers.

The level of persecution in China is so very very different. We have no real opposition, there are no forums for debate, and there is only the official, highly-controlled press. The call by the demonstrators for a "face-to-face dialogue" with the high-level leaders must be seen in this context. The call for face-to-face meetings was a desperate act resorted to by ordinary people who had absolutely no other recognized channels through which to express their deeply-held feelings and frustrations about the problems of Chinese society.

In the Chinese cultural context, the call for a meeting was a call for the leadership to make a single, symbolic gesture signalling their acknowledgment that the demonstrators had legitimate demands, and to accept that they had the right to peacefully express these demands.

Isn't democracy an illusion in many parts of the Third World? Isn't it a bourgeois trick which leads to exploitation and confusion? Look at India.

Democracy is not perfect, but it is an important element, but only one element, in guaranteeing popular participation and control of the political process. Other mechanisms include workplace democracy, independent mass organizations and trade unions, guarantees on freedom of information, and an independent legal system. Democracy is shaped and affected by the socio-economic context in which it is implemented. The difference between bourgeois democracy and people's democracy is a very real one. If democratic reforms were introduced into China by a communist party intent on meaningful reform, one would expect these would take the form of people's democracy.

POLITICS AND POLARIZATION THE TIANANMEN CRISIS AND THE R.P. CHINESE COMMUNITY

Teresita Ang See

THE BELIEF that the local Chinese community is a cohesive, homogenous group is nothing more than a myth. There is no better proof of this than the reactions of the community to the Tiananmen Square events.

The pro-democracy student movement in Beijing hogged the headlines of Philippine dailies from April to June last year. Today, while news about China is relegated to the inside pages, discussions and debates on the issue go on heatedly in the local Chinese community.

The varied reactions to the Beijing crisis can roughly be classified first, on the basis of the age or generation of those who expressed them; second, according to the conflicting attitudes towards China — whether pro-Taiwan, pro-China or neutral; and third, according to their sentiments towards the crisis: whether pro-students or pro-Chinese government. No other event in recent memory has served to polarize the entire local Chinese community more than the Beijing crisis last June.

Take for instance the family of the owner of a big department store chain. The wife lamented about what happened to the students. She said that no matter what one's ideology or political inclination is, the fact that a peaceful student movement was quashed so brutally cannot be justified in any way.

But the husband quipped: "The students deserved their fate. They had been repeatedly warned. Why didn't they heed their elders and go back to their classrooms? They were wasting their time and money demonstrating in the streets instead of studying their lessons."

CHINESE STUDIES

And the younger daughter, when asked what her feelings were, answered: "I don't understand why they are making so much fuss about China. Beijing is so far away; what happens there does not affect us anymore. If it were the Filipino student movement during the Marcos days, then I might be personally affected since some of them may be my classmates."

These reactions show first of all the generational differences. The old generation who came from and have had first-hand experiences of China naturally have strong emotional reactions to what is happening there. They identify with China and they are pained by the turmoil in their homeland. There are also younger ones who share the same feelings — mostly those who were born in China and had their Chinese education either in China or in Hong Kong. Among the most vehement protests against the Chinese government that appeared in the local Chinese dailies were those expressed by middle-aged alumni of schools in China or Hong Kong.

The young generation of locally born Chinese, while being concerned about the issues, no longer have the deep emotional response that their elders have. They identify with and think of the Philippines as their home. A young Chinese, when asked how he would feel if Deng Xiaoping were to die now, asked: "Who's he?" He can not even name any of China's current leaders.

The older generation lament over this attitude and accuse the younger ones of forgetting their roots; failing to understand that the roots they have established are in fact here in the Philippines, not in China.

The second difference in reactions is based on political leanings — the pro-China, pro-Taiwan, and the centrists or neutral group. Among these three groups, the pro-China group would have the most varied reactions.

Those who sided with the students are mostly more intellectually inclined and have attained higher levels of education. They feel the need for reforms in China and understand that historically, it was often the students and the intellectuals who spearheaded these reforms in China.

Those who supported the government's stand are again further divided into three groups. One group would be the relatively less-educated elderly Chinese who have blind devotion to China or who cling

tenaciously to the traditional Chinese values (foremost of which is respect for the absolute authority of the leaders), and who readily blame the Americans for China's woes. They are not politically mature and do not understand the students' clamor for reform. The only thing they see is that China has indeed made great strides in the past several decades.

The other group would be the pragmatic businessmen who have business ties with China. Some of them take the view that the government is justified in using force because it is a situation of "either you win or I win", and there was no way that the Chinese government could have allowed the students to win.

Others were supportive of the students at first or were at least non-committal; but now that the official line of the Chinese government has come out, they have changed their tunes or simply kept quiet for fear that their business interests may be adversely affected.

Still others will be those with the "ostrich syndrome". They bury their heads under the sand and believe what the government says because reality is unacceptable. Denial is another traditional Chinese way of making reality acceptable.

The pro-Taiwan group, on the other hand, sided with the students mainly. While some of them are genuinely concerned and sympathetic to the students' cause, others are simply capitalizing on the issue to take up the Kuomintang's anti-communist cudgels. A rally held at the Quirino grandstand supposedly to express sympathy for the students who died in the Tiananmen massacre turned out to be an anti-communist bash.

The Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce which had erstwhile claimed to be apolitical and to be concerned only with business matters, this time came out with a full-page advertisement in both Chinese and English language dailies — blatantly calling for the termination of diplomatic contacts with the People's Republic of China.

These differences gave rise to situations where husband and wife, members of the community, friends and classmates become polarized — highlighting the pluralistic make-up of the Chinese community.

Time passes. Life goes on. Now that a semblance of sanity has seemingly come back to Chinese soil, it would be better if the local

Chinese were to stop arguing over China politics and come back to local Philippine realities.

Some Chinese who still harbor strong pro-China sentiments have realized even more that the Philippines is the only home that they have and there is no more going back, particularly now that political unrest once again besets their former motherland.

This is an unexpected consequence of China's present crisis which should lead to positive results in the Philippines, aside from the much bruited about, anticipated re-channelling of Taiwanese investments from China to the Philippines. When all sectors in the Chinese community accept the reality that this is the only home that they have, then we can expect that one day, they would all come to identify Philippine interests as their paramount concern.

THE CHINA CRISIS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PHILIPPINES

by Aileen San Pablo-Baviera

(Delivered at a symposium on THE CHINA CRISIS, sponsored by the Association of Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines, Sister Formation Institute, Quezon City, 16 September 1989)

SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION in China since 1949 has been a painful process, rife with struggle and contradiction over what economic strategies and what political line needed to be pursued in order to transform a huge feudal nation into a modern socialist society. There were important achievements in terms of uniting the people behind socialism, providing food and security for an otherwise starving majority of the population, advancing in science and technology to the point of establishing nuclear capability, and creating the basis for industrial development.

However, after thirty years, the economy remained relatively underdeveloped, productivity was low, and the Chinese masses felt dissatisfied with the lack of amenities in both their material and cultural needs. Since 1979, bold economic reforms were undertaken by the Deng Xiaoping government to heave China out of its backwardness. These reforms entailed decentralization of economic decision-making, incentives to private ownership and to private production for profit, broad cooperation with foreign capitalist enterprises and institutions, and placing prime emphasis on economic prosperity rather than ideological purity. At the same time occurred the de-ideologizing and de-politicizing of norms of behavior. While the past decade of reforms succeeded in raising productivity and improving standards of living for a great number, it also introduced inflation, worsened rampant official

corruption, brought on loss of social security and a general breakdown in socialist morality especially in urban areas. These culminated in protests by students, intellectuals, workers, state employees and other social sectors. Some elements of the reform, which had seemed of great urgency and inevitability at the time they were put into place, were later adjudged ill-conceived, incoherent and shortsighted. They resulted in unanticipated economic and financial imbalances and negative social phenomena that the Chinese people and their leaders have had no past experience dealing with. Economic failures and widespread discontent finally led to a split in the Communist leadership. And in what has come to be known as the Tiananmen bloodbath, the desperate inner-Party power struggle was fought in the streets of Beijing between armed soldiers and an unsuspecting defenseless civilian population.

The rest is history.

China today is experiencing a crisis. More than economic difficulties, the real quandary is how China's communist leaders can recover their lost legitimacy in the eyes of their own people, a condition necessary for continued stewardship of socialist modernization. The problem is how they can mobilize a gravely demoralized workforce and a disenchanting intelligentsia for the more difficult tasks ahead.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PHILIPPINES

IN THE PHILIPPINES, it has been some time since an international issue of this sort has succeeded in holding the attention of a normally more parochial-minded population for such an extended period. And this is why we are today exploring the implications of the recent events in China for the Philippines and the Filipinos.

A. Implications on China's Relations with the Philippine Government

ON ONE LEVEL, we look at the repercussions of Tiananmen on relations between the Chinese and Philippine governments. Before the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1975, China used to be considered the greatest external threat to Philippine security—because of its proximity, its size and armed strength, the ideological affinity of the Mao regime with the then fledgling Communist Party of the Philippines, the presence of a large ethnic Chinese community (a small

section of which was sympathetic to the mainland) and China's former active internationalist position supporting national liberation movements in the Third World. The Philippines, in turn, was seen by China as a mere pawn of American imperialism. This was because of Philippine support for United States' foreign policy, particularly in the Korean and Vietnam wars (conflicts in which China and the United States were antagonists), and in light of the Philippine government's rabid anti-communism translated into suppression of local communists from the Hukbalahap to the New People's Army.

The Marcos government decided to normalize relations with China on the basis of the drastically changed balance of forces in Asia in the early 1970s — following United States' withdrawal from Vietnam, Sino-US rapprochement on the one hand coupled with the worsening turn of Sino-Soviet relations, China's admission to the United Nations, plus the growing popularity of neutrality and non-alignment among Third World countries as exemplified by the 1971 ASEAN declaration of neutrality. The first oil crisis and the resulting recession of the US economy also forced our country to look elsewhere for sources of crude oil, while consolidation of power by the Philippine military after the Martial Law Proclamation gave it greater confidence in combatting internal insurgency. All these factors helped pave the way for the friendly and mutually beneficial relations we now enjoy with China.

Thirteen years after normalization of ties, at the time of the "searching for roots" Aquino state visit to China in April 1988, relations could be characterized as smooth, stable and quite close. In fact, the Philippines conducts more trade with China than with fellow members of the Asean, with China being a major source of crude oil, coal and soybean imports in exchange for Philippine exports of copper concentrates, phosphatic fertilizers, coconut oil, bananas and plywood.

However, even a cursory glance at the structure of the economies of the two countries will reveal that the economies are basically competitive, rather than complementary in nature. The productive forces of both countries are backward and inefficient, so that both countries seek to attract technology and capital from the advanced capitalist countries of the West, which are also their primary markets for exports. The Philippines does not have what China needs to buy at the moment, and vice versa. As far as the grand schemes of our economic development strategies are concerned, our two countries are not too important

to one another.

We may even say that economic relations have been largely instrumental in attaining political goals — e.g., neutralizing Chinese communist support for the local revolutionary movement from the Philippine perspective, and as far as the Chinese are concerned, gaining respectability and acceptance by its neighbors, and in particular, mustering ASEAN support for its Indochina and anti-Soviet policy.

Prior to the June 1989 Tiananmen massacres, there were already certain challenges to the close relations between China and the Philippines. Foremost among these were the apparent violations of the one-China policy by the Philippine government.

By proclaiming adherence to a one-China policy in 1975, the Philippines bound itself to recognize only one China and that Taiwan is a province of China. In the absence of formal diplomatic ties with Taiwan, our relations with Taipei were limited to economic and cultural exchanges facilitated by the Pacific Economic and Cultural Center in Taiwan and the Asian Exchange Center in Manila. The lack of diplomatic relations obviously was no obstacle to expansion of ties, as Taiwan has now become our largest source of foreign investment and our fifth largest trading partner. Beijing is fully aware of this and, in consideration of our national goals of economic recovery, poses no objection.

Recently, however, certain Philippine officials have been pushing for the legislation of a "Taiwan Relations Act" that would formally upgrade relations with Taipei and in effect discard the one-China policy. President Aquino has received in Malacañang delegations of businessmen from Taiwan, whom official press releases referred to as guests from the "Republic of China". Lakas ng Bansa president and presidential relative Paul Aquino last year accompanied high-level Kuomintang officials to the Philippine Senate. No less than Vice President Doy Laurel, Trade and Industry Secretary Jose Concepcion, Local Government Secretary Luis Santos and Defense Secretary Fidel Ramos have made recent visits to Taiwan, and hundreds of local government officials this year went on junkets fully paid for by the Taipei government.

The Taiwan issue promises to be the single biggest irritant in Philippine-China relations as the Taiwan lobby in the Philippines prepares its case for the upgrading of relations short of establishing full

diplomatic ties. Most noticeably, immediately after the massacre at Tiananmen, proponents of the Taiwan Relations Act revived their measure in Congress, ostensibly responding to pressures by Taiwanese businessmen who, taking advantage of the worldwide horror and outrage against Beijing, have been pressuring Philippine officials for "better guarantees for Taiwanese investments". The Philippines is particularly vulnerable to promises of millions of dollars in Taiwanese investments, as our officials have already demonstrated beyond doubt their propensity to think principally in terms of dollars and cents. The question is—will China tolerate a two-China policy (or even, as it were—a 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ China policy) in the Philippines? If not, is the Philippine government prepared to deal with the repercussions should China decide to withdraw its support for the Aquino government?

Consider this: will such a provocation of China on the Taiwan issue help upset the ASEAN-China detente that is helping to keep the peace in the region, and be prejudicial to other outstanding issues between China and the Philippines—such as conflicting claims to the Kalayaan or Nansha Islands, attitudes towards the "overseas" Chinese, and support for the local communist movement?

Another irritant stemming from the Tiananmen incident was the position taken by the Philippine government before and after the crackdown on demonstrators. The fact that young Chinese students took some inspiration from the EDSA uprising inflated the Philippine ego and encouraged officials of State as well as Church to affirm their support for the students. First of all, the exaggerated parallelism between EDSA and Tiananmen contributed to misconceptions among the Filipino population about the dynamics of the events in China. Secondly, the lame and belated condemnations of the massacre by Philippine officials were most embarrassing compared to the excitement and encouragement with which the pro-democracy movement was received earlier on. The Department of Foreign Affairs was in a dilemma over what, if any, sanctions were to be imposed to express the Philippine government's position on the issue. We therefore ask how prepared is the Philippine government to face possible Chinese reprisals over increasing recognition of Taiwan should this occur?

One thing that is clear is that the handling of relations with China in recent years and especially in recent months demonstrates the absolute lack of vision in current Philippine foreign policy. In fact, it is

more accurate to assume there is no policy at all, only shortsighted responses, knee-jerk reactions and — "bahala na", let destiny do the rest. Moreover, the different agencies of our government are not speaking with one voice when it comes to foreign policy. The DFA is tasked with promoting relations with socialist countries but, owing to real and imagined pressure from the United States, a conservative local ruling elite, as well as a powerful military establishment, many obstacles to attaining genuine neutrality in our foreign policy are still in place.

One of the dangers of the Tiananmen crisis is it might be used as an excuse to re-introduce ideology as a major factor in foreign policy decision-making in the Philippines, at a time when gravely strategic questions involving the US bases and RP-US relations are up for resolution.

B. Implications on Local Political Forces

THE FACT THAT THE PHILIPPINE MILITARY and other elements of the Philippine right seized on the events at Tiananmen as an excuse to launch an anti-communist and anti-Marxist propaganda offensive underscores the implications of the China crisis on domestic Philippine politics. Tiananmen was touted as undeniable proof of so-called communist use of terror and the incompatibility of socialism and democracy. But the more knowledgeable can see how simplistic such an argument is, yet at the same time agree that they are not entirely unfounded. In China, the situation was indeed complex. While the "Goddess of Democracy" was erected, we know, for instance, that many of the Chinese people themselves believed greater democracy could flourish within the socialist framework. This is precisely why student leaders exalted Gorbachev's efforts at political reforms in the Soviet Union and why they sang the Communist Internationale.

More importantly, we Filipinos know also that in historic as well as contemporary times, examples abound of the use of force by the state against unarmed civilians in countries labelled as "democracies"—to name only a few, Israel against Palestinians, the white South African regime against its black populace, our own Filipino marines against peasants in Mendiola.

However, the fact that so-called democracies are guilty of the same barbarities does not exonerate the socialists. On the contrary, socialists

who lay claim to superiority of their social system, Marxists who profess to champion the cause of the poor working man, ruling as well as struggling communist parties aspiring to be vanguards and as such, repositories of wisdom if not truth embodied in the "correct ideological line" — all are hard put to assert and demonstrate such superiority and correctness not only of their objectives and ideals, but their strategies and methods as well. This is especially challenging in an era where the socialist world is undergoing great changes—*glasnost* in the USSR, power-sharing in Poland and Eastern Europe, opening up in Vietnam, etc.

Important to the future directions of socialism would be the socialist countries' and communist movements' handling of opposition and dissent among its own masses.

A most relevant question, therefore, raised by the situation in China for Filipinos is—how attractive can socialism be as an alternative economic, political and social system to our chronically (perhaps terminally?) ill society?

The actions of the Chinese communist leaders and their armed minions at Tiananmen have undoubtedly damaged the prestige earlier enjoyed by socialists the world over. Many socialists have even condemned the act as an aberration to socialism, although there are those who choose to be neutral and those who would even defend it. Nevertheless, condemning the massacre is not the same thing as denigrating the efforts at reform by the Chinese people and government, nor does it imply dismissing the possibilities of their eventually achieving socialist modernization, perhaps under a more enlightened leadership.

The most optimistic view is that the death-cries and the anguish of Tiananmen may well be the birth pangs of a new kind of socialism, a socialism which, having assured the survival of its species and overcome the hostility of its neighbors, can now look forward to developing and enriching its socialist democratic institutions.

The Philippine left and the underground revolutionary forces are no doubt affected by the China crisis—in the same manner that all communists and socialists suffer diminished international as well as domestic respect due to the failings of a comrade party. Perhaps the Communist Party of the Philippines is bound to suffer more criticism on account of its historical and ideological affinity with Maoist China. But apart from this, predictions of serious injury to strategy and tactics

or to internal relations within the CPP as a result of Tiananmen are greatly exaggerated. It is common knowledge that the CPP has long ago given up its propensity to "toe the China line", especially following the death of Mao Zedong and the rapid improvement in Sino-US ties, China's own distancing from Southeast Asian communist parties plus the emergence of other Third World revolutionary models that local communists could draw lessons from. And needless to say, it is still the particularities of the Philippine context that will make or break the local communist movement.

Immediately, these are some aspects of how Tiananmen may have affected the Filipinos, from the perspective of the Philippine government, of the local revolutionary movement as well as society at large. There are bound to be other repercussions stemming from how the Chinese leadership will choose to navigate the present tempest-ridden sea it finds itself in. How far will retrenchment of economic reforms go? What are the prospects for true democratization and other political reforms beyond Party-building and ideological education campaigns? The directions of Sino-US and Sino-Soviet relations in the aftermath of Tiananmen, as well as the success or failure of *glasnost* in the Soviet Union, will also surely affect the people of the region—the Philippines included—and call for our ready responses.