

JOURNALISM REFORM IN CHINA: A COMPARATIVE  
STUDY OF THE PRESS PERFORMANCE DURING  
THE 1989 TIANANMEN STUDENT MOVEMENT

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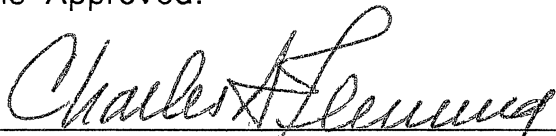
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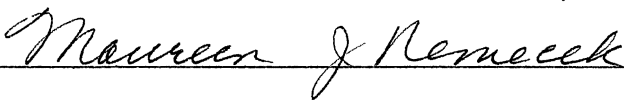
Submitted to the Faculty of the  
Graduate College of the  
Oklahoma State University  
in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements for  
the Degree of  
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION  
December, 1990

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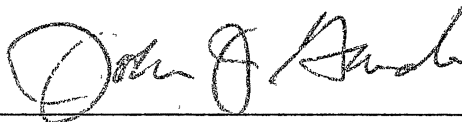
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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 1989 Tiananmen student-led democratic movement in China has exposed many problems with Chinese journalism, and it has also given me the inspiration to explore the practicable ways of reforming the current Chinese press system, which, in any event, is but a propaganda machine of the Chinese Communist Party. The young students who sacrificed their lives for freedom and democracy and the single man who defiantly stood in front of a column of tanks in an attempt to stop them had turned my blood boiling. As a journalist, I felt I had the obligation to identify myself with the students' ardent pursuit of truth. It was with this inspiration that I decided to make Chinese press reform the topic of research for my dissertation.

In the course of designing and conducting the research, I have received a lot of timely help as well as constructive guidances from my advisers and friends. I am deeply indebted to Dr. Charles A. Fleming for advising me knowledgeably and patiently in every step of my research and editing my dissertation with rigorous care. Many sincere thanks also go to Dr. John J. Gardiner, Dr. Marlan D. Nelson and Dr. Maureen J. Nemecek who, being a continuing source of encouragement and advice, have contributed many critical and insightful comments to my study. I also want to give my deep thanks to Prof. Elisabeth H. Schullinger who gave me a lot of encouragement and valuable suggestions at the initial stage of my research.

Finally I wish to express my gratitude to my wife, Yanhua, and my children, Robin, Catherine and Richard, for their understanding and support. Working on the dissertation took me away from my family on numerous weekends and evenings, but their love and care have made my study a constant joy.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### General

Nineteen eighty-nine was an eventful year for the whole world. In the Soviet Union, the reform-minded president Mikhail Gorbachev initiated political reforms which quickly swept the Communist bloc in Eastern Europe, resulting in the first non-Communist government in Poland, the collapse of the Berlin Wall in East Germany, and the downfall of the Ceausescu dictatorship in Romania.

Even earlier than all these dramatic events, a pro-democracy movement led by university students took place in China and captured the attention of the world.

During a 50-day long standoff between the government and demonstrators from April 15 to June 4, 1989, the students, joined by hundreds of thousands of professors, writers, journalists, workers, city residents and even government functionaries, occupied Tiananmen Square in the center of Beijing, and launched large-scale protests and hunger strikes one after another, pressing for political reforms in China.

This pro-democracy movement started when Mr. Hu Yaobang, former general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party who was dismissed from his position as a result of his sympathy over the student democratic movement in 1987, died of a heart attack in April 15, 1989. Hu had long been respected by the people, especially by the intellectuals, as a party liberal and a model reformist, and his death ignited the students' anger and frustration which soon led them to the streets to stage demonstrations.

Asking for democracy and freedom, and for freedom of the press and freedom of speech in particular, more than a million demonstrators in Beijing, and thousands more in dozens of other cities, openly challenged the legitimacy of the communist rule and demanded that economic reform go hand in hand with political reform.

Sensing that their power was being seriously threatened, Deng Xiaoping, the paramount party leader, and other party "old guards" adopted a hard-line attitude in dealing with the peaceful demonstrators.

The Tiananmen democratic movement was crushed on June 4 by military tanks and machineguns when the communist government decided "to teach the students a bloody lesson: `Communist power grows out of the barrel of a gun.'" (New York Times, June 5, 1989, p. A17)

Furthermore, the crackdown was reinforced by the Chinese news media which launched a powerful campaign in an attempt to justify the use of violence in dealing with the peaceful demonstrators.

Harrison E. Salisbury, a distinguished American journalist who happened to be in Beijing when the crackdown took place, made these observations on the Chinese media campaign:

It is a propaganda blitz, and it is backed by the biggest lie they could think of --Tiananmen did not happen. No one, no one, was shot in the Square. They have even put down the memory hole their original announcement of twenty-three students killed there. Now all they talk about are the brave PLA soldiers.... The whole order of events has been reversed. First, the "bandits" and "bad men" attacked the noble troops, who then reluctantly had to open fire. (Salisbury, 1989, p. 147)

Salisbury, author of the book The Long March: The Untold Story, which was a detailed account of the Chinese Communist revolution based on his interviews with almost every Chinese top leader, and "an old friend of the Chinese people" as being regarded by



the Chinese Communist leaders, commented in his recent book Tiananmen Diary:

I was so revolted I could hardly watch local TV. And the story will be accepted by many because it is reinforced by terror... I confess it is an atmosphere in which people find it safer simply to accept the current lie, kowtow to the current emperor, and hope that by so doing they have not taken the first fatal step toward the high executioner of whatever emperor is waiting in the wings. (Salisbury, 1989, p. 148)

### Background

In China, the Communist Party controls everything with the help of the army and the news media. The news media are used as the Party's propaganda machine for motivating, educating and persuading the Chinese people to follow the Party's political line and policies. The late party chairman Mao Zedong said, "the role and power of the press consist in its ability to bring the Party program, the Party line, the Party's general and specific policies, its tasks and methods of work before the masses in the quickest and most extensive way." (Chen & Chu, 1982, p. 219)

It's small wonder that the Chinese Communist Party openly claims the news media to be its mouthpiece. As former UNESCO Regional Communication Advisor for Asia, Mr. Lloyd Sommerlad, observed:

Communication systems and political systems are always interrelated but nowhere more closely and purposefully than in the People's Republic of China. Here communication is an integral part of political organization; it is both an instrument of social control and a process of socialization which affects the minds and attitudes of the whole population. (Sommerlad, 1981, p. 234)

This close and purposeful interrelation between China's news media and the political apparatus has made it possible for the communist party to manipulate information and public opinion to suit its political needs. Most of the time, the news media only play the role of a weather-cock that serves to indicate the changeable climate of the Party politics and

policies.

### Statement of the Problem

The world is moving into the information age. The rapid development of highly advanced communication technologies has shortened distances and pierced international borders. In the recent Tiananmen crisis, despite the news blackout imposed by the Chinese government, people throughout the world followed the daily development of events in China, and watched with horror the mass killing in the Chinese capital.

However, only a few hours after the military took control of Tiananmen Square and the gunshots continued to be heard in Beijing, the Chinese news media began to present a version of the events that was totally different from what was being seen on television screens around the world.

Reality was being portrayed differently -- one version by the Chinese media, and other versions by the international media. What was the difference in the performance of the news media, and why was there a difference? The issue has to do with responsibility of the mass media and the relationship of the mass media to the society served. To the extent that perceptions of roles and responsibility differ, perceptions of reality -- and reporting of reality -- may similarly differ.

### Purpose of the Study

This dissertation is a study of the performance of the Chinese news media, represented by the party newspaper, the People's Daily, compared with the international news media, represented by the New York Times and Taiwan's Central Daily News. The

aim of the study was to analyze and determine the objectivity and accuracy of the news reporting on the recent Tiananmen crisis by these three newspapers. The New York Times was chosen under the assumption that it is the model free press characterized with objective standard against which performance of the other newspapers was compared. The Central Daily News was included because it is from a Chinese culture but with a different political philosophy.

Through a content analysis of the daily news reporting by the media from April 15 to June 4, 1989, this study examined whether the Chinese Communist news media had fairly and accurately reported the Tiananmen democratic movement. It also examined whether the international news media vilified the Chinese government for its handling of the student-led demonstrations as has been claimed.

### Significance of the Study

As the common knowledge goes, a democracy cannot maintain its existence without the free flow of information. In a communist country like China where the flow of information is controlled and manipulated by the government for carrying out its political line and policies, how the drive for democratization should be conducted is obviously an interesting question that deserves serious study.

This dissertation, with the recent Tiananmen democratic movement as its focus, examined the role of the Chinese news media during the crisis by comparing the news reporting of the People's Daily with that of the New York Times and the Central Daily News. It is hoped that scholars and students of journalism would benefit from this study of how the news media function in a crisis situation. It is also hoped that this study will be of some use to pro-democracy activists who attach sufficient importance to the relationship

between the information flow and the democratic movement.

### Limitations

The preparation of this study was started only a few months after the Tiananmen democratic movement was suppressed on June 4, 1989. As a result, the amount of time devoted to collecting and analyzing the data, and translating Chinese press reports was relatively limited.

A significant limitation was Chinese government's censorship of news and information, both of its own media and of international media. Not only the news reports by the Chinese media were largely believed to reflect the views of the Chinese government, even news reporting of the international media, however, sometimes was based on eyewitness accounts or rumors because journalists were banned from where the news was taking place.

Because of these limitations, the current study is not a comprehensive one, and further studies may be needed as more is learned about the demonstrations and the government's response.

### Assumptions

It is assumed that all the news media examined in this study would cover the same general events to roughly the same extent so that they could be put on an equal basis for comparison. If this assumption turns out to be untrue, it could effect the outcome of the study.

## Organization of the Study

Chapter II discusses the historical background of the problem, and compares the theories and practices of the Western press with those of China's Party-controlled mass media.

Chapter III deals with the methodology of the research. A qualitative content analysis will be used to systematically compare and analyze the news coverage by China's People's Daily, Taiwan's Central Daily News and America's New York Times dating from April 15, 1989 when the student-led democratic movement began to June 4 when the Communist rulers ordered the military crackdown.

Chapter IV presents a detailed comparison and analysis of the news reporting by the People's Daily, the Central Daily News and the New York Times. Findings of the study are included in this chapter.

The last chapter summarizes the study results, presents conclusions and suggests ways to reform China's press system, including media ownership and organizational structure, journalism education and press law.

## CHAPTER II

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

#### The New York Times

Being commonly regarded as a world newspaper of record, first and foremost, the New York Times has a very impressive history. It was founded as a "penny paper" in 1851 by Henry J. Raymond, and soon gained a reputation for its interpretative articles, well balanced coverage and objectivity.

A four-page paper then, the Times was printed on a large sheet. It was hawked in the streets and climbed rapidly in circulation to 20,000. It gave particular attention to foreign affairs, running "the News From Europe" at the top of page one.

After Raymond's death, another Times' most famous personality, Adolph S. Ochs, succeeded him in 1891 and created the traditions that made the Times great -- its full coverage, completeness and accuracy. And these traditions are sustained by his successors. (Paneth, 1983, p. 345)

Ochs wrote an editorial after he was appointed publisher and general manager on August 18, 1896, in which he stated the basic philosophy of the Times:

To undertake the management of the New York Times, with its great history for right-doing, and to attempt to keep bright the luster which Henry J. Raymond and George Jones have given it is an extraordinary task...It will be my earnest aim that the New York Times give the news, all the news, in concise and attractive form, in language that is parliamentary in good society, and give it as early, if not earlier, than it can be learned through any

other reliable medium; to give the news impartially, without fear or favor, regardless of any party, sect or interest involved; to make of the New York Times a forum for the consideration of all questions of public importance. (Paneth, 1983, p. 346)

Characterized as an independent, non-partisan paper which is free from government control, the New York Times has adopted as its motto: "All the news that's fit to print." (Paneth, 1983, p. 346) It has been serving not only as an information disseminator for the public, but also a watchdog of government performance.

As early as in 1881, the Times was awarded a Pulitzer Prize for its complete coverage and full publication of the First World War documents. In the 1950s, it supported the U.N. action in Korea and denounced McCarthyism. In 1962 the Times' challenges to the official version of the Vietnam War, may have been an important factor in ending that war. On the Watergate break-in, the Times only ran second to the Washington Post in exposing the situation.

Exploring the secrets of its preeminence, Executive Editor A.M. Rosenthal found four worthy of note "The Times is a newspaper of continuity. The Times is a newspaper of relativity because it grades the importance of the news. The Times maintains a decent level of discourse. The Times is a newspaper of objectivity." If it were to be characterized in one word, that would be "thoroughness," Rosenthal concluded. (Kurian, 1982, p.961)

Because of its complete and thorough coverage of national and international affairs, the New York Times has been not only ranked first among American dailies, but it also has been considered a national and world leader in the area of journalism. (Merrill, 1983, p. 310)

The Times, in an effort to stimulate thought and provoke discussion of public problems, introduced in 1970 the "Opposite Editorial Page," in which guest articles by government officials, scholars and others are printed. The guest columns and additional letters are expected to provide an improved forum for the exchange of opinions on

important issues. (Merrill, 1980, p 311)

Under the slogan, "More than just the news," since 1976 the Times has introduced several special insert sections for different days of the week and it switched from an eight-column-per-page format to one of six columns for news and nine for advertisements. This has increased the advertising space without adversely affecting the news hole/ad ratio, which stands at 30:70.

As a result of these innovations, circulation is nudging a million copies daily, spread over every state and major town in the United States and most countries of the world. The Times' foreign coverage, already one of the best in the world, has improved in recent years as a result of eyewitness reports from its large foreign staff. Thirty-two full time correspondents working out of 23 bureaus and 25 part-timers constitute the paper's worldwide information-gathering network. (Kurian, 1982, p. 961)

The New York Times now has a news staff of 650, the largest newspaper staff in the United States. As of 1978, Times personnel had won 42 Pulitzer Prizes, more than any other newspaper. The daily paper normally has 60 to 70 pages; the Sunday edition has more than 400 pages. From nearly two-million words that flow into the newsroom the staff culls 70 pages, or 152,000 words of information, so large that Publisher Arthur Ochs Sulzberger once remarked, "Anyone who claims to have read the entire paper every day is either the world's fastest reader or the world's biggest liar." (Kurian, 1982, p. 961)

### The People's Daily

As media in China are all owned by the Communist Party and the government, the People's Daily is the organ of the party central committee and serves as the party's mouthpiece. (People's Daily, April 14, 1985)



Founded in August 1948, the People's Daily is at the top of the list of the nation's newspapers, and it sets the tone for other Chinese news media. Traditionally, editorials and policy statements appearing in the People's Daily have been widely reprinted intact by other newspapers throughout the country. (Sommerlad, 1981, p. 235)

Ever since its founding, the People's Daily was controlled by the Communist Party as its propaganda tool to promote the party's political line and policies. Through the press, the party strives to organize the masses, to mobilize the masses and to develop in the masses the proletarian characteristics that will make them loyal and useful citizens of the country. To achieve these missions, as the People's Daily put it in 1960, the press must become the party's "loyal eyes, ears and tongue," and "an important bridge for daily contact between the party and innumerable people and a powerful tool for the party to guide revolutionary struggle and construction." (Chen & Chu, 1982, p. 219)

Internationally, the People's Daily propagandizes the party and government foreign policies and publicizes the achievements made under the party's leadership to generate among international audiences favorable reactions and sympathy toward China's revolutionary cause of communism and socialist construction.

The paper consists of eight pages: page one is for important news and commentaries; page two is for economic news; page three is for politics, art and literature; page four carries academic and theoretical topics while the fifth and sixth pages carry international news. Pages seven and eight are for literary supplements. The circulation of the People's Daily is reported to be in the range of 5-6 million. (Nathan, 1985, p. 158)

The People's Daily has a staff of 1,600, of which some 500 work for the editorial department. The rest are on the staffs of the departments of administration and printing. The editorial department consists of ten units: Mass Work which handles letters to the editor; International News; Domestic Politics; Science and Technology; Agriculture; Industry and Commerce; Theoretical Propaganda; Literature and Art; Reporters and

Commentary. (Chen & Chu, 1982, p. 220)

Distribution of the People's Daily, and of all the other newspapers, is handled by the post office. Very few copies are supplied to newsstands, and 90 percent go to subscribers who, mostly governmental agencies and industrial enterprises, are obligated to read the paper as part of their political tasks.

Since private ownership of the press does not exist in China, the Chinese Communist Party and the government are the major financial supporters for all the news media. Newspapers at different levels will draw money from governments of corresponding levels. As a result, competition is non-existent, and income from advertising constitutes a tiny proportion of their financial resources.

Organizationally, the People's Daily is under direct supervision of the Propaganda Department of the party central committee, which is responsible for selecting the director for the paper. The director is the party boss who oversees the overall work of the People's Daily and reports to the Propaganda Department, and sometimes, to the party chairman directly. The director may not necessarily be a member of the party central committee, but he has the privilege to attend every important meeting of the party and has access to the confidential documents of the party central committee.

Printing or withholding of any news story about the policy matters will not be decided by the editor-in-chief, but by the director. The editor-in-chief is only in charge of the day-to-day reporting and editing, and he has no final say on the paper's policies and principles. Very often, a news story done by a reporter has to go through several check points before it is printed, and sometimes a story has to be read and approved by the top leaders themselves. This is one reason why the Chinese media often seem late with important news. (Schramm, 1981, p. 300)

### The Central Daily News

The Central Daily News is the official newspaper of the Kuomintang (KMT), the Nationalist Party in Taiwan. Its editorial line and treatment of controversial issues enunciate the current views of the party's policymakers and set the direction for the other newspapers. (Tien, 1989, p.199)

Founded in Shanghai in 1928 and relocated in Nanking in 1929, the Central Daily News was forced to move from Nanking to Chungking, the wartime capital, during the Sino-Japanese War (1937-1945). It resumed publication in Nanking immediately after the surrender of Japan on September 9, 1945. When the Communists took over power on the Chinese mainland, the newspaper moved to Taiwan in 1949.

The paper publishes a number of daily and weekly sections, including news analysis, mainland affairs, literature, modern living, children's and color pictorial sections, letters to the editor, etc. It is the first newspaper to deliver copies to central and southern Taiwan by airplane. Since 1950, it has issued a four-page airmail edition for circulation abroad. (Reference Book, 1988, p.323) Being the third largest newspaper in Taiwan, the Central Daily News claims a daily circulation of 550,000 copies.

As an official publication of the KMT, the Central Daily News has a circulation advantage because public institutions, agencies, and offices ranging from national government bodies to local police stations must subscribe to it. Government enterprises such as railways, bus stations, gas stations, and even some tourist hotels often offer only official papers, such as the Central Daily News, for sale. This practice restricts the market share of the independent newspapers. (Tien, 1989, p.200)

Despite the fact that the vast majority of Taiwan's daily newspapers are privately-owned "independent" newspapers, (Jacobs, 1976, p.780) most of them, including the

Central Daily News, are obligated to support the official policies. As the organ of the KMT's central headquarters, the Central Daily News prints little which could be called controversial in the Taiwan context. Certainly, the party's official policies find expression in its editorials and news columns. Many find the politics of the Central Daily News dull, but a large percentage of Taiwan's intellectuals, including non-partisan opponents of the Nationalists, read the Central Daily News supplement because of its high literary quality. The Central Daily News also serves as a "paper of record" by publishing more complete texts of documents than other papers. (Jacobs, 1976, p.780)

Theoretically, newspapers in Taiwan enjoy freedom of the press under the Constitution of the Republic of China adopted in 1946. Under the Publication Law (1930) and Martial Law (1948), however, the authorities have the right to control the press. All newspapers must be registered with the Government Information Office (GIO). Newspapers are seldom censored. When censorship occurs, it is usually after publication.

In theory, publications have the right to criticize the government; in practice there are some limitations. Although the past few years have seen much more criticism being printed both in domestic and external publications, local editors and writers observe certain unwritten restrictions. For example, no criticism is seen of the president of the Republic of China, and no positive references to communism will be aired or printed. Articles about leaders on the Chinese mainland, however, have the titles put in quotations, and the administration is not called a government but the "political power." Another sensitive topic is the Taiwanese independence movement, which advocates independence for Taiwan, opposing both the rule of the Kuomintang on Taiwan and reunification with the People's Republic of China. This idea and its advocacy formed the basis of the "Kao Hsiung Incident" of December 1979 which led to the arrest and trial of some 40 people, including editors, writers and clergymen, and the suspension of Formosa magazine. (Kurian, 1982, p. 855)

In January 1988 the ROC government lifted its previous restriction on the publication of new daily newspapers. Within three months several new dailies went into publication. All newspapers are permitted to add pages. Many local newspapers have since come into existence. The lifting of restrictions inevitably led to intense competition over market share and a growing liberalization in reporting and press commentary. To survive, most newspapers are compelled to commercialize even further to gain reader acceptance. Newspapers catering to official policies are reportedly doing poorly in circulation as readers expect the emergence of a free press. The circulation of the Central Daily News and two major official newspapers -- China Times and the United Daily News -- reportedly have declined significantly. (Tien, 1989, p. 201)

#### Journalism Philosophies and Principles

The Western news media, with those of the United States as most representative, are operating for the most part under the libertarian theory of the press, which contains the basic idea that "the task of society is to provide a free market place of ideas so that men may exercise reason and choice." (Rivers, 1980, p.42)

According to libertarian theory, human beings are independent and rational, able to choose between right and wrong, good and bad. The theory cherishes the conviction:

Human understanding is capable, of its own power and without recourse to supernatural assistance, of comprehending the system of the world, and that this new way of understanding the world will lead to a new way of mastering it. (Cassirer, 1935, p. 547)

The major function of the press, maintains the libertarian theory, is to provide the public with truthful, accurate and complete information so as to enable people to make sound judgments and decisions on issues concerning their daily lives.

Based on this principle, the press must be run as a private enterprise which enjoys profits and bears losses all by itself, and is totally free from government control. John Milton, a libertarian philosopher, emphasized the importance of a free press in his Aeropagitica. In his view, men can exercise their reason to its fullest power only when they have free choice. He was strongly against any form of government restriction on the freedom of the press.

Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States who wrote the Declaration of Independence, attached special importance to the freedom of the press. He wrote:

The basis of our government being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. (Kurian, 1982, p.990)

Jefferson further contended that, just as the function of government is to establish and maintain a framework within which an individual can develop his own capabilities and pursue his own ends, the chief function of the press is to inform the individual and to stand guard against deviation by government from its basic assignment. Therefore, he concluded:

No experiment can be more interesting than what we are now trying, and which we trust will end in establishing the fact, that man may be governed by reason and truth. Our first object should therefore be, to leave open to him all the avenues of truth. The most effective hitherto found, is the freedom of the press. (Rivers, 1980, p.41)

In 1789, the American Congress passed the First Amendment to the Constitution which stipulates: "Congress shall make no law... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." No other business than the press in the United States enjoys this specific constitutional protection. Why should there be such protection for the press? The libertarian theorists argue that the free flow of ideas is necessary in a democracy because people who govern themselves need to know about their government and those who run it,

as well as about the social and economic institutions that greatly affect their day-to-day lives. Most people get that information through newspapers, radio and television. (Brooks, 1980, p. 432)

Since the press is a private enterprise which is to provide a free marketplace of ideas, everyone should have an equal chance in this marketplace and have equal access to information. Anyone with sufficient funds can start a newspaper or a radio station. This idea certainly encourages competition among the news organizations and enables news and information to be more diversified and current.

The libertarian theory maintains that the press cannot serve its readers unless it earns sufficient profits to survive. Elie Abel, professor of journalism at Stanford University and former U.S. delegate to UNESCO, wrote that the crucial distinction between the American mass media and those of many other countries lies in the political and philosophical climate in which they operate. This distinction, he wrote, "is marked by the total absence here of government control, licensing, or regulation." He further pointed out, "Certain characteristics of our media that set them apart from those of many other countries can be readily identified: ours are private -- not state -- enterprises, operate for profit." (Abel, 1981, p. 4)

The private and independent nature of the American press has made it possible for it to function as a source of information and as a watchdog of the government. The chief purpose of the Western free press, in summary, is to inform, entertain and sell, but its essence is to discover the truth and check on the government.

In communist countries, such as China, however, all the news media are owned and controlled by the political party in power and by the government as their propaganda tools.

According to Karl Marx, founder of the communist philosophy, the character of ideological forms has always been a reflection of the character of the dominant social class. Mass media, as part of the superstructure, are guided and maneuvered by the dominant

social force. (North, 1971, P.17)

The Russian communist leader, Lenin, had a very vivid description of the role of the press. He wrote, "A newspaper is not only a collective propagandist and a collective agitator, it is also a collective organizer." (Lenin, 1927, p. 114)

Mao Zedong, the Chinese communist leader, explained the role of the press more specifically. In a talk with the editors of the Shansi-Suiyuan Daily in 1948, Mao said, "The role and power of the press consists in its ability to bring the party program, the party line, the party's general and specific policies, its tasks and methods of work before the masses in the quickest and most extensive way." (Nathan, 1985, p. 154)

Even Hu Yaobang, the liberal-minded party leader, had stressed the importance of a party-controlled press. Hu was forced to resign as general-secretary of the Chinese Communist Party in 1987 as a result of his tolerance of the then student movement, and his death on April 15, 1989, triggered the student-led democratic movement in Tiananmen Square. In a speech to the party central committee meeting on February 8, 1985, Hu said:

The most fundamental characteristic of the Chinese press is that it serves as a mouthpiece of the party. Since the Chinese Communist Party is the party that serves the people wholeheartedly, the press, which is the party's journalism cause, must serve as the party's mouthpiece. (People's Daily, April 14, 1985)

Using the press as a tool of class struggle and political propaganda, the Chinese Communist Party has been indoctrinating the people with Marxist, Leninist and Maoist ideas, persuading them to follow the party line and policies, and motivating them to rally around the party to carry out the revolution and class struggle. The functions of the press, therefore, are to publicize the party decisions, to educate the masses and to form a link between the party and the masses. Through the press, the party strives to organize the masses, to mobilize the masses and to develop in the masses the proletarian characteristics that will make them loyal and useful citizens of the country. (Chen & Chu, 1982, p.219)



The Chinese press, said Xu Zhuqing, deputy editor-in-chief of the China Youth Daily, should strengthen the link between the party and the people, and should pass on the party's and government's policies to the people, and people's demands and suggestions to the party and government. (Xu, 1985, p. 9)

Since the Chinese press is instrumental rather than informational, news judgment and time efficiency, which are so vital to the Western press, are not part of its concern. Chinese journalism theory maintains that the function of the press should not be confined to the mere reporting of a news event or a fact. When deciding whether to report an event, the press must decide whether the event will engender favorable reactions among the people. To put it differently, the press must determine whether the news story will arouse the people's political consciousness, or whether it will strengthen their allegiance to the party. In sum, social effects must be taken into consideration when each news story is being treated.

The Journalism Front, a magazine published by the People's Daily, stated in an article, "To Serve as a Qualified Mouthpiece of the Party," that "We must not rush to report any event merely for the sake of being the first in releasing the news. Serving as the party's mouthpiece, we editors and reporters must take news reporting as seriously as performing a solemn task entrusted by the party, and strive to make every news story stand the test of history." (Xie, 1985, p.12)

The article went on to say that once a reporter or an editor finds a news clue or a story idea, he/she must weigh it earnestly to determine whether the viewpoints in it are valid, and whether it will evoke positive responses from the audience. In the view of this article, many events are not suitable for publicity, and some problems need to be exposed, but cannot be expected to be solved for the time being. News about problems of this kind should be withheld, otherwise it will ignite popular dissatisfaction about the societal status

quo. The article concluded, "We will rush to report an event which is in conformity with the fundamental interests of the party and the people; and we will withhold a piece of news when time is not opportune." (Xie,1985,p.12)

Unlike libertarian theory which treats people as rational human beings capable of judging and understanding the problems by themselves, the communist theory of journalism, which is more or less close to the authoritarian or totalitarian theories of the press, looks upon the people as being incapable of making their own judgments and decisions, and thus powerful, wise men are needed to guide them by telling them what to do, what to know, and how to think.

Although the party and government have declared time and again that "there is no censorship in China at all, and all the news media enjoy full socialist freedom to perform their journalistic duties," the Chinese press cannot print anything without the approval of the party. In the communist view, a free and independent press becomes a divisive, costly luxury that does not serve the needs of the state and hence the people. Mass media, controlled and directed by the Communist Party, can concentrate on the serious task of the nation building by publishing news relating to the entire society's policies and goals as determined by the top party leadership. (Hachten, 1987, p. 23)

In between the commercialized, free press system in pluralistic democracies and the government-owned press system in communist countries, Taiwan has a unique press system which "combines some qualities of commercial mass media with a degree of state-controlled political sanitization." (Liu, 1982, p43) It has highly commercialized radio and television broadcast systems as well as newspapers and periodicals, and it also has substantial official sanitization. Consequently the balance between Kuomintang (the Nationalist Party) control and press independence varies across a narrow range and periodically tilts toward one side or the other.

Before the government lifted the restrictions on the press in 1988, the authorities did not tolerate criticism that questioned the legitimacy of the government, the fundamental policy of anti-communism, the reunification of China based on the Three Principles of the People, or the rejection of Taiwan independence. All four topics are now gradually finding their way into the newspapers and political journals. Although the government's press policy is liberalizing, blunt criticism still runs the risk of official sanction. (Tien, 1989, p.204)

The KMT's intrusion into media activities does not in practice guarantee editors' or reporters' compliance. Although ownership of the major media is restricted to "reliable persons," competition for market share and the profit motive have led to frequent deviation from the official position in bids to increase circulation. Since business goals sometimes run counter to party interests, Taiwan's newspapers, including some of the KMT affiliates, can maintain a degree of independence not found in other authoritarian systems.

Generally speaking, in Taiwan today, the KMT and government authorities can no longer monopolize media enterprises in an increasingly pluralistic society. The party and the government still monitor the press closely, but party opinions are not reflected either strictly or uniformly. (Tien, 1989, p 215)

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

With the aim of determining the objectivity and accuracy of reporting on the 1989 Tiananmen democratic movement by China's People's Daily, America's New York Times and Taiwan's Central Daily News, this study used a qualitative content analysis to compare the performance of the three newspapers.

Rather than focusing on straight description of the content of the reporting itself, this qualitative analysis centered on the apparent intentions of the three media and their probable effects upon the readers. In this study the interpretations (i.e., inferences about intent and effect) more often were made as part of the analytical process, and they were largely based on statements about intent and motivations of the communicators. Although this qualitative content analysis does not have a rigid system of categories, it will allow for more subtle and more individualized interpretations. In short, the focus of the qualitative analysis "lies less often in the content as such and more often in other areas to which the content is a cue, i.e., which it `reflects' or `expresses' or which it is `latent' in the manifest content." (Berelson, 1971, p. 124) On the other hand, concern is more often centered upon other events for which the content is only or largely a convenient indicator. Thus, analysis of the agitator's propaganda is meant to reveal "ideologies and ideological manifestations...the meaning of demagogue" and indeed to expose a whole sector of the society. (Lawenthal & Guterman, 1949, p.xi)

### Sources of Information

Three daily newspapers, the People's Daily (Overseas Edition), the New York Times and the Central Daily News, dating from April 15, to June 4, 1989, were used in this study. News stories about the Tiananmen democratic movement during this 50-day period were selected, analyzed and compared. Since the sizes of the three newspapers differs, with the New York Times ranging from 70 to several hundred pages daily, and the People's Daily and the Central Daily News having only eight pages daily, a quantitative content analysis would be unbalanced and inappropriate. In this case, a qualitative content analysis appeared to be more proper for a study designed to analyze the intention and effects of the media communication beyond the obvious, superficial contents of the news reports.

### Data Collecting

The 50-day period of the 1989 Tiananmen democratic movement was divided into five segments according to the five prominent events occurred during that time period: the death of Hu Yaobang that touched off student demonstrations; the student hunger strike; Gorbachev's China visit; student-government dialogues, and installation of the Statue of Democracy. This chronological summary of events is based on:

Event #1: Hu Yaobang's Death Touched Off Student Demonstrations (April 15 - May 13, 1989)

Among the communist leaders in China, Hu was regarded as a liberal-minded reformist whose leadership had pushed forward China's economic, and, to some extent, political reform in the mid-1980s until he was removed from his party general secretary

position in early 1987.

The direct reason for Hu's forced resignation was his reluctance to suppress the student demonstration in December 1986, and many people, especially young students and intellectuals, expressed great sympathy for him over his dismissal. When Hu died of a heart attack on April 15, 1989, his death immediately served as a trigger for people to vent their anger and dissatisfaction about the party and government corruption.

With university students taking the lead, people quickly turned the mourning of Hu Yaobang into open demonstrations for freedom and democracy. Hundreds of thousands of people from all walks of life joined the students, and the number of demonstrators and supporters in Tiananmen Square soon increased to more than one million. Pressing for political reforms in China, the demonstrators called for a dialogue with the government, which repeatedly ignored or declined the students' requests. This led to the escalation of the demonstrations, and the students decided to start hunger strikes on May 13, almost a month after the demonstrations began.

During the period of April 15 through May 13, many important events occurred, such as the students' petition in front of Zhongnanhai, the compound where party and government leaders live and work; the People's Daily editorial on April 26 which labelled the peaceful demonstrations as "riots"; the establishment of the University Student Autonomous Association; the first dialogue between government officials and student representatives; the dismissal of the editor-in-chief of Shanghai's World Economic Herald; and the protests by more than one thousand journalists.

#### Event #2: Student Hunger Strike (May 13 - May 22)

The government indifference toward students' requests for dialogue had angered them, and on May 13, about two thousand students took the oath to start a hunger strike. For six days and six nights, with fainted students being rushed to hospitals one after another, the government still turned a deaf ear to the students' demand for dialogue. It was

not until May 18 that Premier Li Peng agreed to meet student representatives in the Great Hall of the People on live television. The meeting, however, turned out to be a failure because the government refused to accept any of the students' demands, but lectured them not to stir up trouble in society. The next day, Li Peng announced the establishment of martial law in a joint meeting attended by the party, government and military leaders. As a result, the already tense situation deteriorated, and the students decided to continue their hunger strikes. It was not until May 22 that the students gave up their hunger strike and finally realized that, no matter how much pressure they put on the government, it would never accept any of their demands. During this period, many university presidents, well-known writers, scientists and artists, and even members of the National People's Congress, signed petitions urging the government to have dialogue with students.

Event #3: Government-Student Dialogues (April 29 - May 18)

The government did make some gestures to meet with students. On April 29, a spokesman for the State Council, together with an official from the Education Commission, had a dialogue with some student representatives and Chinese television made a live telecast of this meeting. However, the Student Autonomous Association, a newly-founded student organization independent of the government, refused to recognize this "dialogue" because it said that all the student representatives were pre-selected by the government.

On the next day, April 30, the party secretary and mayor of Beijing met with student representatives, urging the students to go back to school. At the same time, the government officials accused the Student Autonomous Association of being an illegal organization.

Prime Minister Li Peng finally met with student-elected representatives on May 18 at the peak of the hunger strike when hundreds of hunger strikers fainted in Tiananmen Square. However, the meeting achieved nothing, and the students were disappointed at being lectured on by Li. The crisis deepened.

#### Event #4: Gorbachev's China Visit (May 15 - May 18)

While the Chinese leadership was devoting its whole effort to dealing with the student movement, Soviet President Gorbachev came to Beijing on May 15 for a four-day visit in hope of mending the 30-year rift between the two communist nations. Gorbachev's visit was an important event in the history of Sino-Soviet relations, and more than 1,200 journalists from various countries came into Beijing to cover this historical event.

As a matter of fact, Gorbachev's China visit had been upstaged by student demonstrations. His Beijing schedule had been forced to change several times to avoid any direct confrontation with the demonstrators. This was obviously a great embarrassment to the Chinese leadership.

The demonstrating students, however, regarded Gorbachev as a hero of political reforms, and paraded with Gorbachev's huge portrait as well as posters that highly praised the Soviet leader. Gorbachev himself was impressed by student enthusiasm for social reforms, and on several occasions he came out of his limousine and walked into the crowds to talk with the young students.

#### Event #5: The Goddess of Democracy (May 30 - June 4)

In the early morning of May 30, a 7-meter-high "statue of democracy" was erected in Tiananmen Square amid cheers and applause. The students of the Central Institute of Fine Art spent two days and two nights building this statue with plaster, and shipped it in parts to the Square the night before by cargo cycles. No truck drivers dared to help the students deliver the statue because they had been warned that their driver's licenses would be withdrawn if they did.

The statue of democracy held a torch with her hands, directly facing the huge portrait of Mao on Tiananmen rostrum. Tens of thousands of people went to the Square to see its



inauguration ceremony, and many took photographs of the statue.

An announcement by the student demonstration headquarters called the statue "the Goddess of Democracy" and "the symbol of freedom and democracy of the Chinese people." But the official media called it "an insult and humiliation to the national dignity and image."

The statue was crushed into rubble by soldiers when they moved into the Square on June 4.

### Data Analysis

According to chronological order, news stories about each event by the three newspapers selected for this study were compared, and interpretations based on either historical documentations or accounts by other publications were used to complement the comparison.

Since the three newspapers differ in size, news stories were not compared and analyzed according to their topic frequencies or column inches, but according to the way in which each newspaper presented them.

### Hypothesis

There is no difference between objectivity in reporting the Tiananmen crisis by the People's Daily, the New York Times and the Central Daily News.

### Research Questions

1. How did the People's Daily handle the reporting of the 1989 student-led

democratic movement in comparison with the New York Times and the Central Daily News?

2. How did the People's Daily balance its functions as both a government mouthpiece and a news service?

3. What problems had been exposed about the Chinese journalism system during the Tiananmen democratic movement?

## CHAPTER IV

### HOW TIANANMEN WAS REPORTED?

#### Introduction

During the past ten years (1979-1989), China underwent an unprecedented economic reform, which attempted to introduce market economy into Chinese society while still retaining the ownership of major business and enterprises in the hands of the state. The hybrid of a socialist economy with capitalist elements improved the stagnation of the centrally planned economy, but on the other hand, it also produced certain social problems -- inflation, deficit, official corruption and profiteering, and inequity between the rich and the poor.

Dissatisfaction of the people about the status quo increased rapidly, and democracy gained ground as a source of inspiration in the society's search for a freer, more just political order. As a symbol of protest it had come to embody a diversity of sentiments -- anger at official corruption, inflation, and hegemony of the bureaucracy. But underlying this diversity was a common desire, democratic in nature and shared by workers, students, farmers, entrepreneurs, and bureaucrats, for greater autonomy from the state and for input into the governing process. (Francis, 1989, p.898)

In China, however, everything is placed under the centralized leadership of the Communist Party. It is illegal to organize any form of unauthorized parties or groups, even social gatherings for the exchange or sharing of views are not permitted. It is also not permissible to say or write anything that is not in conformity with the party line in news

media, let alone to start a private newspaper or radio station.

Under such circumstances, people in China usually rely on the informal, unofficial grapevine to get information, or take advantage of some breaking events to get together to share views and exchange information. Hu Yaobang's death served as a signal for people in various parts of the country to take common action simultaneously. In this sense, Hu's death raised the curtain on China's democratic movement of 1989, which was a breakthrough in the Chinese people's struggle for social change.

#### Student Movement after Hu's Death

Hu Yaobang, who helped navigate China away from orthodox Marxism and led the world's largest Communist Party for six years until he was forced to resign in disgrace in January 1987, died on April 15, 1989. He was 73 years old. (Times, April 16, 1989, p. 38)

The People's Daily carried an obituary by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party on April 16 calling Hu "a seasoned, loyal communist fighter, a great proletarian revolutionary, politician, and an outstanding leader of the party and the army." While recognizing that "Comrade Hu Yaobang had made immortal contributions to the party and the people," (Daily, April 16, 1989, p. 1) the obituary did not mention a single word about Hu's resignation in 1987. As a matter of fact, the students' spontaneous mourning activities, which were quickly turned into demonstrations for freedom and democracy, were triggered by their anger over what they saw as the disgraceful and unjust dismissal of Hu from his party chief position. His dismissal was ordered by Deng Xiaoping and other aging leaders.

The New York Times reported on the day of Hu's death that "hundreds of students,

reacting in sadness and anger to the death of the former Communist Party leader Hu Yaobang, crowded in the dark tonight at Beijing University to pin up illegal posters and discuss the consequences for Chinese democracy." One poster written in big black characters read, "Those who should die still live. Those who should live have died." Another poster read, "When you (Hu) were deprived of your post, why didn't we stand up? We feel guilty. Our conscience bleeds." (Times, April 16, 1989, p. 11)

The New York Times commented that when Hu was forced to resign in January 1987 after nationwide student demonstrations, he became increasingly popular among intellectuals. He came to be seen as a symbol of democracy and change, while his "resignation" was viewed as a major example of the capriciousness and loyalty to Marxist orthodoxy that existed among some elderly leaders. (Times, April 16, 1989, p. 11)

Being a longtime enemy of the Chinese Communist Party, the Nationalist Party (KMT) in Taiwan took a very serious look at the death of Hu. Its political organ, the Central Daily News, devoted almost the whole front page on April 16, 1989, to stories about Hu Yaobang and China's political situation after Hu's death. It also reported the mourning activities of university students in Beijing. A student was quoted as saying that since the 1986 student movement which led to the stepdown of Hu, university students in Beijing had been expressing their feeling of dissatisfaction, and this time, their anger came to an explosion point. Despite the enormous pressure and threat from the authorities, the students were planning to hold demonstrations. (News, April 16, 1989, p. 1)

The student mourning activities soon spread from campus to the center of Beijing, Tiananmen Square. On April 16, hundreds of students and other people gathered around the Monument to the People's Heroes, and placed wreaths under the portrait of Hu. Under the wreaths, there were many freshly smashed bottles. The New York Times pointed out, "In a nation where there are no opinion polls to assess the popularity of national leaders, what people do with small bottles may be the best indication of the remarkable rise and fall

in the popularity of Deng Xiaoping."(Times, April 17, 1989, p. 1)

The pronunciation of "Xiaoping" is the same as that of "small bottle" in spoken Chinese. By smashing small bottles people vent their anger over the communist leadership headed by Deng and other octogenarian leaders. Ten years earlier, people had used the same symbolism to show their support for Deng's reform by putting small bottles in conspicuous places. But today, "even Communist Party officials acknowledge that the public is growing tired of Mr. Deng. Some of the pent-up hostility has come into the open after the death Saturday of the former party leader Hu Yaobang, who was ousted two years after being criticized by Mr. Deng for tolerating intellectual dissidents and student unrest." (Times, April 17, 1989, p.1)

The Times summarized three specific reasons for the slump in Deng's popularity: 1). There is a general discontent over inflation, corruption, crime, and shortages; 2). Deng's children have capitalized on their father's position in their business activities; 3). The 84-year-old Deng has held onto power too long. According to the Times, people often compared him to the aging Mao of the mid-1970's, and said he should completely retire and leave the stage. "While ordinary Chinese principally complain about Mr. Deng on pocketbook issues, like inflation, some intellectuals make unflattering comparisons with Mikhail S. Gorbachev, the Soviet leader. They note that Mr. Gorbachev has gone much further in opening up the political system than has Mr. Deng." A poster on the campus of Beijing University simply said, "Down with the dictator!"(Times, April 17, 1989, p. A8)

The Central Daily News carried an article by Hong Kong's Min Pao on April 18 which reported that, Hu Deping, the eldest son of Hu Yaobang, on behalf of the whole family, requested party general secretary Zhao Ziyang that a fair judgment and reappraisal be made on his father's forced resignation in 1987. A number of well-known intellectuals immediately echoed their support, and they called for a rehabilitation of Hu Yaobang at an

early date. Another story by the Central Daily News said that students and young teachers from more than a dozen universities in Beijing put up a large number of posters expressing their strong dissatisfaction with the obituary by the Party Central Committee which did not make any comments on Hu's resignation in 1987, and demanded for a fair evaluation of Hu's historical deeds. Some other posters directly criticized Deng Xiaoping and asked Prime Minister Li Peng, step-son of former Premier Zhou Enlai, to resign. (News, April 18, 1989, p. 4)

Almost all the international news media had reported the large-scale demonstrations by several thousand students on April 17. The People's Daily, however, kept silent on this event.

The Central Daily News reported in a front-page story that several thousand students in Beijing marched toward Tiananmen Square, shouting slogans along the way: "Long live freedom! Long live democracy!" "Down with corrupted officials!" A crowd of four or five thousand people was reportedly gathered around the Monument of the People's Heroes. The story also said that more than a thousand students in Shanghai took to the streets the evening of April 17. (News, April 18, 1989, p.1)

While comparing the current student movement with the student demonstrations of April 1976 to mourn Zhou Enlai which later turned into anti-government riots, the New York Times focused on the students' demands: an official reappraisal of Mr. Hu, an apology from the government for various unspecified mistakes, and a "collective resignation," apparently of all the country's leaders; democratic elections, the release of China's political prisoners, and freedom of the press.

For four days since university students took to the streets after the death of Hu Yaobang, the People's Daily kept avoiding the issue of the demonstrations, and only mentioned the mourning activities of the Chinese people, including the students. It was not

until April 19 that the People's Daily carried a 400-word story on its front page, warning people to be on guard against "a very small number of individuals with ulterior motives who wanted to stir up troubles by forcing their way into the headquarters of the party and government." The story said,

From last night until early this morning, about one thousand students and other people gathered in front of Zhongnanhai, the headquarters of the Party Central Committee. At 12:20 a.m., under the instigation of a small number of individuals, some people began to force their way into Zhongnanhai by holding three wreaths. During this time, someone threw bottles and shoes at the security guards, and one of the guards received a bruised face. (Daily, April 19, p. 1)

In another front-page story, the People's Daily warned students by quoting a Qinghua University professor that "the students' feelings of deep grief over the death of Comrade Hu Yaobang are quite understandable. But I hope that you students should not commit any transgressions while expressing your feelings, and you should observe the law." (Daily, April 19, 1989, p. 1)

The People's Daily reported the phenomenon of "a very small number of people charging Zhongnanhai," but it never mentioned why so many students and other people were so easily persuaded by a few individuals to gather in front of Zhongnanhai, and why they wanted to force their way into the party headquarters. Obviously, the People's Daily had missed some elements of the news -- it had ignored the expressed cause of the students' action: their demands for direct talks with government leaders had not been met.

The international media, however, had widely reported the students' demands.

The Central Daily News made it clear that prior to the protest in front of Zhongnanhai students went to the Great Hall of the People, a conference building of the leaders, and asked to see the party and government leaders. While no leader came out to meet them, the angered students marched toward Zhongnanhai and demanded a face-to-face talk with Premier Li Peng. One student was quoted as saying, "We hope our leaders come to talk to us and listen to our opinions." (News, April 20, 1989, p. 4)



The Times, while commenting that the protest at Zhongnanhai was a "brazen challenge to the government," once again reported the students' demands: freedom of the press, a reappraisal of Hu, a repudiation of past crackdowns on intellectuals and a disclosure of the income and assets of China's leaders and their children. (Times, April 19, 1989, p. A8)

It is commonly acknowledged that news can be fair only when it has been reported completely. The People's Daily, however, only reported students' attempt to force their way into Zhongnanhai, while leaving out their reasons for doing so, that is, they had not been able to talk to the nation's leaders. (Daily, April 20, 1989, p. 1) In China where the news media are all controlled by the government, the news that is read throughout the country follows closely the party line. People in other areas, who depended on the official news media for information, would have little idea about what was really going on in Beijing and would have little choice but to believe the official story of the event.

Min Pao, a Hong Kong daily, disclosed on April 19 that the Propaganda Department of the Party Central Committee had instructed all official news media not to have anything about the student demonstrations appear in news stories, photographs, television and radio programs. (Min Pao, April 19, 1989, p. 1)

During the following days when protests in front of Zhongnanhai escalated, the People's Daily and the official Xinhua News Agency published commentaries, accusing "a very small number of individuals" of "conducting anti-party and anti-government activities." The People's Daily commentary said,

A very small number of individuals who took advantage of mourning Comrade Hu Yaobang, have conducted the unlawful activities of brazenly charging Zhongnanhai, directing their spearhead against the party and government. This can never be tolerated. Maintaining the political situation of unity and stability is the highest interest of the Chinese people, and anyone who attempts to destroy it using whatever excuses will be punished

by law. Up to now, in dealing with the very small number of people engaging in the unlawful activities, the government has exercised great constraint. If some people consider this weakness and cling obstinately to their own way, they will have to face bitter consequences.

The Xinhua News Agency commentary was even more menacing:

There are certain individuals who, under the pretext of mourning Comrade Hu, have premeditatedly directed their spearhead against the party and government. Delivering instigative speeches; chanting reactionary slogans of 'Down with the Communist Party;' smearing the Monument to the People's Heroes; and even injuring security guards when charging Zhongnanhai. All of these activities have gone far beyond the limits of law. It is absolutely necessary to adopt firm measures to stop these unlawful activities. (Daily, April 21, 1989, p.1)

Here again, the People's Daily dodged the essential point of the conflict between students and police.

The New York Times reported the intense situation at the entrance of Zhongnanhai where at least 10,000 people marched for the second time on Communist Party headquarters and demanded to see the nation's leaders on the evening of April 19. According to the Times' story, "the protest outside Zhongnanhai was broken up at 3:30 a.m. when thousands of police officers rushed the demonstrators... the police were seen beating several protesters, and 150 to 200 protesters were taken away in a bus." (Times, April 20, 1989, p.A8)

The Central Daily News also reported that about 300 protesters were arrested during the Zhongnanhai demonstration after clashing with the police. It quoted a Reuters reporter that policemen kicked and beat demonstrators, who, in return, threw bottles and stones at the officers. Two women were seen being beaten by the police, and one of them was bleeding all over her face. The Central Daily News also reported that the editor-in-chief of the Hong Kong Express protested in a letter to the Xinhua News Agency, Hong Kong

Bureau, that one of the Express's reporters, Mr. Ho Ze, was beaten by the police while he was taking pictures during the Zhongnanhai protest, and his films were taken away by force and exposed. (News, April 21, 1989, p. 1)

While the People's Daily and other major news media continued to cover up the news about the student movement for democracy, and to denounce "a very, very small number of individuals with ulterior motives," the "very, very small number of individuals" turned out to be more than 100,000 demonstrators by April 22. The distortion of the news by the official news media had greatly aroused the indignation of the students, and more than 100 students from the Journalism Research Institute, an affiliate of Xinhua News Agency, went to join the demonstration in Tiananmen Square. They held high the posters of "Freedom of the Press" and "We want truth!" and their action was warmly cheered and applauded. (News, April 23, 1989, p. 1)

Actually, not all the official news media willingly served as government accomplices to vilify the students. A Hong Kong monthly journal, Cheng Ming, pointed out,

A number of newspapers that are directed at intellectuals as their main body of readers have disdained to have anything to do with this despicable behavior on the part of the Chinese communists. One after another they have offered positive resistance to the campaign of united attack of the student movement. While the Chinese communists do not allow them to carry any independent reports or critical articles on these matters, they have also refused to carry any worthless articles cooked up by the official literary circles. (Cheng Ming, May 1989, pp. 25-27)

The New York Times, having reported that the number of demonstrators in Beijing had increased to more than 100,000, and that the student movement had also spread to many other cities such as Xian and Changsha where riots took place, also devoted space to the banning of the World Economic Herald in Shanghai. "In its firmest action so far to stem the growing student campaign for more democracy," said the Times, "the communist party

today (April 24) banned an issue of a popular newspaper that published comments openly supporting the demonstrators."

The April 24th issue of the banned Shanghai-based weekly, the World Economic Herald, which had a circulation of 300,000, contained some of the boldest criticism of the Communist Party ever published in a major Chinese newspaper. But the party prohibited the distribution of the newspaper, and at the same time, fired its editor-in-chief, Qin Benli. (Times, April 25, 1989, p. A3)

This incident further provoked the students, and "tens of thousands of university students in the capital began an indefinite boycott of classes to press their demands for more democracy and a freer press," the Times reported. (Times, April 24, 1989, p. A3)

The New York Times also reported that Hu Qili, one of the five members of the Politburo Standing Committee, met with editors of major newspapers to advise them not to cover the student demonstrations lest they inflame the situation. But, in addition to the World Economic Herald, at least one Beijing newspaper ignored the warning. The Science and Technology Daily printed a long and sympathetic article about the demonstrations as well as six photographs. (Times, April 25, 1989, p. A3)

In a story entitled "Police beat students, but It had been reported as students beat the police," the Central Daily News said that dozens of students were injured after being kicked and beaten by the police during the Zhongnanhai protest, but in the story by the Xinhua News Agency, it was reported as the opposite, that students roughed up the police. While charging that students injured four police officers, the Xinhua story didn't mention student injuries and arrests. The Central Daily News quoted the students' posters which read, "People's Daily deceives people! Central Television confuses black and white! and Xinhua News Agency is a literary police!" (News, April 24, 1989, p. 4)

In other stories, the Central Daily News reported the banning of the World Economic Herald and the Science and Technology Daily, and it also reprinted a story by Agence

France Presse which said that about 4,000 students marched along Beijing streets, demanding the restoration of the two banned newspapers. (News, April 24, 1989, p. 4)

Again, the People's Daily did not report the Herald and the Science and Technology Daily.

In the morning of April 27, several hundred thousand students from more than 50 Beijing universities marched along the major streets of the capital to express their strong reaction to the April 26 editorial of the People's Daily which clearly defined the nature of the student movement as "rioting." (News, April 27, 1989, p. 1) Under the title of "Taking a clear-cut stand against turmoil," the editorial charged:

A handful of individuals with ulterior motives took this opportunity to fabricate rumors against the party and state leaders, incited people to attempt to force entry through the Xinhua Gate of Zhongnanhai, and even shouted reactionary slogans like 'Down with the Communist Party!' They wantonly violated the Constitution by advocating opposition to the party's leadership and the socialist system. In some colleges and universities they have formed illegal organizations to seize power from student unions... Under the banner of democracy, they are trampling on both democracy and law. Their purpose is to poison people's minds, create national turmoil and sabotage the nation's political stability and unity. This is a planned conspiracy, a turmoil which, in essence, aims at negating the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party and the socialist system. This is a grave political struggle facing the whole party and the people of all nationalities." (Daily, April 26, 1989, p. 1)

The editorial further warned that "no illegal organizations will be allowed to be set up, and no one will be allowed to take any action under whatever pretext that encroaches upon the rights and interests of the legal student organization... Illegal demonstrations and parades are forbidden." Finally, it called on the whole party and the whole nation to "actively go into action and struggle for the quick and resolute quelling of the turmoil."

Many students and teachers felt deeply distressed and grieved on reading this

editorial, and they said they heard once again the language of the Cultural Revolution which had disappeared for quite a while. (Min Pao Monthly, June 1989, p. 11)

The New York Times observed that "the mood of the students was angry." It reported that "more than 150,000 demonstrators today openly defied official warnings and a concentration of troops to march for 14 hours through the capital, repeatedly and effortlessly puncturing lines of policemen and soldiers sent to stop them, in one of the biggest displays of dissatisfaction in 40 years of communist rule." (Times, April 28, 1989, p. A1)

According to the Times report, although military troops had been called in to suppress the demonstrators, people in Beijing still swarmed into the streets to support students. Crowds of cheering workers lined the entire route and hailed the core of student marchers almost as a liberating army. Workers vigorously applauded the students, waved encouragement from office windows, and frequently sent them food and drinks to show support.

The Times estimated that half a million people, including the onlookers who waved and cheered as the parade went by, took part one way or another. "For the first time," the Times commented, "the pro-democracy movement, which in the past has been overwhelmingly limited to students and intellectuals, seemed to draw fervent support from others." The glee was unforgettable, and everyone jostled for a place in history: the ice-cream vendor who gave her cart of popsicles to the marchers, the businessmen who bought food and drinks for the students, and the young workers who blocked the army troops sent to stop the marchers. (Times, April 30, 1989, p. 24)

The Central Daily News devoted most of the front page to this latest defiance of the government. In addition to giving detailed accounts of the popular support the students received during the marches, the Central Daily News also reported that people in many other major cities, such as Tianjin, Shanghai, Hangzhou, Guangzhou, Nanjing, Xian,

Changsha and Chongqing, responded to demonstrations in Beijing and also took to the streets. (News, April 28, 1989, p.1)

In a separate story, the Central Daily News reported the establishment of the Beijing University Student Independent Union and the Union's appeal to the whole people which demanded the retraction of the People's Daily editorial. In another front-page story, the Central Daily News quoted the Washington Post that the paramount Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping announced at a summit meeting that the government would no longer tolerate the ever-expanding student movement. Deng was reported to have said, "I hope there will be no blood-shedding. But if necessary some blood can be spilled. We don't have to worry about the world's opinion." (News, April 28, 1989, p. 1)

The New York Times was alarmed by Deng's remarks, and it also reported that "Chinese with close Communist Party connections say the Politburo raised the matter of student unrest this week and asked Mr. Deng for his views. He is said to have answered particularly harshly, saying that if necessary some blood could be spilled and that repression would not seriously harm China's image in the world." (Times, April 28, 1989, p. A6)

To such an important event as the April 27 parade which drew more than half a million people, the People's Daily reported nothing. For several days following its April 26 editorial, it carried articles one after another, charging "a very small number of individuals" with making trouble. The Daily used the phrase "a very small number of individuals" to describe a crowd of more than half a million. Plus, it seldom mentioned the students' activities and their demands.

In a front-page article on April 28, entitled "On the Truth of the Recent Rumors in Beijing," by an unidentified Xinhua reporter, the People's Daily accused the "very small number of individuals" of inciting students by spreading rumors. The article reported that

the police never beat nor kicked students during the Zhongnanhai protest, but that the protesters injured police officers with rocks and bottles. It also addressed the rumor that Premier Li Peng had promised to meet the students, but never showed up. It explained that the students had been deceived and used by a very small number of people who had ulterior motives to oppose the leadership of the Communist Party. (Daily, April 28, 1989, p 1)

In another front-page story, the People's Daily reported the dismissal of Mr. Qin Benli from the position of editor-in-chief of Shanghai's World Economic Herald. Accusing Mr. Qin of "gravely violating party discipline," it said,

In its April 24 issue, the World Economic Herald devoted several pages to reporting mourning activities for Hu Yaobang. Some content, if openly printed, would jeopardize the current situation of stability, and would cause ideological confusions. The Shanghai Municipal Party Committee has thus made the decision to dismiss Comrade Qin from his position in order to enable the newspaper to correctly stick to the four fundamental principles and implement the policy of reform and opening up. (Daily, April 28, 1989, p. 1)

Regarding the reporting by the Chinese news media of the April 27 parade, the New York Times made an important observation. It said, "The government appeared dumbfounded by the size of the day's demonstration, and the television news did not mention it tonight. The official Xinhua News Agency mentioned it briefly and suggested its effect only indirectly when reporting that it had caused 'huge traffic tie-ups' affecting 300,000 people." It quoted Lin Yulin, one of the marchers, as saying, "The leaders cover everything up. People don't know anything, and we are no longer the masters. That's why there is this uprising." (Times, April 28, 1989, p. A6)

Following the historical April 27 march which involved half a million people and after the government rejected the students' ultimatum for direct dialogue with government leaders, the Beijing Student Autonomous Union planned to stage a bigger demonstration on May 4, the 70th anniversary of the famous May 4th Movement of Chinese history. On May



4, 1919, Beijing University students and intellectuals gathered in Tiananmen Square to protest the Baiyang warlord government's acquiescence in the Versailles Treaty and to demonstrate in favor of more democratic rights for the people. Seventy years later, on May 4, Beijing students again took to the streets, but now it was from the communist party that they were demanding more democratic rights. (Liu Binyan, 1989, p. 21)

According to the New York Times report, a defiant and enthusiastic crowd of more than 100,000 workers and students forced its way through police cordons in Beijing on May 4, 1989, to demand more democracy, and small demonstrations were held in many other cities around China.

The occasion for the marches today was the 70th anniversary of famous nationalist demonstrations in Beijing that led to the May 4 Movement, which led a generation of Chinese intellectuals to seek a major re-examination of Chinese society. The movement also foreshadowed the rise of the Communist Party. (Times, May 5, 1989, p. A8)

The New York Times further reported that the demonstrations were an immense display of support for the students and their demands -- particularly freedom of the press, which had become an increasingly important issue in the last few weeks. While the nucleus of the crowd was still students, they were easily outnumbered by young workers. Yuan Jun, an iron worker who came from out of town to join in the demonstration, was quoted as saying, "Even if the students don't bring up the inflation problem, I'll still support them. They demand press freedom, which is something we need, too. Now we have no freedom at all." The Times also reported that several hundred journalists from official publications gathered in front of the official Xinhua News Agency to protest false and biased reporting and to call for the reinstatement of Qin Benli, the editor of The World Economic Herald, and one of the boldest journalists in China. (Times, May 5, 1989, p. A8)

The Central Daily News reported the heavy measures the Chinese government

adopted to prevent students from holding demonstrations on May 4 by enforcing a traffic curfew around Tiananmen Square from 7:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. The police built cordons in front of many Beijing universities in an effort to stop students from going into the streets. (News, May 4, 1989, p. 2) In another story, The Central Daily News reported that more than 300,000 students from all over the country marched along Beijing streets to commemorate the May 4 Movement. "At 7 o'clock this morning," said The Central Daily News, "The Beijing University Students Autonomous Union started to prepare for today's demonstration. At 8:30 a.m., students began to march toward Tiananmen Square, and civilians who lined both sides of the streets cheered and applauded when they saw the contingents of student marchers. Some onlookers gave the "V" sign to the students, and many others simply joined the students' parade. More than one hundred journalists, including journalists from The People's Daily and Xinhua News Agency, also joined the demonstration." The Central Daily News likewise gave a lot of details on the protests of the people in Hong Kong and Macao, as well as by Chinese students studying abroad. (News, May 5, 1989, p. 2)

Since May 1, some minor changes had taken place with the People's Daily. In addition to its usual practice of carrying stories of the government line, it also printed some short stories about student demonstrations. In a front-page story in its May 1 issue, The People's Daily reported a dialogue between students and government officials, stating that they exchanged views on many issues concerning official corruption, news reporting, education and student demonstrations. A picture of two Taiwanese journalists interviewing a man in Tiananmen Square was placed next to the news story. (Daily, May 1, 1989, p. 1)

Also in two front-page stories of the May 3 issue, The People's Daily reported that more than 4,000 university students in Shanghai took to the streets, and dozens of students from various Beijing universities sent a petition to the National People's Congress, the

State Council and the Party Central Committee, though these stories did not specify what demands the students raised during their demonstration in Shanghai and in their petition. On the day of the May 4 Movement commemoration, The People's Daily carried the usual long articles and speeches by government leaders about the "great significance" of the May 4 Movement, but it devoted almost all of page four to stories about the student demonstrations. It not only reported that government officials, such as Mr. Yuan Mu, spokesman of the State Council, repeatedly expressed the willingness of the government to have dialogues with the students, and that they also warned students not to be utilized by "a small number of individuals with ulterior motives," but it also printed the whole text of the student petition. (Daily, May 3, 1989, p.1)

On May 5, The People's Daily front-paged a speech by Zhao Ziyang, then general-secretary of the Communist Party, who subsequently lost his position after being accused of supporting the riot, stressing that "China will not sink into turmoil." In his speech, Zhao called for soberness, reason, restraint, and order to solve the mounting crisis ignited by the student movement. He said,

I believe that they (the students) are by no means opposed to our basic system. What they want is that we eliminate the defects in our work. They are very satisfied with the accomplishments of the past ten years of reconstruction and reform, and with the progress and development of our country. But they are very dissatisfied with the mistakes we have made in our work. They want us to correct our mistakes and improve our work, which happened to be the stand of the Party and government as well. (Daily, May 5, 1989, p. 1)

Zhao's speech was apparently a contrast to the People's Daily editorial eight days before which branded the student movement a "turmoil," and the speech clearly sent out a signal that a more conciliatory line should be taken to deal with the protesters. (Yi Mu, 1989, p.160)

The international media immediately noticed this dramatic change of tone in the government stand, and gave it a full report. The Central Daily News reprinted a dispatch

from the Agence France Presse which reported that official newspapers in China had unprecedentedly carried stories accompanied by large photos to "report in great details the student demonstrations," and some stories even quoted the "instigative slogans" of the demonstrators. The French story commented that this dramatic change was caused by Zhao Ziyang's speech which was published in all the official newspapers. A Western diplomat was quoted as comparing that situation to "a freshly opened sluice." The Xinhua News Agency quoted a demonstrating student as saying, "We have won. The newspapers have begun to stand on our side." The English-language newspaper, China Daily, used a cross-page headline which read, "Hi, Mr. Democracy!" All the television stations reported the student demonstrations as their first news item for the evening programs on May 4. (News, May 6, 1989, p. 4)

The New York Times also was quick to appreciate the "new openness" in the Chinese media. It reported on May 5 that "after studiously ignoring pro-democracy protests for the last two weeks, China's official newspapers seemed today to display a new openness in their reports of a mass demonstration held here on Thursday." The Times observed that photographs of streets filled with banner-waving students as far as the eye could see ran on the front pages of most newspapers, and newspapers also reported details of demonstrations not only in the capital but also in many other cities. "To some extent, the articles tried to portray the demonstrators as patriotic citizens commemorating a historic occasion," the Times commented. It also pointed out that "more accurate reporting has been one of the demonstrators' principal demands, and today's articles and photos seemed to be a move to satisfy the demand." The Times ended its story by quoting Zhao Ziyang as saying, "corruption occurs partly because there is a lack of openness in the system of work." (Times, May 6, 1989, p. A4)

The People's Daily carried a story on page four, May 10, reporting that more than

1,000 journalists in Beijing signed a petition demanding a dialogue with the party leaders in charge of state propaganda. The story disclosed that 1,013 journalists who signed the petition were from more than 30 news organizations in Beijing. It also reported that more than 1,000 students gathered in front of the All-China Journalists Association to show their support for the journalists. They shouted such slogans as "It is vitally important to speak for the people." (Daily, May 10, 1989, p. 4)

The New York Times reported the journalists' petition on the same day by stating that "the goal of the talks would be to discuss independence of the press, broader coverage of major events like the recent student demonstrations, and the dismissal of the editor-in-chief of a Shanghai newspaper." In a separate story, the Times reported that more than 5,000 students, "wearing colored headbands and shouting slogans against censorship, paraded today on bicycles to the offices of several official newspapers to show support for journalists who have called for greater press freedom." According to the Times report, the cycling parade drew tens of thousands of spectators along the 30-mile-long journey. The students wove their way past the Central People's Broadcasting Station, the Xinhua News Agency, the People's Daily and other newspapers. At each of the headquarters, they stopped and shouted slogans. The Times further reported that "while demanding truth in reporting, the university students also continued to press their demand for 'real' dialogue with the nation's leaders and criticized what they said was the government's paternalistic, unresponsive attitude toward them." (Times, May 11, 1989, p. A3)

The Central Daily News took the journalists protests as a big news event, and gave it a lot of space for several days, from May 9 until May 14. In a story in its May 9 issue, The Central Daily News reported that Mr. Hu Jiwei, former editor-in-chief of the People's Daily, criticized the Shanghai Municipal Party Committee for removing Qin Benli from his editor-in-chief position of the World Economic Herald. In an interview with a Hong Kong

reporter, Hu Jiwei also criticized the censorship of the news media by the communist government. In a story the following day, the Central Daily News gave a detailed report of the journalists' petition, which expressed the indignation of the journalists over the party's restriction on their reporting of the student movement. "We believe that restricting the reporting of the student movement has directly violated the party's basic principle of informing the people of the truths of major events," the petition was quoted as saying. (News, May 9, 1989, p. 4)

In its May 13 editorial entitled "The People's Daily deceives people, and the Guangming (Brightness) Daily is pitch-dark," the Central Daily News commended the petition by more than 1,000 Chinese journalists and regarded it as a first step of Chinese journalism toward a free press. The editorial attributed the journalists' protest to the longtime watertight control over the news media by the communist government that finally made journalists feel ashamed of misleading the people and telling lies. The editorial concluded that, to have a real "mouthpiece of the people, China must carry on its journalistic reform, and lift the ban on the press to allow private newspapers." (News, May 13, 1989, p. 1)

In a front-page story on May 14, the Central Daily News reported that Mr. Hu Qili, a Politburo Standing Committee member in charge of the ideological and propaganda work, met with editors and reporters of the China Youth Daily, and acknowledged that the news events could not be reported truthfully because of party control. He said that "Journalism reform has become such an imminent issue that we cannot afford a moment's delay." (News, May 14, 1989, p. 1)

### Hunger Strikes

Because the government had declared the Beijing University Students Autonomous

Union illegal, and had refused the students' demands for having direct dialogue between government leaders and student representatives, the Student Autonomous Union decided to start hunger strikes on May 13 in an attempt to put more pressure on the government.

The New York Times ran a story on May 13 reporting,

Today, students continued their protests by taking a new tactic and going on a hunger strike to back their demands for more democracy and a meaningful dialogue with the nation's leaders. More than 20,000 spectators watched in Beijing's Tiananmen Square as more than 1,000 university students staged the strike in the middle of the square.

The Times story further disclosed that a power struggle was going on inside the ruling circle of the Communist Party as an unannounced Politburo meeting had endorsed the moderate line of party leader Zhao Ziyang. "The situation remains extremely unsettled, as the debate over recent student demonstrations continues to reverberate through the leadership and exacerbate the power struggle here." (Times, May 14, 1989, p. A10)

The Central Daily News saw this event as important news and ran it on its front pages for several days. One story in its May 14 issue reported that more than 2,000 students staged a hunger strike in Tiananmen Square, with about 20,000 supporters gathering around the Monument to the People's Heroes. One student leader said they would not stop their hunger strike, even during Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to Beijing, unless the government agreed to have "equal and sincere" dialogue with them. (News, May 14, 1989, p.1)

The Soviet President, Mikhail Gorbachev, was scheduled to visit Beijing from May 15 to 18 for a summit meeting with Chinese leaders to improve the 30-year-long bad relations between the two countries. The demonstrating students regarded Gorbachev as a

hero and reformist, and hoped that he would bring some fresh ideas for political reform in communist systems to China.

To avoid losing face during Gorbachev's visit, the Chinese government agreed to hold talks with the students the day before Gorbachev's arrival, hoping that would prevent the students from staging larger demonstrations during Gorbachev's Beijing visit. However, the students were dissatisfied with the dialogue because the participating officials rather than nation's leaders, always dodged students' questions and their demand for a live television broadcast of the talks. Thus, the talks wound up a failure, and the students continued their hunger strike.

In a front-page story on May 16, the Central Daily News reported that more than 500,000 people had gathered in Tiananmen Square on May 15 to support the hunger striking students. It said,

Up until now, the communist regime has not found a way to calm the ever-rising student movement as well as the hunger strike which has lasted for three days since May 13. More and more people come to Tiananmen Square to show their support to the student hunger strike, and it was estimated that the number of people has reached half a million at one time.

A group of well-known intellectuals and professors also marched to the Square under a big banner of "Chinese Intellectual Circle," and their contingent is about several miles long.

Also marched on the streets were journalists from the Science and Technology Daily, the People's Daily, China News Service and many other news organizations. They were holding posters which demanded freedom of the press. Many civilians, workers, government functionaries, and even monks and nuns, had joined the parade. About 40,000 to 50,000 people were involved in the parade, and they were cheered and applauded wherever they went. After they reached the Square, they sat together with the hunger strikers.

Among the 2,300 hunger strikers, about 60 to 70 fainted students had been carried away by the ambulances. Some of them came back to the Square after being treated in the hospital. The students said that they would win the victory because they enjoyed the support of the people. (News, May 16, 1989, p. 1)



Commenting that the crowd was significant not only for its size, but also because it marked the first time that intellectuals and workers organized themselves to join the students in a demonstration, the New York Times reported that the ebullient crowd of about 150,000 protesters and spectators even including journalists from the official People's Daily, singing the "Internationale" and chanting anti-government slogans, rallied to show support for a hunger strike on the opening day of the first Chinese-Soviet summit meeting in 30 years. (Times, May 16, 1989, p. A12)

The Times observed that although students had sealed off an area for the hunger strikers to protect them from the shoving crowds, the fasting of the young students moved some demonstrators to tears, as they watched ambulances carry weakened students to the hospital. A team of medical students distributed salt tablets and glucose. But by late evening more than 100 strikers, who had fainted or lost consciousness, had been taken to hospitals. The Times quoted Wang Chao, a student leader, as saying, "Tomorrow, we will continue with our hunger strike as we did today, until we have a real dialogue with the government."

The student protesters were demanding direct talks between their chosen delegates and government leaders. They insisted that these talks be broadcast live. They also had asked for a positive re-evaluation of the student movement, the Times further reported. "The hunger strikers are raising concerns that we all care about," Hong Jinyao, a 33-year-old worker was quoted as saying. (Times, May 16, 1989, p. A12)

The Times reported the following day that the demonstrating crowd swelled to 300,000 by evening, and workers, students and onlookers "turned the center of the capital into near-pandemonium in one of the biggest displays of popular dissatisfaction the capital has seen since the communist revolution in 1949." (Times, may 17, 1989, p.1)

In a separate story, the New York Times noted that party chief Zhao Ziyang had sent a message to the students calling on them to end their hunger strike and -- in a major

concession -- declaring that the highest levels of the government and Communist Party "affirmed the students' patriotic spirit in calling for democracy and law, opposing corruption and striving for further reform. The Times further commented that the written message, which Mr. Zhao said represented the opinions of all five members of the standing committee of the Politburo, amounted to a retreat from the party's previous position that the demonstrators were trying to cause trouble and sabotage the economy. Mr. Zhao also promised that the authorities would not punish the students after calm was restored. (Times, May 17, 1989, p. A8)

Zhao's moderate line, indeed, alleviated the tension between the demonstrators and the government, and it also resulted in a temporary openness of the Chinese news media. But on the whole, the students' demands for more democracy, such as freedom of the press and freedom of speech, and for direct talks with government leaders had not been satisfied. As more and more students fainted on the fifth day of their hunger strike, a million people swarmed into Tiananmen Square to show their sympathy and support for the students.

A Times' front-page story on May 18 began this way:

Sirens wailed as ambulances whizzed by, carrying hunger strikers who have fainted after five days without eating, when the greyhaired school teacher suddenly pulled out her handkerchief and cried.

"Our hearts bleed when we hear the sound of ambulances," she said, her voice breaking. "They are no longer children. They are the hope of China."

The teacher, like more than a million other people in the capital, had taken to the streets to support the hunger striking students and express her demands for democracy. When a group of students approached, passing around a cardboard box to collect money for their cause, she reached into her faded purse and pulled out the equivalent of \$5 -- a week's wages for her -- and put it into the box. "I want to thank them," she said, sniffing. "They represent our hearts. They represent our hopes."

Scenes like that near Tiananmen Square occurred all over central Beijing today, as office clerks, factory workers, bank tellers, journalists and taxicab drivers fought through vast seas of people to get near the enclave of hunger

striking students, now the center of China's swelling democracy movement. (Times, May 18, 1989, p. 1)

Another Times front-page story reported that the million-strong crowd demanded "more democracy and often the resignation of Deng Xiaoping, China's senior leader, and Prime Minister Li Peng." It also noted that the city reverberated with angry slogans demanding a more open political system and with sirens of ambulances carrying unconscious hunger strikers from the central square to nearby hospitals. Among the thousands of "work units" that paraded through the capital were organized groups representing some of China's most respected and sensitive institutions like the People's Liberation Army, the Foreign Ministry, the Central People's Broadcasting Station, People's Daily and even the cadre school of the Communist Party Central Committee. (Times, May 18, 1989, p. 1)

While closely following the development of the student hunger strike, the Central Daily News also reported huge demonstrations in Hong Kong and Macao, as well as the hunger strike by some Hong Kong students in front of the Xinhua News Agency, Hong Kong Bureau. When the hunger strike went into its fifth day, the Central Daily News reported about three million people in Beijing, including policemen, soldiers and party officials, took to the streets to support the students. On the sixth day of the hunger strike, the Central Daily News ran an emotional and detailed report on the situation in Beijing. It read like this:

When the student hunger strike in Beijing reached its sixth day, the work units that openly supported the students became uncountable. About half of the factories and stores had stopped their operations, more than a million people paraded in the rain. The whole city of Beijing was nearly paralyzed.

Since party general-secretary Zhao Ziyang disclosed to Soviet leader Gorbachev in their May 16 meeting that it was Deng who actually "controls the helm" of the Communist Party, the demonstrating masses began to direct their spearhead at Deng, demanding he step down.

One slogan read, "Step down, Deng Xiaoping. You are too old."

The Communist Party also had lost control over its mouthpiece. Even the People's Daily devoted almost the whole front page and second page to reporting the student movement. This is indeed an unprecedented phenomenon.

Up until this morning, the number of the fainted hunger strikers has exceeded 2,000, and even some rumors said that one student had died.

The weather in Beijing turned chilly this morning and there also was a shower. The rescue teams organized spontaneously by people of various circles delivered a large number of quilts, umbrellas, fruit and drinks to the Square. Workers from Beijing Running Water Company had specially installed drinking water pipes for the students, and street cleaning workers cleaned away the garbage which piled up to half a foot thick.

In addition to workers and government clerks, many army people from various army headquarters also participated in the demonstration. Wherever the marchers went, civilians standing by the roadside waved "V" signs at them. Many middle and elementary schools also suspended their classes, and when a group of 150 children from an east district elementary school paraded under the guidance of their teachers, the onlookers showered them with warm cheers and applause.

Another contingent which attracted special attention was formed by a group of old farmers who specialized in making urns. They marched with more than a hundred urns loaded on their pedicabs, and their spectacular form of support was particularly welcome. (News, May 19, 1989, p. 2)

In a separate story, the Central Daily News reported that about 100,000 people in Shanghai held a demonstration to support the Beijing students. Demonstrations also occurred in more than 20 other major cities such as Tianjin, Guangzhou, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Shenyang, Hangzhou, Nanjing, Wuhan, Chengdu, Harbing and Shenzhen. (News, May 19, 1989, p. 2)

The People's Daily first reported the student hunger strike on May 15 in a front-page story by the Xinhua News Agency. The whole text was as follows:

Several hundred Beijing university students started a hunger strike in Tiananmen Square in the afternoon of May 13. In a "Statement for the Hunger Strike," the students said that this action was to protest the indifference of the government toward the students' demands, as well as to

protest the government's delay in having a dialogue with the student delegation. In the evening of May 13, Yan Minfu, Secretary of the party Central Committee Secretariat, invited some students and professors to a talk. After the talk, the hunger strike was still going on.

At 2:30 this morning, the State Council sent some officials to the square to persuade the students to go back to their schools; leading cadres of some universities also went to the square to urge them to return to school. There also were some professors and writers who went to show their support for the students in Tiananmen Square.

Up until now, more than 10 people had fainted in Tiananmen Square, and the Beijing Municipal government had immediately organized medical teams to their rescue. (Daily, May 15, 1989, p.1)

On the third day of the hunger strike, the People's Daily printed three stories and a large photo on its front page reporting that several hundred-thousand intellectuals including professors, graduate students from more than 60 institutions of higher education and research institutes, as well as many celebrities, marched toward Tiananmen Square to support the students. It also reported that the students who joined the hunger strike had increased to about 1,000, and more than 100 students had fainted. (Daily, May 16, 1989, p.1)

When the hunger strike came into its fourth day, the People's Daily again front-paged a story that reported that people from all walks of life swarmed into Tiananmen Square from all directions to support the students when more than 600 hunger strikers fainted. Some professors "tightly hugged their students who were lying on the ground while bitter tears streamed down their cheeks." For the first time, the People's Daily reported that many journalists from various Beijing news organizations, together with scientists, writers, and government clerks, joined the demonstration. On page four of its May 17 issue, the People's Daily published an open letter by 10 presidents of various Beijing universities

which urged government leaders to have direct dialogue with the students as soon as possible. (Daily, May 17, 1989, p.1)

For the following two days, May 18 and 19, the People's Daily not only ran front-page stories which reported in detail that more than a million people paraded in streets to support the students, but it also carried large photographs to show the endless sea of people and posters in Tiananmen Square. One story reported that when the hunger strike reached its fifth day, the situation in which students' lives were in imminent danger had drawn more than a million people to Tiananmen Square. People from all walks of life, including more than 1,000 journalists from the People's Daily itself, expressed their support to students by urging the government to accept the students' demands, by delivering food and drinks to the students, or by collecting donations for the hunger strikers. Another front-page story on May 19 under the title "On the sixth day of the hunger strike, a million people marched in the rain" reported:

Despite the rain, another million-people parade took place in Beijing today, when people from all walks of life marched toward Tiananmen Square in very orderly contingents. Such eye-catching posters as "We feel our hearts aching when our children are starving," and "Save the children" could be seen everywhere.

Today's parade consisted of more industrial workers. A 3,000-strong contingent of the Beijing Jeep Factory, all in blue fatigues and yellow helmets, marched along the streets, shouting slogans all the way. This reporter had noticed that there were more workers parading on motor vehicle than yesterday. Beijing No. 2 Chemical Factory paraded in 16 trucks of the same color which attracted a lot of attention. Outside the windows of many office buildings alongside the Changan Avenue, many posters saying "support the students" were hung.

This is the sixth day of the hunger strike. Although the square was a sea of people, it was in good order and people automatically stepped aside to make wide passage for the endless stream of ambulances which were hurrying past to save the hunger strikers whose lives were in imminent danger.

According to a report from the Beijing Emergency and First Aid Center, up to 6 o'clock this evening, it had treated 3,504 cases, and had detained 2,457 patients for observation. The students' every breath affected the feelings of the people.

Before the rain, Beijing Public Transportation Company had provided more than 90 buses to shelter hunger-striking students from the rain. Beijing Plastic Products Factory donated a lot of plastic sheets; Min Qing Store donated tens of thousands of raincoats; and Beijing Oxygen Cylinder Factory sent in oxygen cylinders. One factory even donated a lot of sanitary products for female students. In addition to all these, many work units came to the square to donate money. For instance, the National Trade Union had donated 100,000 yuan, Stone company had donated 50,000' yuan and the Chinese Peasants Democratic Party had donated more than 10,000 yuan. The students were very grateful for all this timely support.

The medical workers were seen taking great care of the hunger striking students. In an ambulance, a doctor took off his coat to make a pillow for a student.

To prevent the spread of infectious diseases, workers from the Environment Sanitation Bureau made a general effort in Tiananmen Square today to clean up accumulated garbage. This fully showed their sincere love for the students. (Daily, May 19, p.1)

May 18 and 19 may be the two days when the Chinese news media showed the most openness since the student movement started on April 15. One long story on page four of the People's daily May 18 issue, under the title, "History will remember this day -- A true record of the May 17 million-person parade in support of the student hunger strike," gave a detailed, humanistic account of the moving situation in Tiananmen Square. Many people were quoted with their real names, and many openly expressed their dissatisfactions with the Communist leadership.

Ten deaf-mute people from Beijing Sanlu Factory walked into Tiananmen Square, holding high a banner with the words "We deaf-mute people support you" on it. They

approached the hunger strikers and handed them a written message which read, "Dear students, your movement is a just cause! All your demands are exactly what we want to say but we have been unable to express them for so many years. Therefore, we sincerely thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We cannot express our feelings with language, but we want to do this with donations of the money we have earned with our labor. Please accept this true feeling of ours." (Daily, May 18, 1989, p.4)

Another letter from the medical workers of the General Hospital of the People's Liberation Army was broadcast over the loudspeakers and contained these emotional words,

You students have not had any food for five days, and many of you had lost consciousness. We feel extremely sorry and are concerned about you all the time. The whole party, the whole army and the whole people have opened their hearts to you. The victory belongs to you, and the future belongs to you. (Daily, May 18, 1989, p.4)

The People's Daily story also described a heart-rending scene in which Mu Baishou, a gray-haired professor of Beijing Theatrical Arts Institute, was visiting his hunger-striking son in Tiananmen Square. Professor Mu told the People's Daily reporter that "Both my wife and I do not want to see our child die because we have only two children. I think, however, it's worthwhile to sacrifice our child for the cause of democracy." (Daily, May 18, 1989, p.4)

In addition to printing the detailed stories about the student movement, the People's Daily also published a large number of petitions by various democratic parties (actually affiliates of the Communist Party), unions, associations, celebrities, Chinese students studying abroad, and all types of people in Hong Kong and Macao, which urged the government to have direct talks with the students immediately to save their lives. (Daily, May 19, 1989, p.1)



The press freedom which the Chinese media enjoyed for the last few days began to experience a change of political climate when Prime Minister Li Peng delivered a hard-line speech at a meeting with top party, army and government officials on May 19. Out of this meeting came an order for martial law.

In his harshly-worded speech, which was published on the front page of the People's Daily on May 20, Li accused a handful of people of taking advantage of the student hunger strike to reach their political purpose of negating the party leadership and socialist system. He urged every one at the meeting to "mobilize quickly and take resolute and powerful measures to curb turmoil, restore order, and maintain unity and stability so as to ensure the smooth progress of the reform, the open policy and socialist modernization." (Daily, May 20, 1989, p.1)

As if to keep a balance between the two sides of the power struggle within the party leadership, the People's Daily's May 20 issue ran two front-page stories. One reported the top leaders' meeting by quoting the main points of Premier Li Peng and President Yang Shangkun's speeches for "curbing the turmoil," The other story reported that Party General Secretary Zhao Ziyang, who refused to attend that meeting, visited the striking students in Tiananmen Square and pleaded with them to end the strike by assuring them that the problems they raised would eventually be solved. The story quoted Zhao as saying, "I feel very sorry that we have come too late. You have every right to blame and criticize us." Zhao told the students that "you have good intentions. You want our country to become better... But things are complicated, and there must be a process to resolve these problems." (Daily, May 20, 1989, p.1)

In subsequent days, stories promoting the party line and parroting government announcements began to outnumber those of the student movement in the People's Daily. In its May 22 issue, the People's Daily devoted almost the whole front page to martial law

order signed by Premier Li Peng, the announcement by martial law troop headquarters, and three orders by Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong which banned all forms of demonstrations, parades and petitions, and prohibited foreign journalists to interview Chinese nationals or to take pictures of the demonstrations. (Daily, May 22, p. 1)

Adjacent to these government orders, a news report accompanied by a large photograph showing thousands of people blocking army convoys, gave an objective account of Beijing under martial law. Under the title, "The second day of martial law in Beijing," The report said,

After martial law was decreed, the broad masses of Beijing civilians set up road blocks in some main traffic intersections leading to the suburbs, for fear of a possible bloodshed when the People's Liberation Army came into the city. By evening, large crowds gathered around the traffic intersections where blocks were set up with all kinds of large vehicles and other objects.

According to Beijing deputy mayor Zhang Baifa, the public bus services in recent days were almost paralyzed because 273 buses had been used as road blocks. (Daily, May 22, p.1)

The report also said on Sunday, May 21, the peacefully- demonstrating Beijing students sat together in Tiananmen Square with students from other parts of the country, and the endless stream of people on Changan Avenue moved about day and night. When several military helicopters circled very low overhead and distributed leaflets of Premier Li Peng's speech, evidence of unrest could be seen among the crowds.

It looked to be a striking contrast that next to the Beijing mayor's orders for banning journalists from covering the student movement, the People's Daily ran a story which reported that Mr. Li Ziqi, party secretary of Gansu Province, said that interference of reporters' journalistic work must not be allowed. It said that two reporters went to a factory to cover a story when they learned the Mr. Li was there to help solve some problems. They were, however, ordered to leave by the factory leaders under the pretext of "internal meetings are not open to the media." One of the reporters was pushed out of the building.

When Mr. Li saw this, he called to the reporters, "Please stay. You are welcome to cover the story." Applause broke out from an audience of more than 500 people when the two reporters returned. Later, Mr. Li telephoned the reporters to express his apology. He said that leaders at all levels must respect journalistic work to ensure the normal flow of information. From now on, he said, the kind of incident that occurred at the factory must not be allowed to happen again. (Daily, May 22, 1989, p.1)

In the following days when Beijing was under martial law, the People's Daily, while continuing to print the government announcements issued by martial law headquarters and letters from party organizations of various provinces to express support for martial law, also ran stories about the demonstrations which drew hundreds of thousands of people who called for the cancellation of martial law and the withdrawal of troops. The Daily also reported that martial law troops sent in from other areas were intercepted by countless people in the outskirts of Beijing. Many photographs were printed to show that the intercepted military convoys were provided food and drinks by the people. (Daily, May 25, p. 1)

By May 27, government news occupied the majority of space in the People's Daily. Numerous stories about people from different groups and party organizations in various provinces discussing the "important speech by Prime Minister Li Peng and President Yang Shangkun" and supporting martial law were published in the People's Daily every day.

The New York Times extensively reported on the enforcement of martial law and the arrival of military troops. In its May 20 issue, the Times reported:

Premier Li Peng's speech calling for "resolute and powerful measures to curb the turmoil" had barely concluded when students rushed from all parts of the capital to the central square and vowed they would continue their fight for democracy.

Throughout the capital before dawn today, tens of thousands of people, stunned and worried, emerged from their homes after seeing the speech on television -- parents with children, workers on trucks, teachers, intellectuals and party officials. As they wiped their blurry eyes and clasped jackets

around their nightgowns, many said that they would do what they could to overcome the planned crackdown. (Times, May 20, 1989, p.1)

According to the Times, the announcement of a crackdown set the stage for a confrontation between the government and the vast number of people who had joined demonstrations for more democracy in the capital and in more than 20 other cities. It reported that the soldiers looked out in bewilderment from their immobilized convoy of trucks when tens of thousands of people blocked their way in western Beijing. Rather than dispersing student demonstrators, as they had apparently been sent to do, the troops found themselves protected by students from throngs of residents who wanted to climb on the vehicles or let air out of the tires.

Inside the city, many civilians blockaded main roads with bicycles, concrete blocks, logs or anything else they could find, apparently in the hope that this would keep the army from the center of the city. Some workers rushed out of their factory dormitories and commandeered company trucks to rush to Tiananmen Square to protect the students.

The Times estimated the throngs who took to the streets to defy martial law at more than one million people. Troops approaching Beijing on at least five major roads were halted or turned back by the largest crowds seen to date. In an example to show how effectively the people had delayed the planned crackdown on the student democratic movement, the Times wrote:

When a small convoy of military trucks used to launch tear gas and to spray water on rioters rolled through eastern Beijing early this morning, the soldiers met their first unexpected challenge. An old woman street cleaner rushed up and lay down on the road in front of the trucks.

Several hundred students immediately dashed toward the convoy, and the soldiers found themselves surrounded by Beijing residents who showered them with questions about why they wanted to repress a democratic movement, but who also gave them breakfast: bread, Coca-Cola and popsicles. (Times, May 21, 1989, p. A1)

The New York Times noted that since the students' hunger strike and the government's order for martial law, the protesters' rage seemed increasingly directed at the nation's leaders, especially the senior leader Deng Xiaoping and Prime Minister Li Peng. The Times quoted a popular slogan as reading, "Xiaoping, Step down! Li Peng, Resign!" (Times, May 22, 1989, p. A1)

Like the New York Times which reported the strong reactions of the Chinese students studying abroad toward martial law, as well as the huge demonstrations in Hong Kong and Macao against martial law, the Central Daily News devoted much space to outside reactions to China's situation. In a story carried in its May 22 issue, the Central Daily News reported that the Chinese communist regime's decision to use military force to crack down on the student movement had not only aroused strong indignation among the people in Hong Kong, but it had also caused dissatisfaction among Hong Kong's pro-communist organizations. Wen Hui Pao, a communist-controlled daily newspaper, published on its front page an editorial which had no text other than four huge Chinese characters, "*Tongxing Jishou* (broken heart and deep hatred)," and it also published a statement signed by its 119 staff members strongly opposing martial law. Another communist newspaper, Ta Kung Pao, also ran stories expressing opposition to the planned crackdown on the student movement. (News, May 22, 1989, p.1)

According to the Central Daily News report on May 20, the students announced the end of their hunger strike on May 19 after party chief Zhao Ziyang visited them in Tiananmen Square. However, when they heard the martial law order on May 20, the 200,000 students in Tiananmen Square immediately decided to resume their hunger strike, and many even wrote their wills to express their determination to fight to the end. Meanwhile, students from nearby cities such as Tianjin and Jinzhou rushed to Beijing to join their fellow students. (News, May 20, 1989, p. 1)

While reporting that party chief Zhao Ziyang had been deprived of power and had been placed under house arrest, the Central Daily News also reported that the hard-liners inside the Communist Party had the upper hand when Deng decided to use military force to suppress the democratic movement. In a front-page story on the deployment of the army troops, the Central Daily News reported that the communist government had deceived the army soldiers by telling them they were being dispatched to Beijing to quell a counterrevolutionary rebellion there. The story further reported that it took about two weeks for the party hard-liners to arrange for this army deployment. During the two weeks before the troops went to Beijing, they were neither allowed to read newspapers nor to listen to radio or watch television, and they were ordered to study the People's Daily's April 26 editorial titled "Taking a clear-cut stand in opposing the turmoil." Meanwhile, the troops were ordered to maneuver in defense of the capital. (News, May 20, 1989, p. 1)

On May 21, the Beijing University Student Autonomous Union announced an end to the hunger strike which started on May 13. A New York Times story that day reported that nearly 3,000 hunger strikers gave up their nine-day fast to preserve their strength to fight the government. The students said that the government in any case was too brutal to be sensitive to the pressure of a hunger strike. (Times, May 22, 1989, p. A10)

#### Gorbachev's Visit to China

For 30 years since Mao split with Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev in the 1959 summit in Beijing, China and the Soviet Union had undergone a long hostility which led to bitter ideological clashes and border skirmishes. In the 1970s, China maintained that the Soviet Union was the main threat to world peace and China's security. (Xie Yixian, May 1989, p. 24)

When China started its economic reform in 1979, Mikhail Gorbachev also began

reforms in the political and economic systems of the Soviet Union. Under his programs, *glasnost* and *perestroika*, the Soviet Union had witnessed many changes in its political affairs. In the late 1980s, both of the communist giants desired to mend the 30-year rift to divert their energies to improving their economies. When Gorbachev offered to go to Beijing for discussions, China's senior leader Deng extended him the invitation. (Times, May 22, 1989, p. A17)

The Sino-Soviet summit scheduled for May 15-18 coincided with the Beijing student democratic movement. Since the summit was a world event, it had attracted more than 1,200 reporters from different international news organizations. The demonstrating students, who had long regarded Gorbachev as a "champion of democracy," took this opportunity to vie for media attention.

The New York Times ran an article on May 14, a day before Gorbachev's arrival in Beijing, predicting that when Mikhail S. Gorbachev arrived on Monday (May 15) for four days of talks designed to restore normal relations between China and the Soviet Union, he would be cast in the unusual role of champion of democracy. Comparing Gorbachev's visit with American President George Bush's visit to China in February, 1989, the Times stated,

Almost everybody seems to think that the Soviet leader's visit will do more for democracy in China than Mr. Bush's trip did, and some believe that the Soviet Union will do more than the United States to inspire political liberalization in China.

"Bush and Gorbachev cut different figures among students," said Zhang Binjiu, a research scholar at Beijing University. "Chinese see Bush as just another president, who represents a remote, rich and beautiful country. But Gorbachev's image is of a resolute leader taking on political reform."

Mr. Zhang also noted that recent events in China principally the student demonstrations -- also contribute to the influence of Mr. Gorbachev on the democratic movement. There were no such demonstrations before Mr. Bush's visit and at that time there was little talk of the need for more democracy. "Both Bush and Gorbachev carried with them a democratic breeze," Mr. Zhang said. "When Bush was here, there was no fire in

China. Now there is a fire already burning, and so the wind can make it spread." (The Times, May 14, 1989, p.A10)

It is obvious, therefore, that Gorbachev's visit to China was a significant event, not only to the Chinese leaders, especially to Deng who wanted to get some credit for his role in history, but also to the Chinese students who hoped that Gorbachev would give a push to their democratic movement. However, neither Deng and Gorbachev, nor the students had anticipated the extent to which the summit would be upstaged by the student movement.

On May 15 when Gorbachev arrived in Beijing, the New York Times reported that the Soviet leader's visit was almost immediately disrupted by China's internal unrest. "Officials hastily relocated a welcoming ceremony that had been planned for Tiananmen Square because thousands of student demonstrators and several thousand hunger strikers camped out in the square refused to end their vigil for greater democracy." The ceremony was held at the airport instead. (Times, May 15, 1989, p.A1)

The students who occupied the square said they would hold their own welcoming ceremony for Gorbachev. Some students displayed portraits of Gorbachev, and some other students held aloft a banner which read "Welcome, Mr. Gorbachev, the true reformer," in a rebuke to China's own leadership. (The Times, May 16, p. A12)

The day Gorbachev arrived in Beijing was also the third day of the students' hunger strike when more than one hundred hunger strikers fainted. The People's Daily published a message from the General Office of the State Council urging the students to end their demonstration and not to harm China's image and dignity during the Sino-Soviet summit. It also briefly mentioned that the welcoming ceremony for Gorbachev had to be relocated at the Beijing Airport because of the large crowd of demonstrating students in Tiananmen Square. (Daily, May 15, 1989, p.1)



During Gorbachev's four-day visit to China, the People's Daily generally had avoided reporting the student demonstration which had caused changes to Gorbachev's schedule several times, but concentrated instead on official meetings and speeches designed for normalization of relations between the two countries. But on one occasion, the People's Daily did run a short story about Gorbachev's press conference on May 18 in which Gorbachev was quoted as saying, "At present, the Chinese young people are holding a dialogue with the authorities, and the Soviet Union welcomes this kind of dialogue because I believe that appropriate solutions to the current problems can be found through dialogue." (Daily, May 18, p.1)

The Central Daily News closely watched Gorbachev's China visit which was aimed at normalizing the relations between the two communist nations. In addition to its commentaries and analyses of the possible outcome of the summit, the Central Daily News also devoted space to the student movement as well as its impact on the summit. In a May 15 story under the title of "Relocation of the welcoming ceremony made the Chinese communist regime lose face," the Central Daily News reprinted a story from the Washington Post which reported that the students acknowledged their intention to take advantage of Gorbachev's visit to tell the world about their democratic demands through the international media. In a commentary on May 17, the Central Daily News wrote that to many China observers, the communist government's restraint toward the student movement was mainly based on its fear of "losing face" during Gorbachev's visit. As a matter of fact, however, its real hesitation in carrying out a crackdown lay in its fear of exposing its brutal nature to the 1,200 reporters from various international news media who came to cover the summit. (News, May 17, p.1)

In another story, the Central Daily News reported that a spokesman for the Soviet Foreign Ministry said Gorbachev would like to meet with the students during his visit in Beijing and that the student demonstration would not affect the Sino-Soviet summit.

On May 19, the Central Daily News carried an analysis which said,

At the time of Gorbachev's visit to Beijing, the demonstrating students went to the Soviet embassy to deliver a letter to Gorbachev, inviting him to give a lecture at Beijing University during his visit in Beijing. Also during the recent hunger strike, the students displayed many posters to welcome Gorbachev and to compare him with Deng in an implication that Deng is old and despotic.

What on earth did the student expect from Mr. Gorbachev? Judging from their posters, we can understand that they appreciate Gorbachev's reform in the Soviet political system because they believed it was the fundamental way of removing the malignant tumor of the society.

The students asked why can the Soviet Union do it, while China cannot? Therefore, we can see that the students wanted to hear Gorbachev talk about political reform in the Soviet Union so they might draw some encouragement and experience from it. (News, May 19, 1989, p. 4)

According to a Central Daily News story on May 18, Gorbachev had confirmed at a press conference that he received a letter signed by 6,000 Chinese students who praised the political reform in the Soviet Union. Gorbachev was quoted as saying, "I value their opinions," but he avoided showing open support for the students. (News, May 18, 1989, p. 2)

The New York Times, May 21, commented, however, that if Mr. Gorbachev did not directly inspire the students, he did seem to weigh in on the side of the democratic reformers in China's internal political struggle. He called for greater political change as well as economic change, and he seemed to want to reassure the government that it should not be frightened of the student demonstration. (Times, May 21, 1989, p. 26)

The Times reported in a May 17 story that Mr. Gorbachev, whose reputation as a political reformer had been a rallying point for the demonstrating crowd, seemed to pay the demonstrators an oblique tribute during his meeting with President Yang Shangkun, remarking that the wisdom of the elder generation should be balanced by "the energy of the

young, speaking out against conservatism." (Times, May 17, 1989, p. 1)

In another front-page story on May 18, the Times gave a detailed account of Gorbachev's comments on student demonstration:

Mikhail S. Gorbachev today portrayed the popular uprising that has engulfed the Chinese capital as part of a painful but healthy worldwide upheaval in Communist countries.

In his most extensive comments on the demonstrations that have disrupted and overshadowed the Chinese-Soviet reconciliation here, Mr. Gorbachev cautiously praised the students who began the huge vigil for greater democracy and repeatedly declared that economic change was impossible without political reform.

"I am convinced that we are participating in a very serious turning point in the development of world socialism," the Soviet leader said at a news conference when asked to assess the unrest here and in his own country.

All communist countries, he said, are headed at different paces toward greater freedom of expression, democracy and individual rights.

"These processes are painful, but they are necessary," he said.

The Soviet leader was careful not to be seen taking sides in the domestic political struggle provoked by the unrest, but it now appears clear he has used his three days in Beijing to encourage political liberalization and indirectly to do what he could to promote the aspiration of the self-styled reformer, Zhao Ziyang, the Chinese Communist Party leader, in an internal power struggle. (Times, May 18, p. A1)

The People's Daily, however, did not print anything about the comments by Gorbachev. The People's Daily coverage of the visit was limited to the exchange of complimentary remarks for each other's achievements in socialist reconstruction, and friendly wishes for the normalization of relations between the two parties and two countries.

#### Government-Student Dialogues

The government leader, Prime Minister Li Peng, did not have any direct dialogue

with the students until May 18, the sixth day of the student hunger strike by which time 3,504 people had been rushed to the hospitals for treatment (Daily, May 19, 1990, p.1), and also the day when Gorbachev left China for home. This meeting between Li Peng and the students, however, proved a failure because Li refused to accept any of the students' demands, but lectured them on the importance of maintaining political unity and stability.

Before this top-level meeting, the government had sent some high-ranking officials to talk with the students on April 29 and 30, but the government excluded representatives of the newly-founded Students Autonomous Union. As a result, the demonstrating students didn't recognize those talks.

On April 28, a day after the biggest demonstration by half-a- million people protesting the People's Daily April 26 editorial that described the student movement as a "turmoil," the New York Times reported that the government announced it would agree to a dialogue with the students:

The announcement indicated that the Government was willing to hold a dialogue, but that the students must "go back to their universities at once," and "adopt a calm and reasonable" attitude. It also said that any dialogue must be mediated by the official student associations.

Many students interviewed said they rejected the offer of a dialogue because it was tied to the official student associations, which they regard as under the thumb of the party organization. Instead, they set their own conditions for a dialogue. At Beijing University, two large posters suggested conditions that students should attach to the dialogues. One called for the dialogues to be open to the domestic and foreign press, and for them to be broadcast live on Chinese television. (Times, April 29, 1989, p. A5)

The People's Daily carried two front-page stories on May 1, reporting that some government officials had held a dialogue with students, urging them to go back to school as soon as possible. One story read:

On behalf of the State Council and Premier Li Peng, Yuan Mu, spokesman of the State Council, He Dongchang, deputy director of the National Education Commission as well as some responsible officials of the Beijing Municipality held a dialogue with 45 students representing 16 universities in

Beijing this afternoon (April 29).

At the beginning of the dialogue, Yuan Mu relayed Li Peng's opinions. He said that the party and government leaders want you students to resume classes as soon as possible, and your suggestions and complaints about state affairs and social problems can be raised through normal channels.

Prime Minister Li Peng had especially pointed out the People's Daily editorial of April 26 was not directed at the students, but at a very small number of individuals with ulterior motives.

Yuan Mu further relayed the leaders' opinions by stating that the students' patriotism and enthusiasm in promoting democracy and reform, and in punishing official corruption had met the same purpose of the party and the government. Therefore, the nation's leaders hope that you students support the party and government, and abide by the four basic principles, i.e., the leadership of the Communist Party; Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought; the socialist orientation and the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This dialogue was organized by the National Students Association and the Beijing Students Association. (Daily, May 1, 1989, p. 1)

The other story reported that the officials exchanged views with student representatives on many issues concerning official corruption, education, media reporting, and student demonstrations. The story said the officials had assured students that the People's Daily editorial was not directed at them and those who organized the demonstration would not be punished. The story also reported that some students said the representation of this dialogue was not wide enough, and it could only represent the participants themselves, but not the school they belonged to.

According to the story, one student from Beijing Aeronautical Engineering Institute asked the other participants to leave in the middle of the meeting because he believed the meeting would not solve the problems raised by the students since no national leaders were present.

Before the end of the meeting, a student who identified himself as the leader of the "Beijing University Students Autonomous Union" asked the government officials to recognize that organization as a legal one, but his request was rejected by Yuan Mu and He

Dongchang. According to the People's Daily story, He Dongchang said "we will never recognize any illegal organization. We come to this dialogue only at the invitation of the National Students Association and Beijing Students Association." (Daily, May 1, p1)

The Central Daily News focused its reporting on the students' reactions to the dialogue between government officials and student representatives. It said that students on various campuses in Beijing had put up posters protesting the dialogue which excluded the "Beijing Students Autonomous Union," and they planned to hold a press conference to explain their next move.

The Central Daily News also reported that the Chinese authorities acted differently this time by allowing live television broadcasts of the dialogue which enabled millions of people to see a situation where government officials had a hard time attempting to evade the difficult questions from the students. The story commented that the authorities deliberately took a low-profile attitude to avoid larger scale student demonstrations in anticipation of the 70th anniversary of the May 4 Movement. (The News, April 30, 1989, p. 1)

The New York Times reported the April 29 dialogue by saying that television viewers were treated for nearly three hours to the extraordinary sight of government officials being interrogated by ordinary students who raised sensitive questions about corruption, police beatings, the deployment of troops and the isolation of the nation's top leaders.

"What was remarkable was not just that the meeting took place but that the government televised nearly all of it, apparently as a concession to the students' demand. The official Xinhua News Agency also gave a long, relatively balanced account of the event," the Times commented. It further reported:

The Government's leading spokesman, Yuan Mu, also told the students that Prime Minister Li Peng thought China's student demonstrations have the same aim as the Communist Party and Government. Mr. Li's remarks appeared to be a turnabout from the Government's stern warning against the student protests.

"We called on Prime Minister Li Peng to come out," one angry student said

in front of tens of millions of television viewers, "Why can't the people's Prime Minister meet the people?"

The atmosphere of the meeting seemed more like that of a lively news conference than an informal talk, with frequent bitter exchanges and criticisms voiced by both sides. One student walked out of the meeting because he did not think there was fair representation on either side. (Times, April 30, 1989, p. A5)

According to the Times, the unofficial student union boycotted the meeting, although some members went as individuals. About one-third of the students at the talks were members of the unofficial student union, while the rest were officers of the official pro-government student organization. (Times, April 30, p. A5)

Regarding this meeting only as an informal discussion, not an opportunity to solve problems, the Student Autonomous Union planned protests one after another to press the government for a genuine dialogue between the nation's leaders and the student-elected representatives. The government kept ignoring the students' demands, and declared the unofficial student union to be illegal. The Central Daily News reported that China's paramount leader Deng Xiaoping had even banned the Student Autonomous Union and some of its members reportedly were arrested. (News, May 2, p. 4)

The government's reactions to students' demands apparently intensified the situation, and demonstrations escalated. The New York Times reported on May 3 that the government rejected a student ultimatum on conditions for official talks, and the students responded by calling for a mass demonstration in the capital on May 4, the 70th anniversary of the well-known May 4 Movement which had a major role in influencing democratic and radical thought in China. (Times, May 3, 1989, p. A10)

Since May 1, some changes had been noted in the People's Daily and reports on the student movement had appeared in its pages from time to time. While printing the official stand on the handling of the students' demands for more democracy and a direct dialogue with the nation's leaders, the People's Daily also ran stories about student petitions, and

even printed the whole text of the students' demands in its May 4 issue. (Daily, May 4, 1989, p. 4)

It also reported another talk between government officials and student representatives on May 14, the second day of the hunger strike, and it mentioned that some hunger-striking students demanded a live television broadcast of the meeting, but government officials declined, saying they did not have adequate technical equipment. When the students raised other points on procedures for conducting the talks, the meeting broke up in discord. (Daily, May 15, 1989, p. 1)

It was not until May 18, the sixth day of the hunger strike when several thousand fainted students were rushed to hospitals for treatment, that Prime Minister Li Peng agreed to meet with student leaders. The New York Times, the People's Daily, and the Central Daily News all reported on this meeting.

The New York Times, in a front-page story under the headline, "Chinese Premier Issues A Warning To the Protesters," reported:

To defuse the situation, the Government capitulated to a key student demand by arranging a nationally televised meeting between Prime Minister Li Peng and leaders of the students' pro-democracy movement.

In another gesture of conciliation, Mr. Li and the Communist Party leader, Zhao Ziyang, went to Tiananmen Square in central Beijing before dawn today to visit some of the 3,000 hunger strikers whose protest has galvanized the nation into mass demonstrations of support. (Times, May 19, 1989, p. A1)

The Times' story commented that Mr. Zhao's meeting with the hunger-striking students appeared to be more cordial than the televised discussion with Mr. Li, in which the Prime Minister refused to discuss issues raised by the students and hinted at a crackdown if the disorder continued. The story noted that student leaders complained about Li's sometimes harsh tone, and the hunger strikers vowed to continue. They said that the talks



with Mr. Li were not a real dialogue because he did not discuss substantive issues, and that he had not met their demand for a positive official reappraisal of the student movement.

(Times, May 19, 1989, p. A1)

The People's Daily published the entire transcript of the meeting, and it also ran a story about Zhao and Li's visit to the hunger strikers in Tiananmen Square. Contrary to its usual practice, the People's Daily story quoted a Beijing University student in detail:

"The Chinese Communist Party must regain the popular trust, and China must revitalize its national spirit," said a Beijing University student when Hu Qili and Qiao Shi (both are Politburo members) came to his side. He said, "I think China has four major problems: first, its population is too large; second, it lacks mineral resources; third, it has a very backward economic foundation, and fourth, the population quality is very low. All these problems cannot be solved overnight no matter who is to take charge. But at present, it is only under the leadership of the Communist Party that it can be solved.

"However," he went on, "now people at large think that China has no hope, and the Communist Party has no hope. It is very popular now on campuses that students are indulging themselves in playing cards, dancing, travelling and seeking every opportunity to go abroad, because the students feel that China has no hope."

When this student turned to ask Hu Qili and Qiao Shi whether his opinion was correct, both Hu and Qiao nodded their heads and said, "Quite right, quite right." (Daily, May 19, 1989, p. 1)

The People's Daily likewise treated readers with an unabridged transcript of the nationally televised meeting between Li Peng and student leaders. It began this way:

LI PENG: I'm glad to see you. Today, we will talk about only one question: how to get the fasting students out of their present plight....

WU'ER KAIXI (student leader from Beijing Normal University): Premier Li, if we go on like this, it seems we don't have enough time. We should enter into substantive talks as soon as possible. Just now you said we would discuss only one question, but the fact is that it was not you who invited us to be here; rather it was so many people in Tiananmen Square who asked you to come out and talk with us. So as to how many questions we should discuss, it is up to us to decide.

WANG DAN (student leader from Beijing University): The government must pay close attention to the will of the people and solve the problem as soon as possible....Here I want to once again reiterate our two demands: 1)

to declare the current student movement as a patriotic movement, and not so-called chaos; and 2) to conduct as soon as possible a real dialogue which will be telecast live....

WU'ER KAIXI: As for these two points, I want to add that we have proposed an earlier rehabilitation of the student movement and denunciation of the April 26 People's Daily editorial, which labeled the movement as "turmoil".... The People's Daily should put out another editorial to negate its April 26 editorial, and to apologize to people all over the country and acknowledge the great significance of the current student movement.... As for the dialogue, it should be an open, equal, direct, and sincere one with representatives of the masses of students. Here, "open" means a live television broadcast, and both Chinese and foreign reporters should be present. As for equal, it means the dialogue should be conducted between leaders who have the decision-making power and genuine student representatives who can influence the student movement and are directly elected by the students. During the dialogue, responses such as "I cannot answer this question" or "this is just my personal view" are unacceptable. One might give such a response if some questions we raise haven't been discussed at the meetings of the Politburo, but new meetings should be immediately convened to discuss such questions. We think this is the genuine attitude toward solving questions.

LI PENG: .... Neither the government nor the Party has ever said that the students are creating turmoil. We have been affirming the students' patriotism, and many things you've done are right. Many questions you have raised are just the ones that the government hopes to deal with. But, the development of the situation does not depend on your best intentions, desirable expectations, and patriotic enthusiasm. In fact, disorder has already appeared in Beijing and it is spreading across the whole country. I didn't mean at all to let the students bear the blame. But the situation exists. The government of the People's Republic of China is one that is responsible to the whole nation. We cannot ignore the current situation. We must protect the students' lives, we must protect the factories, and the achievements of socialism as well as our capital. Turmoil has happened many times in Chinese history. At the beginning, many people did not intend to arouse turmoil but finally it happened. (Daily, May 19, 1989, p. 1)

While assuring the students at the meeting that their movement was patriotic in nature, Prime Minister Li Peng announced the following day at a meeting of top party, government and army leaders that "we must adopt firm and resolute measures to end the turmoil swiftly, maintain the leadership of the party as well as the socialist system." Immediately after Li's announcement, martial law was declared in Beijing on May 20, and troops were gradually dispatched to the capital. (Daily, May 20, 1989, p. 1)

## The Goddess of Democracy

After Prime Minister Li Peng declared martial law in Beijing, hundreds of thousands of Beijing civilians left their homes to blockade the army troops in Beijing suburbs. The party's control of the news media became tighter than ever before, and soldiers were sent to major news organizations such as the People's Daily, Xinhua News Agency and the Central Broadcasting and Television Administration. News stories filled with political propaganda began to appear in the People's Daily again, and foreign journalists were warned not to interview or take pictures of the student demonstrators. Later, the Chinese authorities ordered the cutoff of satellite transmissions by major international news media such as CNN and CBS of the United States. A military action seemed to be imminent.

At about this time, the students, defying the government warning and vowing to sacrifice their lives for democracy, put up a statue of the Goddess of Democracy, a replica of the Statue of Liberty, in the center of Tiananmen Square on May 30 to encourage exhausted demonstrators to carry on.

The New York Times closely watched the power struggle at the top level of the Communist Party, and for several days, the Times devoted much space to this issue. It reported on May 26 that the party hard liners took the upper-hand after party chief Zhao Ziyang was stripped of his power and was placed under house arrest. The Times said,

Prime Minister Li Peng appeared on television today, declaring that his government was in control, and there were more signs that at least for now he is gaining in the power struggle that is racking China. In an indication that a military solution to the political crisis remains a possibility, Mr. Li also sent a letter to troops encircling Beijing, expressing the hope that "the troops will overcome the difficulties confronting them and successfully impose martial law."

Major newspapers and television programs today carried a letter from the army headquarters asserting that the democracy movement had been

manipulated by a small number of people and calling for a "grave national struggle" against them. The letter clearly endorsed a military crackdown. (Times, May 26, 1989, p. A1)

In another story on May 23, the Times reported that seven top ex-commanders, including a former defense minister and a former army chief of staff, formally objected to the government's plan to bring troops into the capital and suppress China's democracy movement. They signed a strongly-worded letter, declaring that "in view of the extremely serious situation, we as veteran soldiers demand that the People's Liberation Army not confront the population nor quell the people. The army must absolutely not shoot the people. In order to prevent the situation from worsening, the army must not enter the city of Beijing." However, the New York Times reported, the control over the party's propaganda department by the hard-liners had made it "more difficult for the official party newspaper, the People's Daily, to publish the letter from the seven military leaders." (Times, May 23, 1989, p. A1)

The Central Daily News called the cutoff of satellite transmissions of Western news networks "an unprecedented measure of blockading information by the communist regime in forty years of its rule." In its front-page story on May 22, the Central Daily News reported that foreign journalists were welcomed by the students because of their fair and objective reporting. It quoted a student as saying, "Please cooperate with the brave foreign journalists and help them to tell the world the truth of what's happening in China now." (News, May 22, 1989, p. 1)

While reporting that the advancing troops had broken through various blockade lines set by the civilians and had injured more than 40 demonstrators during the clashes, the Central Daily News printed a front-page story on May 23, reporting that American president George Bush expressed his support for the Chinese students' democratic movement. "Continue to fight for what you believe in, stand up for what you believe in,"

President Bush was quoted as saying "We do support freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of the press and clearly we support democracy." (News, May 23, 1989, p. 1)

The Central Daily News devoted one or two full pages every day to the student movement since martial law had been declared. Stories about support of the students from people in Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macao, as well as from Chinese students studying abroad gave exhaustive details of the protests against the possible crackdown all over the world.

With the party hard-liners gaining power, the Central Daily News reported that intellectuals would again be regarded as a target of attack. In a front-page story on May 28, it reported that the hard-liners had started their all-round suppression to get rid of dissent. More than 1,000 intellectuals, as well as some workers and businessmen, had been put on the blacklist. At the same time, the News reported that 200,000 well-armed troops had gathered in the outskirts of Beijing. (News, May 28, 1989, p. 1)

By the end of May, students had occupied Tiananmen Square for more than two weeks since they started the hunger strike May 13. By the end of May, the square had become very squalid and unsanitary with garbage. Students felt weary and exhausted, and uncertain of their next move. According to a New York Times report on May 28, the student leaders announced on May 27 an end to the siege of Tiananmen Square so they could conserve their energy for a larger demonstration. On May 30, however, the New York Times again reported that the students reversed their earlier position, and thousands of them resolved to maintain pressure on the government by continuing their round-the-clock occupation of Tiananmen Square for at least another three weeks. (Times, May 30, p. A1)

In an emotional scene at the square in the heart of Beijing late Monday night, a crowd of nearly 100,000 workers and students cheered the arrival

of a 27-foot sculpture modeled after the Statue of Liberty. The statue, made by local art students and dragged to the square in several pieces on tricycle carts, was called the Goddess of Democracy and Freedom, to distinguish it from the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor.

The decision to remain in the square, and the arrival of the statue, seemed to raise the protesters' spirits and create a new sense of the possibilities of the movement. "She signifies hope for China," said Y.H. Yang, a 22-year-old teacher who was in the crowd. "But she's behind schedule in reaching the square, and she's coming by tricycle. That is symbolic of the slowness and backwardness of the democratization process in China."

T.X. Wang, a 29-year-old factory worker said, "The most important thing is that she symbolizes our common hopes for democracy." (Times, May 30, 1989, p. A1)

Reacting to the erection of the Goddess of Democracy in Tiananmen Square, the People's Daily printed on its front page May 31 a statement by the Tiananmen Administrative Bureau opposing the statue. Calling the statue "an insult to our national dignity and a mockery of the nation's image," the statement said:

Tiananmen Square is an important place for holding the nation's political rallies and for welcoming foreign guests. It is the square of the people, and it is a sacred place. It is a serious blasphemy as well as a violation of the Announcement of November 1, 1981, by Beijing people's government when at present, certain people are putting up a certain kind of "goddess" statue in Tiananmen Square. One of the important duties of the Tiananmen Administrative Bureau is to protect the square. Therefore, we firmly oppose the erection of the statue by certain people. We believe that people throughout the country will oppose it. We ask those people immediately to stop doing it. (Daily, May 31, 1989, p. 1)

The following day, the People's Daily again ran two stories on its front page attacking the Goddess of Democracy. One story written by Wu Ye asked what the implied meaning of the "Goddess of Democracy" was:

The broad masses of young students want to promote democracy, and their feelings are quite understandable, because it is also the demand of the people and the aim of the party and government. Certain people, however, erected a statue of the so-called "Goddess of Democracy," and this is by no means a positive action of pursuing democracy but a serious misunderstanding of freedom and democracy. It is also a disrespect to other people's rights of freedom and democracy. Freedom should be given within the limit of law, and any citizen must not harm the nation's interests and

other citizens' legal rights and freedom when he exercises his own rights and freedom. It is not permissible to do as one pleases. (Daily, June 1, 1989, p. 1)

The second story reported that many people called the National City Sculptures Management Office to ask whether the erection of the "Goddess of Democracy" had received the Office's permission in advance. Declaring that no permission was ever given, a spokesman from the office said it was absolutely intolerable to accommodate the "Goddess of Democracy" in such a sacred place as Tiananmen Square. (Daily, June 1, 1989, p. 1)

The attack continued until the last day when the statue was crushed by military tanks during the crackdown on June 3-4. The People's Daily printed a front-page story on June 2, one day prior to the crackdown, stating, "The sacred Tiananmen Square cannot be profaned." The story went on to say:

Recently, Tiananmen Square, which belongs to the people, has become the dominion of a certain group of people. Some people staged a lengthy sit-in that seriously damaged the image of Tiananmen Square, and disrupted the normal sightseeing on the square. Cries for restoring order to Tiananmen Square are getting louder and louder. At such a time, however, certain people have even gone so far as to ignore the people's sentiments by erecting a so-called "Goddess" statue. This kind of behavior has naturally aroused the indignation of the broad masses of people.

The erection of the Goddess statue showed that anarchism of certain lawless people has developed to a serious degree. Some people always have democracy and law on their lips, but in reality, they have time and again violated law and democracy. This also showed that what they want is not socialist democracy based on law, but the anarchism that denies discipline and order. The chaos in Beijing has lasted for more than a month, and it begins to subside a little bit in the last few days through the concerted efforts of the government and the people. Certain people, however, turned a deaf ear to the admonition of the government and paid no attention to the opposition of the people. They insisted on going their own way by putting up a so-called Goddess statue, and attempted to stir up the calm situation once again. This is definitely the last thing the broad masses of the people want to see, and people from all walks of life have been telephoning the government, strongly demanding a ban on this lawless behavior immediately. (Daily, June 2, 1989, p. 1)

The statue of the Goddess of Democracy was finally crashed into pieces by soldiers in the early morning of June 4 when the army took control of Tiananmen Square. The New York Times reported:

Tens of thousands of Chinese troops retook the center of the capital early this morning from pro-democracy protesters, killing scores of students and workers and wounding hundreds more as they fired submachine guns at crowds of people who tried to resist.

Troops marched along the main roads surrounding central Tiananmen Square, sometimes firing in the air and sometimes firing directly at crowds of men and women who refused to move out of the way.

Two hospitals alone reported receiving 39 corpses of civilians, and said many others had not yet been picked up from the scene. Five other hospitals also said they had received bodies of civilians, but declined to say how many. Students said they believed hundreds had died. (Times, June 4, 1989, p. A1)

According to the Times stories, as the sound of automatic weapons filled the air on Changan Avenue, the main thoroughfare going through Tiananmen Square, tens of thousands of Beijing residents, even elderly men and women rushed out to see what they could do to turn back the troops. A taxi driver was quoted as saying, "The citizens have gone crazy. They throw themselves in front of the tank, and only when they see it won't stop, they scatter." (Times, June 4, 1989, p. A1)

The Central Daily News devoted much space to a large number of emotional stories about the killing in Beijing. A front-page story on June 5, under the headline "The Communist troops started bloody crackdown, at least 3,000 people killed under heavy machinegun fire," gave a detailed description of the June 4 massacre:

The Communist regime started its frenzied military crackdown in the early morning of June 4! About 20,000 troops broke through the blockades put up by the civilians under the cover of armored vehicles and heavy machinegun fire, and finally occupied Tiananmen Square. The troops fired indiscriminately at the crowds on both sides of the streets all the way during their advance toward Tiananmen, leaving countless corpses on the streets which were flooded by human blood. By 4:00 a.m., about 3,000 students and civilians were slaughtered, and countless were wounded. (News, June



5, 1989, p. 1)

Describing the communist troops as "frantic beasts" who had lost all human sense and conscience, the Central Daily News reported that they used tanks to crash dozens of students and civilians, stabbed women and children with bayonets, shot at medical personnel and ambulances, and burned corpses in Tiananmen Square to eliminate the evidence. (News, June 5, 1989, p. 1)

The People's Daily, however, presented quite a different story in the days after the crackdown. On June 5, it printed on its front-page a story by Xinhua News Agency stating that "a counterrevolutionary rebellion took place in Beijing in the early morning of June 4, during which the thugs and hooligans frantically attacked the People's Liberation Army soldiers, snatched weapons, and burned army vehicles. It is clear they attempted to subvert the People's Republic and overthrow the socialist system." It again published the "Notice to the People of the Entire Nation" by the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the State Council on June 6, which read:

The present situation in Beijing is serious. More than one month ago an extremely small number of persons with ulterior motives premeditatedly created disturbances. In the early morning of June 3 these disturbances had already developed into an appalling counterrevolutionary rebellion.

This extremely small number of rioters incited some people unaware of the actual situation to carry out many forms of violent activities. They intercepted the Martial Law Forces; smashed and burned over 100 military and public vehicles; beat and kidnapped soldiers and police officers; seized firearms and other military equipment; they attacked Zhongnanhai party headquarters and many other government key departments; looted stores and burned down police posts. They even cruelly and inhumanely killed dozens of soldiers and policemen, going so far as to hang the mutilated corpse of one soldier on a traffic bridge. Clearly, their purpose was to negate the socialist system and subvert the People's Republic. The main planners and organizers of this counterrevolutionary riot were an extreme minority composed of people who for a long time have stubbornly sought bourgeois liberalization, they are political plotters lined with hostile powers overseas. Among those taking part in creating the violent activities were unreformed ex-prisoners, politically-oriented hooligans, remnants of the Gang of Four and other dregs of society. In short, they were reactionary elements harboring a deep-seated hatred against the Communist Party and

the socialist system.

The grave situation pushed the Martial Law troops to the limits of their forbearance, forcing them to take decisive measures to suppress the riot. As they calmly carried out their duty, the troops did their best to avoid bloodshed. However, an extreme minority of thugs paid no heed to these proceedings as they wildly attacked the troops. Due to these conditions some casualties occurred, but most of them were sustained by soldiers and police officers. (Daily, June 6, 1989, p. 1)

The People's Daily did not mention any casualties among the students and civilians until June 8, when Yuan Mu, spokesman of the State Council, exposed the "truths of the counter-revolutionary riot" at a press conference. He announced that after repeated verifications, it was now clear that more than 5,000 soldiers and officers, and more than 2,000 civilians were injured; total deaths were about 300, including many soldiers. Only 23 students were killed. (Daily, June 8, 1989, p. 1)

The New York Times reported on June 5 that China's television news showed the army knocking down a replica of the Statue of Liberty that students had put in place on the square. The broadcast hailed troops for "victoriously crushing this counterrevolutionary rebellion." (Times, June 5, 1989, p. A10)

Will the Goddess of Democracy disappear forever on China's mainland as the Communist rulers had expected? According China Spring, a New York based Chinese language magazine, the answer is "No!" The democratic forces and the democratic movement in China are like an immortal bird that will never withdraw its soaring wings under the attacks of heavy storms. Everywhere in China, struggles for freedom and democracy are still going on, and they strongly shake the collapsing feudal dynasty. Many students said, "The Goddess of Democracy will live in our hearts forever." (China Spring, August 1989, p.76)

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

The 1989 student-led Tiananmen democratic movement was suppressed by military force when the Chinese government ordered troops to move in on June 3-4. Thanks to the devoted efforts of the Western free press, as represented by the New York Times and others, and of third-world news media operating under free press policies, such as Taiwan's Central Daily News, people the world over learned what was happening in China almost instantaneously, and with some measure of objectivity. The Chinese news media, as represented by the party organ, the People's Daily, however, exposed its fatal weakness in failing to perform the duty of a news service. This conclusion is based on a comparison in the current study of the People's Daily, the New York Times and the Central Daily News.

#### How Did the People's Daily Handle the Reporting of the 1989 Student-Led Democratic Movement?

To answer this research question, it might be useful to review some episodes of the comparison.

As stated earlier in the study, while the international news media had already taken the student demonstration which broke out after Hu Yaobang died on April 15 as the focus of their reporting, the People's Daily kept silent on this explosive news event for nearly a week. It was not until April 19 when demonstrations escalated and thousands of

demonstrators protested in front of Zhongnanhai, the party and government headquarters, that the People's Daily printed a very short story, charging "a very small number of individuals with ulterior motives" of instigating some people who were unaware of the truth to create disorders. It neither defined the term "a very small number of individuals" nor explained who those "people unaware of the truth" actually were. It evaded the fact that tens of thousands of university students with the highest education in China's agrarian society who were in better positions to make sound judgments and decisions had participated in the demonstration. It also avoided mentioning the cause of the student movement by ignoring the students' demands which directly criticized party corruption and asked for more freedom, such as freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

Reading the People's Daily stories, readers might have these questions: How many people constituted that "very small number of individuals?" How would it be possible that so many highly educated university students had become duped and used by a very small number of people? In what way had the small number of people successfully instigated the young students and civilians to engage in such a large-scale demonstration? And, what did the small number of people and the students demand? Obviously, the People's Daily had missed some essential elements of journalism in its reporting: truthfulness, fairness, comprehensiveness and timeliness. To give the Chinese press its due, of course, there was a brief period of openness during May 1989. This study based its evaluation of press performance on the overall situation during the 1989 Tiananmen crisis.

### Truthfulness

Truthful information is indispensable to human beings in modern society. The news media exist to seek and provide truths to the public to enable them to make sound judgments and decisions about their daily lives. This essential principle of journalism,

despite geographical and cultural boundaries, is applicable to all news organizations.

The United States' Society of Professional Journalists (Sigma Delta Chi) Code of Ethics states clearly that "The public's right to know of events of public importance and interest is the overriding mission of the mass media. Good faith with the public is the foundation of all worthy journalism. Truth is our ultimate goal." (Rivers, 1980, p.291-292)

The People's Daily, however, followed a different set of principles. Despite hundreds of thousands of university students supported by millions of people from all sectors of the society taking to the streets to demand freedom and democracy, the People's Daily intentionally evaded that fact by insisting that only "an extremely small number of individuals with ulterior motives had instigated some people who were unaware of the truth to stir up a counterrevolutionary turmoil."

Here, several points in the People's Daily statement are not in conformity with the truth: first, it confused the huge crowd of million-strong demonstrators with "an extremely small number of people;" second, it failed to mention that most of the demonstrators in the square were university students who were wise enough to make personal judgment and observations instead of the kinder-garten children or illiterate people who might be regarded as "some people unaware of the truth;" and third, the students held peaceful and reasonable demonstrations, during which, according to the New York Times reports, crimes and traffic accidents in Beijing had been visibly reduced. So, it would be inconceivable to connect the student movement with "turmoil."

On the other hand, it was against the ethics of journalism for a news organization to publish an editorial (the People's Daily editorial of April 26 entitled "Taking A Clear-cut Stand Against the Turmoil") to declare the students guilty of "counterrevolutionary turmoil," a most serious crime in China which often results in the death penalty or life

imprisonment, even prior to the judicial process. It was this editorial which greatly provoked the students and thereby caused the escalation of their demonstrations.

The subsequent large-scale protests, and the later hunger strike all took the retraction of this editorial as one of the main demands of the demonstrating students. It was also this editorial which apparently made the students see the importance of a truthful and objective press, and from then on, freedom of the press became a priority over the other demands of the students.

However, the current political system in which the Communist Party openly uses the press as its propaganda tool eventually made it impossible for the Chinese press to present an objective and truthful picture of the student movement. Despite a very brief period of openness in the Chinese news media during the 1989 student-led pro-democracy movement, the reporting of the demonstrations and the crackdown on June 4 had been distorted by the Chinese press. As it was later to be known as the Big Lie, which referred to the reporting of the June 4 crackdown by the Chinese press, history had been totally rewritten in a way that as if the Tiananmen suppression had never happened. As

Newsweek pointed out:

No one died in Tiananmen Square on June 4. When China's Army cleared the square, student protesters left peacefully, with banners flying. No one was shot or crushed by tanks. Trouble was caused elsewhere in Beijing by a counterrevolutionary rebellion. Thugs stole rifles from the Army and attempted to overthrow the communist state. In the fighting that followed, only about 300 people died. Some were thugs, some were unfortunate bystanders. Fully half of the victims were soldiers.

That was the Big Lie, and China's government told it over and over again last week as it rounded up members of the democracy movement, sentenced some protesters to death and tried to wash the brains of everyone else.

(Newsweek, June 26, 1989, p. 26)

Day after day following the June 4 Beijing massacre, the Chinese Communist Party

and the government used the news media, with the People's Daily in particular, to step up a powerful propaganda blitz in an attempt to eradicate the disastrous image of the killing. Stories about the "counterrevolutionary thugs and rioters" burning army vehicles and beating soldiers filled newspapers throughout the country, and television footage showed charred bodies of two soldiers and damaged tanks over and over again. The Far Eastern Economic Review, a Hong Kong-based monthly, made a cutting observation of such a propaganda undertaking:

Just hours after the massacre on Peking's streets, China's propaganda machine, those outlets that only the month before had been paragons of the new journalism, began recreating the events of 3 and 4 June, rewriting the face of tragedy.

From the outset, it was not the people of Peking, high school and university students and workers, the bus drivers and bird sellers, the dumpling ladies and the shopkeepers who were slaughtered. Rather, it was the heroic soldiers of the People's Liberation Army who were the victims. Endlessly, the television showed film clips of civilians stoning armored personnel carriers, torching troop trucks, smashing the windows of jeeps, clips played almost entirely in silence so that the sound of gunshots would not be audible.

Even more important, as the official version of events went, the army moved not against protesters for democracy, for human rights. Instead, the army fought to suppress "counterrevolutionary rebellion." Any action by the army, any number of deaths, any level of destruction, any degree of repression is justified to put down "counterrevolution." (Far Eastern Economic Review, July 13, 1989, p. 57)

### Fairness

Western journalism ethics advocate that any person or organization whose reputation is attacked is entitled to simultaneous rebuttal; and every effort should be made to present all sides of controversial issues. (Rivers, 1980, p.295)

Through the comparison of news reports by the People's Daily, the New York Times and the Central Daily News, it is easy to find that the People's Daily had presented far less

of the students' side of the stories than that of the party line during the Tiananmen crisis, especially during its early stages. While reporting the student-police clashes in front of Zhongnanhai, the party and government headquarters, the People's Daily described how students threw stones and shoes at security guards and injured some of them, but never mentioned that the guards used belts and clubs to beat the students so severely that the faces of many of students were covered with blood.

Likewise, the People's Daily did not give due coverage to the students' demands which asked for the recognition of their rights to demonstrate; punishment of official corruption; a dialogue between government leaders and student representatives; and objective media accounts of the student movement. Instead, it only reported that the student movement had interrupted the traffic and affected the functioning of the government offices. Reports by many international media, however, pointed out that had the Chinese government properly responded to the students' demands, the students might have been appeased to go back to campuses and the crisis might not have gotten out of control.

Similarly, in handling the reporting of the June 4 crackdown, the People's Daily only printed the government stories of how hooligans and thugs incited a counterrevolutionary rebellion; government announcements and orders; and articles by some unidentified authors praising martial law and the crackdown. Student accounts of the bloody massacre, people's opposition, including many senior army generals, to martial law, as well as domestic and international denunciations of the crackdown did not get a column inch in the People's Daily. By presenting one-sided stories, the People's Daily may have intended to lead people in other parts of China to believe that a tiny handful of thugs had incited the naive and credulous students to fan up a counterrevolutionary rebellion in order to subvert the communist leadership and sabotage economic reform.



## Comprehensiveness

In the Western concept of journalism, news stories should include all important aspects of the event, and no part of it should be taken out of context or ignored. The Washington Post Code of Ethics points out: "No story is fair if it omits facts of major importance or significance. So fairness includes completeness... The newspaper shall tell *all* the truth, so far as it can learn it..." (Rivers, 1980, pp. 298-299)

The Chinese press, with the People's Daily in the lead, tailored the facts or quotes of the news events out of context to suit party politics. In reporting the students' protests and demonstrations, the People's Daily evaded the fact that the government had, for quite a long period, ignored students' repeated appeals for a dialogue between government leaders and student delegates. Instead, it focused its reporting on the student sit-ins in front of party headquarters that ended up in clashes with the police, and called that rioting. For the Gorbachev visit, the People's Daily blamed the students for the forced change of Gorbachev's Beijing schedule, but never mentioned that student demonstrations were, in large part, inspired by Gorbachev's political reform in the Soviet Union.

This study found that Gorbachev's visit to China happened to coincide with the period when the Chinese press slipped from party control and was as open as it ever had been in Chinese communist history. Even during this time, the People's Daily refrained from discussing the sensitive issue of Soviet political reform. Against its usual practice of printing the whole transcript of a press conference, the People's Daily did not publish Gorbachev's speech at the press conference apparently because Gorbachev praised the Chinese students for beginning the huge vigil for greater democracy and he also repeatedly declared that economic reform was impossible without political reform. The New York Times quoted him as saying: "All communist countries are headed at different paces toward greater freedom of expression, democracy and individual rights. These processes are

painful but they are necessary." The Times commented that the Soviet leader was careful not to be seen taking sides in the domestic political struggle provoked by the unrest, but it now appeared clear he had used his three days in Beijing to encourage political liberalization. (Times, May 18, 1989, p. A1)

As to the reporting by the Chinese media of the June 4 crackdown, the People's Daily reported the event out of context. It only reported that counterrevolutionary thugs threw stones and bottles at soldiers and beat them, and burned army vehicles, but it never mentioned that all these things happened after the soldiers opened fire at the crowds and killed many students and civilians, and tanks crushed human beings. It likewise reported only the hanging of two soldiers' charred corpses, but failed to report it happened after these two soldiers killed several civilians, including children and old women.

This incomplete and out-of-context reporting was misleading to the people in other parts of the country who had not personally seen the actual situation in Beijing, and they were especially deceptive to the rural population that has a low literacy level and little access to other sources of information apart from the official one. Having no other choice, the peasants, who account for more than 80 percent of China's population, might reluctantly choose to believe the government story of the Tiananmen crisis. (Yi Mu, 1989, p. 139)

### Timeliness

Timeliness is vital to Western media that exist to serve the public's right to know, and to do it as quickly as they can because of competition. To them, today's news might not be news tomorrow. So, Western journalists often race against the clock to get their stories printed. To the Chinese news media, however, time is of less concern. With politics in command, everything else can be maneuvered. An ordinary news story usually has to go

through several levels of approval, from desk editor to section chief, department director and up to the editor-in-chief, before it can be printed. Important news concerning party and government policies must be approved by the party secretary, rather than the editor, and very often, it must be sent to the chief of the party's propaganda department, sometimes even to the top leaders themselves, for review and approval. As Columbia Journalism Review once commented: "[Chinese] journalism is hindered by too many 'parents-in-laws' interfering in the process. Days are spent verifying articles again and again, after just a few words from above, the article is shelved." (Columbia Journalism Review, Nov/Dec. 1985, p. 36)

In handling the Tiananmen democratic movement of 1989, the People's Daily reported it much later than the international news services. Mr. Yi Mu, a Chinese senior journalist, was upset about this situation and pointed out:

As they have done many times before in controversial situations, the official press kept silent at the beginning of the demonstrations, acting as if nothing had really happened. It was only after the number of protesters swelled into hundreds of thousands and threatened to go out of control that the movement began to get some attention -- which was by no means positive -- in the press. Therefore, although some daring editors at a few newspapers such as the World Economic Herald and the Science and Technology Daily began reporting on the student demonstrations right after Hu Yaobang's death, the People's Daily remained silent about the student activity until April 20, five days after he died. Then People's Daily published its first report on the student demonstrations in front of Zhongnanhai, headquarters of the Communist Party and residential compound of many top Chinese leaders. In that report, the students were said to be used by a "handful of instigators" when they "tried to break into the gate and throw bottles and shoes at the security guards." (Yi Mu & Mark V. Thompson, 1989, p. 126)

Such deliberate delay and withholding of news, to say nothing of distorting and fabricating the news, by the Chinese press like the People's Daily, has greatly damaged its reputation. It is no wonder the demonstrating students said that "People's Daily deceives the people! Central Television confuses black and white! Xinhua News Agency is a literary police!" (Times, May 11, 1989, p. A3)

Michael J. Berlin, an American journalism professor who taught journalism in China as a Fulbright Exchange lecturer since 1988, was very much impressed by a cartoon-poster he saw on the campus of Beijing University. It depicted Fidel Castro telling Napoleon Bonaparte, "If you had the PLA [People's Liberation Army], you wouldn't have lost Waterloo," and Bonaparte replying, "If I'd had Xinhua News Agency and CCTV [Central China Television], no one would have known I lost." (Washington Journalism Review, September 1989, p.34)

How Did the People's Daily Balance Its Functions  
As Both a Government Propaganda Tool  
and a News Service?

It would be unfair to neglect the short-lived, but courageous behavior of the Chinese press, especially of the party organ, the People's Daily, during the 1989 democratic movement. From early May until May 20 when martial law was decreed, the Chinese people, and perhaps the people all over the world, were surprised by the openness and objectivity displayed by some Chinese media. With the People's Daily and Xinhua News Agency deviating from the party line, all the other news media followed suit and expressed strong support for the student movement and showed great sympathy for the hunger strikers by giving detailed and objective reports of the demonstrations. USA Today reported on May 17 that "The specter of tens of thousands of rebellious students denouncing the Chinese government on Tiananmen Square was making the front page of the state-controlled press and getting into broadcasts of the Central China Television Service. It stated, "The People's Daily, China's largest newspaper with a circulation of more than four million, has been carrying reports from the square bearing not only the date of publication but the time -- sometimes as late as 2:30 a.m." In another story on May 19,

USA Today reported:

China's state-controlled media are giving unprecedented display to voices of dissent that are reverberating through Tiananmen Square and rising in other major cities. The People's Daily is giving top position to the protest.

The coverage for both electronic and print media shows how the government has loosened up on what's allowed in news reports.

Before the current demonstrations, protests since mid-April had gone largely unreported, Chinese relied on Western media coverage for accurate accounts.

Newspapers and the television network both appeared to be responding not only to events but to pressure from their own staff members, many of whom are joining demonstrations here and in other cities. (USA Today, May 19, 1989, p. 4A)

A Chinese journalism student, Ma Yu Cong, was quoted as saying, "The news is getting better. Formerly the news was closed, there was nothing." Xue Yong, a novelist, also said, "There is no free press, and that breeds corruption. It's only in the last couple of days that we've seen fairly objective reporting. That's the great sorrow of China's media." (USA Today, May 17 & 19, 1989, p.4A)

The brief press freedom in China was by no means a fortuitous phenomenon. It was like a volcanic eruption after a longtime accumulation of the crustal movement. This study found three main factors to explain this short-lived openness of the Chinese press: a reflection of the power struggle within the Communist Party; a display of conscience of the Chinese journalists; and an ardent demand of the students for freedom of the press.

### Power Struggle

The power struggle between party hard-liners represented by the senior leader Deng, Prime Minister Li Peng and President Yang Shangkun, and moderate reformists represented by party general secretary Zhao Ziyang was the direct cause for the loosening

of the party control over its propaganda machinery, and it provided a vacuum for the news media to act on their own for a short while. Zhao had, on several occasions, openly expressed his willingness to talk to the students and to retract the People's Daily editorial which declared the student movement to be "a counterrevolutionary turmoil." Prime Minister Li Peng and President Yang Shangkun, backed by Deng and other octogenarian leaders, insisted that some "black hands" were behind the students to fan up a riot to subvert the communist leadership and, therefore, military forces be used to crush the counterrevolutionary conspiracy.

In early May, Zhao's moderate line seemed to take the upper hand when he made a contradictory statement against the People's Daily editorial in his speech at the Asian Development Bank annual meeting in Beijing, asserting that "China will not sink into turmoil!" He emphasized that the students were by no means opposed to the basic social system, and their aims were the same as those of the government. "They are very dissatisfied with the mistakes we have made in our work. They want us to correct our mistakes and improve our work, which happened to be the stand of the Party and government as well." Zhao concluded "What is most needed now is soberness, reason, restraint, and order. We must solve the problems according to the rule of democracy and law." (Daily, May 5, 1989, p.1)

Encouraged by Zhao's remarks that "party corruption is partly due to the lack of openness and transparency in our system of work," the People's Daily and all the other news media began to try freedom of the press to increase the level of openness. Zhao's speech, however, was later turned into evidence of his crimes of "supporting the turmoil and splitting the party." Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong said in his report to the National People's Congress on June 30 that "Zhao Ziyang's speech created serious ideological confusion among the cadres and the masses and inflated the arrogance of the organizers and

plotters of the turmoil." (Daily, July 1, 1989, p.1)

Prime Minister Li Peng and other hard-liners had long been dissatisfied with Zhao's reformist line and had wanted to get rid of him in order to pull China back to the Maoist central planning economy. The hard-liners not only blamed the unprecedented inflation and growing economic crisis of 1988 on Zhao, but also claimed the current student movement, a typical form of "bourgeois liberalization," to be the result of the open policy and economic reform. Zhao, however, did not want to give in. He took the burgeoning student movement in Beijing and throughout the country as a chance to improve his position. (Liu Binyan, 1989, p.36) Noticing that Deng, his mentor who personally designed the policies for opening up and economic reform, had already sided with the hard-liners to order a military crackdown, Zhao clearly knew what his fate would be, and his only choice for survival was to secure stronger support from the people. This led him to take a much more conciliatory line, and to openly distance himself from Deng.

In his meeting with Gorbachev during the Sino-Soviet summit, Zhao told Gorbachev that, although Deng had retired from all party positions, he was still the person who had a final say on all major party and government issues. Although he was merely stating an open secret, this action was extraordinary in Chinese politics, especially under the circumstances because it implied that Deng, rather than Zhao himself, should take responsibility for the chaotic situation. Zhao also tried to send a message that he was personally prepared to accept the student demands, but was prevented by Deng. (Yi Mu, 1989, p. 63)

After the Chinese media reported Zhao's statements, students began to direct their spearheads at Deng by asking him to step down. Deng was greatly angered by Zhao's behavior, and he made the final decision to oust Zhao as party general secretary.

Zhao thus lost the power struggle, and faced the same fate as his predecessor, Hu

Yaobang. On May 19, he went to Tiananmen Square, despite the repeated warnings by Li Peng and other hard-liners, to deliver a tearful speech of farewell to the hunger striking students. The next day, Li Peng declared martial law and Zhao was no longer seen in any news report.

After Li Peng stationed troops at various major news organizations like the People's Daily, Xinhua, and Central Television, and replaced many of the editors, the Chinese press once again presented one voice -- the party's voice -- in all of its news reporting.

### Journalists' Conscience

The tremendous courage and sense of justice displayed by the Chinese journalists during the Tiananmen crisis showed that the long-dormant conscience of the journalists had finally come to light. Inspired by the World Economic Herald and the Science and Technology Daily, journalists of various news organizations expressed their dissatisfaction with the tight control over and censorship of the press, and took to the streets to show their open support for the students. From numerous news accounts by the international news media, such as the New York Times, people all over the world learned for the first time that the propaganda tool of the Communist Party dared to challenge the communist authorities. (News, May 15, 1989, p. 1)

On May 4, the 70th anniversary of the May 4 Movement of 1919, about 500 journalists from more than 30 news organizations in Beijing, including the People's Daily and Xinhua News Agency, marched in Beijing streets to show solidarity with the students. Holding high banners which identified their different news services, the journalists shouted slogans such as: "Don't force us to deceive the people!" "News services must tell the truth!" and "We want freedom of the press!" (Times, May 5, 1989, p. A10)

On May 9, more than 1,000 Beijing journalists signed a petition, demanding the



restoration of Mr. Qin Benli to the editor's position of the World Economic Herald and a dialogue with the party leaders in charge of the propaganda work. The New York Times quoted Li Datong, an editor at the China Youth Daily who was also the sponsor of the petition, as saying, "The reason we are calling for such a dialogue is that our press coverage has attracted criticism at home and abroad. We think that the press in Beijing has failed to be comprehensive and fair in its coverage. And we think this is the direct result of our current press system." The petition itself also acknowledged that "some reports of the demonstrations were extremely distorted and they have severely damaged the reputation of China's press both here and abroad." (Times, May 10, p. A11)

From then on until Zhao lost his power and martial law was declared on May 20, the press in China had presented a fresh look of journalism. News stories, news photographs, television footage and radio programs all gave fairly accurate and objective accounts of the student demonstrations. Even after the declaration of martial law and the replacement of editors in many news organizations, the Chinese journalists adopted some tactics to subtly and implicitly get their messages across to readers. For example, on May 22, two days after martial law was declared, the People's Daily published a front-page article about a Hungarian leader's objection to the use of army troops to solve domestic problems. It quoted Hungarian Prime Minister Miklos Nemeth as saying that "no political force should be allowed to use military troops to solve domestic problems. One of the most hateful characteristics of Stalinism was that armed forces were willfully and recklessly used to suppress its own people. We should most resolutely break with such behavior." (Daily, May 22, 1989, p. 1)

Before the Sino-Soviet summit to be held in Beijing on May 15, the China Youth Daily published a long account in which a Soviet citizen was quoted as saying that before Gorbachev "our country was run by old and sickly people who need help to walk, who

lack the breath to speak, whose minds are stiff and muddled." In a country where criticisms are always made indirectly, this appeared to be a comment on Mr. Deng and a call for "a young and strong leader." (Times, May 14, 1989, p. A10)

The New York Times made a comment on a People's Daily story on May 21 about the resignation of the Italian government:

Not many Chinese follow Italian politics, so perhaps it was a bit surprising for People's Daily to carry a small front-page article Sunday on the resignation of the Italian Government.

But in China, where subtlety is a way of journalism as of life, the message was obvious: China's government should think about resigning as well. (Times, May 24, 1989, p. A1)

On May 7, three days after the Tiananmen massacre, the People's Daily carried a story about the suppression of Kwangjiu Uprising in 1988 by the South Korean authorities. The headline of the story was in heavy bold type which read: "South Korean Opposition Leader Kim Dae-jung Appealed to Punish Arch-criminals Who Suppressed People's Uprising and to Launch a Struggle to End the Rule of the Current Regime." (Daily, May 7, 1989, p. 4)

The audience was expected to read between the lines and apply similar sentiments to the Chinese situation.

Aside from reporting foreign attitudes that contradict the official line, Chinese journalists have long practiced the technique of "double-entendre" to get around official restrictions on reporting. Slight differences in tone or nuances of expression will convey a message to the informed reader that the writer means the very opposite of what is printed. Unstated facts that everyone is aware of, or under-stated statistics and many other subtle hints will suggest to the reader that things are not at all what the surface of the text seems to proclaim. (Yi Mu, 1989, p. 140)

Of course, there are some other journalists who are courageous enough to risk their

jobs, even their lives, to speak the truth. Michael J. Berlin, the American professor who was teaching journalism in China during the Tiananmen crisis, gave a moving account of his experience, "After the massacre, we turned on Radio Beijing's English service, curious to hear what propaganda was being dished out. What we got, however, was this heart-rending elegy for a nation's shattered dreams:

Remember 3 June, 1989. A most tragic event happened in the Chinese capital, Beijing. Thousands of people, most of them innocent civilians, were killed by fully armed soldiers when they forced their way into the city. Among the killed are our colleagues at Radio Beijing.

The soldiers were riding on armored vehicles and used machine guns against thousands of local residents and students who tried to block their way. When the army convoys made a breakthrough, soldiers continued to spray their bullets indiscriminately at crowds in the street. Eyewitnesses say some armored vehicles even crushed foot soldiers who hesitated in front of the resisting civilians.

Radio Beijing English Department deeply mourns those who died in the tragic incident and appeals to all its listeners to join our protest for the gross violation of human rights and the most barbarous suppression of the people. (Berlin, 1989, p. 37)

A Hong Kong newspaper identified the broadcaster as Li Dan and called him the "bravest reporter in contemporary China." (Washington Journalism Review, September 1989, p. 37)

### Students' Demand for Press Freedom

From the beginning of the demonstrations, freedom of the press was placed high on the list of the students' demands. Learning from previous lessons, the students were clearly aware that, without a free press to objectively and fairly report the democratic movement, their patriotic ideals of moving China toward democracy would not be understood by the masses of the Chinese people, and so they would not be able to get popular support.

Especially after the April 26 People's Daily editorial which accused the students of creating a "counterrevolutionary turmoil," the students requested that their demands be published in newspapers and their dialogue with government leaders be broadcast live through television.

At the same time, the students relied on themselves to make their ideas and demands known to the public because they understood that it would be unrealistic to place the hope of getting consistent objective reporting of their movement on the government-controlled propaganda machine. In addition to sending out groups to factories, business offices and residential communities to publicize their ideas, the Autonomous Student Union also published its own newspaper, the News Herald, in late April. The newspaper not only carried news gathered by the students themselves, but it also reprinted stories by the foreign media, such as the Voice of American and BBC. It became so popular that it was sold out immediately each time it was printed. After martial law was declared on May 20, another newspaper, the News Bulletin, was published by the students with the help of some journalists, and it ran articles by people from different sectors of society to call for the cancellation of martial law and dismissal of Prime Minister Li Peng. Also, in Tiananmen Square where the hunger strike was going on, the students set up their own broadcasting station effectively to deliver their messages to the huge crowd gathered around there.

During the high tide of their demonstrations when more than one thousand journalists from various Beijing news organizations signed a petition to demand freedom of the press and took to the streets to protest the government censorship, 5,000 students marched to some major official news organizations, such as the People's Daily and Xinhua News Agency, to show support for the journalists.

The students clearly knew the importance of a free press that could give objective accounts of their democratic movement. But a deeper issue than having the press help create a favorable public image, according to Yi Mu, a senior Chinese journalist, was the

belief that freedom of the press is part of the overall political reforms which students had been pushing more strongly than other sectors of society. The students viewed freedom of the press as an indispensable means to solve many of the nation's current problems, such as corruption and popular discontent. They believed that putting public officials under the scrutiny of the press and the people would help check corruption. And by letting people freely express their views and complaints, the concerns of the general population could be properly voiced, creating a better understanding between the people and the ruling authorities. Moreover, democracy itself should insure that different opinions could be expressed without reprisal. For the students, then, freedom of the press was both a fundamental demand and a strategic means to present a positive image of their movement. (Yi Mu, 1989, p. 118)

#### Problems of Chinese Journalism

For a long time, the Chinese press has been criticized not only by international readers but also by domestic opinions for its propaganda orientation, lack of credibility and time efficiency. The late Wilbur Schramm, a distinguished American scholar in mass communication, sharply pointed out that the Chinese press "is not intended to be essentially informative, but rather instrumental. That is why it can take such a detached and timeless view of news breaks and getting there first with the news, why it feels it can omit many of the chief stories that excite other news agencies...." (Schramm, 1981, p. 301)

Even after Deng Xiaoping opened up China to the outside world and carried out economic reforms in 1979, journalism, as part of political infrastructures, still was tightly controlled by the party and government. "Journalistic freedom exists at the sufferance of the party and state leadership. Until the party truly commits itself to safeguarding some

form of independent inquiry, journalists will continue to peer cautiously over their shoulders, which, it seems, is exactly what Deng wants." (Columbia Journalism Review, Nov/ Dec, 1985, p. 37)

The 1989 Tiananmen democratic movement exposed the problems of China's journalism system to a greater extent. Not only students, workers and business people complained about being kept in the dark, journalists demanded freedom to tell the truth, and even some top party leaders, such as Zhao Ziyang and Hu Qili, acknowledged that there was a lack of openness in the system of work, and that it was necessary to reform China's press system without a moment delay. (Daily, May 5 & May 14, 1989, p. 1)

For 40 years since the Chinese Communist Party took power from the Nationalist Party (KMT) on China's mainland in 1949, the communist regime still has been using the same methods it used to take power to maintain its power, that is, relying on "the barrel of the gun" and "the barrel of the pen." It is not difficult to understand that, by relying on the gun, the regime can use the People's Liberation Army to suppress anyone who has complaints or doubts about the absolute leadership of the Communist Party, like the students and civilians in Tiananmen Square. By relying on the pen, the regime can use its propaganda machine to distort or simply fabricate the facts so people will never know that the suppression ever happened, such as the Big Lie after the Tiananmen massacre. It might be said without exaggeration that the 1989 Tiananmen crisis is an epitome of the 40-year communist rule of suppression plus obscurantism.

In a sense, the communist regime has used the party-controlled press to indoctrinate the people more effectively than it has used the army to suppress the people. Otherwise it would not be able to explain why the Communist Party can still hold fast its power for 40 years during which time the Chinese people had been forced to endure endless political struggles, severe economic difficulties and serious deprivation of human rights. If every Chinese citizen had enjoyed freedom of expression, freedom of the press and freedom of

demonstration as people in Western democracies do, how could the communist regime explain the legitimacy of its rule of one billion Chinese people by just a few gerontocrats?

Based on the current study, one presumption could be made that if there had been a free press in China, there would have been neither a Tiananmen demonstration, nor a Tiananmen massacre. To think that in China where citizens are discouraged from freely expressing their views, are prevented from starting any publications, and punished for organizing any form of unauthorized groups, what other means could they possibly use to have their voices heard? Very often, a breaking event, such as the death of a state leader or even the loss of a sports contest to a foreign team, could become an instant signal for the people, especially university students, to gather themselves spontaneously and take to the streets. This has become a unique and creative way of airing views and pouring out grievances by the Chinese people.

Many China watchers observed this special Chinese phenomenon with great interest. Corinna-Barbara Francis, an American researcher, made this insightful observation:

Beginning in 1985 a new pattern of protest emerged -- the mass spontaneous student demonstration. Sparked by some incident or news item, students would mobilize in unison, write character posters, demonstrate on campus and on the street. This type of demonstration became almost routine, with students using just about any excuse to take to the streets.... Yet, regardless of the nature of the initial spark, student attention would quickly turn to broader themes -- the need for political reform, freedom of the press, the rule of law, human rights. (Francis, 1989, p. 901)

Francis also mentioned several examples to reinforce her argument: In 1985 students demonstrated over a perceived attempt by Japan to cover up in Japanese textbooks atrocities committed during the Sino-Japanese war. In 1986 demonstrations were initially sparked by poor campus conditions and unfair election practices. The murder of a Beijing University student, racial tensions among students, and even a Sino-Japanese soccer match propelled student action in 1987 and 1988. (Francis, 1989, p. 901) The New York Times quoted a

demonstrating student as saying: "Hu Yaobang's death is not the reason for this demonstration. It is the excuse." (Times, April 18, 1989, p. A3)

The current China situation coincided with the one described by Mao before the communist victory in 1949, in which Mao said: "China now has dried fagots spread everywhere and a single spark can start a prairie fire." Because of the longtime suppression of individual freedom by the communist government, the Chinese people have had no place to vent their dissatisfaction and frustration, which have accumulated like the long-piled dried fagots, while Hu Yaobang's death served as a spark to set them afire.

Based on this, it may be assumed that if the Chinese people had had normal channels to communicate their views, and outlets to vent their grievances, there might not have been a need for such a large-scale mass demonstration. On the other hand, had the Chinese press freely and objectively reported the student demonstration and their demands, it not only would have placated the demonstrators, but also would let people throughout the country know the truth of what happened in Beijing, and what the students really asked for. It would not be difficult to imagine what support the students might have received if people across the country knew the truth of the student movement. Even most of the soldiers would have considered whether they were confronting "an extremely small number of counter-revolutionary rioters" when they were ordered to shoot.

That may explain why the party hard-liners who insisted on a military solution to maintain their power had not only ordered the news media not to report the student movement, but also forbade soldiers to read newspapers or watch television for two weeks before sending them into Beijing. "The troops had no idea at all of their cause. At least some of the troops said they had been told by their leaders not to read recent newspapers or watch television news." (Times, May 21, 1989, p. A10) Some troops were even given fictitious reasons for being sent into Beijing, such as to carry out a military maneuver, to



shoot a war movie or to rescue the victims of a torrential flood. (News, May 21, 1989, p. 4)

In addition to controlling its own propaganda machine and warning the people not to spread the word of the Tiananmen demonstration to other parts of China by mail or telephone, the Communist Party also tried to restrict foreign news media in an attempt to prevent their reporting the Chinese situation truthfully. Employing various tactics ranging from issuing orders restricting foreign journalists' activities, detaining and beating them, to cutting off their satellite transmissions or jamming their radio programs, or even expelling foreign journalists from China, the Chinese government seemed to deploy all possible means to deprive the Chinese people of all access to any type of truthful information. Many instances during the Tiananmen crisis showed that the communist regime wishfully took it as a foolproof strategy to keep people in the dark so that it could do whatever it wished without being challenged. (News, May 25, 1989, p. 1)

A peculiar phenomenon has been discovered through the current study. In China, where news and information are controlled, people have to resort to foreign news media such as VOA and BBC for information about their own country, and they have to express their views or feelings by taking advantage of some unusual events or by smashing small bottles. Journalists have to rely on hints or innuendo to get their messages across. (Times, April 17, 1989, p. A1) This is indeed the root cause of China's tragedies.

To save China from suffering further tragedies and to push her toward democracy, it is time to reform the journalism system. Data of this study point to a conclusion that China cannot establish its democratic system without first having a free press. To a large extent, the press system in a country reflects the political system of that country because, according to William Hachten, an American journalism professor, all press systems reflect the values of the political and economic systems of the nations within which they operate. (Hachten,

1981, p. 16)

Given that China is a large agrarian society with 80 percent of its population in rural areas, and that China has a long history of isolating itself from international intercourse, it is even more important to set up a free press system to disseminate democratic ideas among the Chinese public that has a low average level of literacy. It goes without saying that, in addition to a sound educational system, a free press is the most effective mechanism for reaching the vast majority of the people and for raising their consciousness of democracy. Before achieving a popular understanding and recognition of the basic principles of democracy, it would be unrealistic to hope for a multi-party system, separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers, and whole-people election in China.

### Journalism Reform

How would it be possible, then, for China to strive for a free press system under the current totalitarian communist rule? The current study has suggested that three essential steps be taken as a starting point for China's journalism reform: enacting a press law, improving journalism education, and encouraging media competition by turning news and information into commercial commodities. All these steps, of course, must be tactfully and cautiously carried out so the process does not give the regime an excuse to crack down. It is not easy to do, but it is not impossible.

### Press Law

Talk about drawing up a press law has been circulating for many years, especially since 1980. Cries for a press law that guarantees freedom of the press and citizens' access to information have become increasingly louder. But China still does not have a press law.

The reason for this is simple: the Communist Party insists that the press law reassert the party's absolute leadership over the news media, while liberal-minded reformists want to give news organizations some power to perform journalistic duties independently.

The People's Daily carried an article on February 15, 1988, reporting on the statement by Zhang Youyu, a well-known Chinese jurist, on enacting China's first press law. While emphasizing the protection of freedom of speech and freedom of the press, Mr. Zhang reaffirmed that the press law must be formulated on the basis of the "four fundamental principles," namely, party leadership, socialist system, proletarian dictatorship, and Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Mr. Zhang said, "Any kind of speech should be allowed so long as it does not intend to incite counterrevolutionary activities, to violate laws, or to oppose the `four fundamental principles.'" (Daily, Feb. 15, 88, p. 4)

However tight the party control seems to be, there are still some loopholes which pro-democracy reformists might utilize for their own ends. It is thus recommended that proper tactics and strategies be used to win back the endowed human rights and freedom restricted by the communist rulers, so that the Chinese people might be able to make the rulers feel helpless even when they want to suppress dissent.

In drawing up the press law, it would be necessary to use as its theoretical basis China's Constitution which, in Article 87, clearly stipulated that "Citizens of the People's Republic of China have freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of association, freedom of procession and freedom of demonstration. By providing the necessary material facilities, the state guarantees to citizens enjoyment of the freedom." (Minton, 1980. p. 105) Although it is commonly acknowledged that laws and regulations in communist China are meaningless, it is still better than none to take them as a shield to carry out struggles for freedom and democracy. In normal situations, it could make the regime feel that it was not on solid ground to take actions, because in doing so, it

would slap its own face.

At the same time, the press law should avoid using such provocative language as "the press should be independent of any political party or interest group, and free from outside control and interference" because this could invite direct confrontation with the communist regime who might not allow the press law to be enacted. Rather, the law should focus on the importance of the free flow of information to the people, and the necessity for faithful and objective news for all citizens in a civilized society.

Thus, it is naturally justifiable to stipulate that journalists have access to news sources and report all kinds of facts without being punished or harassed; and that all citizens have access to public information, are free to air different views and have the right to start their own publications and radio stations. These are all the freedoms clearly stipulated in the Constitution and it would be very difficult for the authorities to find fault with them. It must be stressed, however, that no such political restrictions as the "four fundamental principles" should be written into the press law.

### Journalism Education

Education has been a low priority in the 40 years of communist history, and journalism education is likewise treated as a non-essential part of societal life. This may be due to the obscurant mentality of the aging leaders who have always been worried about the threat to their power from a well-educated and well-informed public. Mao once said, "The more educational knowledge one has the more reactionary one becomes." Thus, guided by Mao's educational theory, schools in China are obliged to educate students to become "both Red and expert," meaning that the students must have political consciousness as well as cultural knowledge. In reality, however, Redness is always placed above expertness. Deng Xiaoping, in a speech to the National Educational Conference on April 22, 1978,

summarized this communist educational philosophy:

We must improve the quality of education and raise the level of teaching in science and culture so as to serve proletarian politics better.

We must train workers with high attainments in science and culture and build a vast army of working class intellectuals who are both red and expert. (Beijing Review, May 5, 1978, p. 3)

William Hinton, a long-time China watcher, made the following observation:

In the context of this struggle [continued revolution], education is both crucial and controversial. If politics in command is to mean anything, then hundreds of millions must seriously study philosophy and political economy... Replacing Confucian texts with Marxist texts does not in itself cause people's brains to come to grips with the real world. That is why Mao has stressed so often that knowledge comes from practice and has insisted that everyone take part in class struggle -- that is, day-to-day political struggle -- in order to master politics. (Hinton, 1977, p. ii)

Since journalists in China are regarded as "proletarian fighters" for organizing, agitating and educating the masses in political struggles, education of journalists has thus been focused on political indoctrination rather than on professional training. James C. Y. Chu, an American journalism professor, offered similar comments:

First, political ideology of a journalist is placed above his professional competence, and a firm political position is the prerequisite for a reporter. Next in importance comes obedience. A journalist must trumpet news under the instruction of the party and report and withhold news completely along the line of the party's decisions... Journalists who report or interpret news against the will of the party are regarded as counter-revolutionary elements. (Chu & Wang, 1972, p. 489)

According the study by Prof. Chu and his associate, William Wang, journalism students generally spend about 40 percent of their five-year program in professional training, while 60 percent is devoted to Marxism-Leninism and other political courses. They also found that applicants for admission to journalism programs had to undergo a

rigid screening of their political background by party officials before they were permitted to be enrolled. Workers and peasants usually enjoyed special privileges in the application for admission. (Chu & Wang, 1972, p. 492)

Under such circumstances, reform of journalism education should put its emphasis on the transition of journalism curriculum from political indoctrination to professional training. Instead of criticizing the communist practice of cramming political dogma into journalism programs, journalism educational reform should devote its efforts to introducing journalism theories, techniques and ethics of Western democracies into Chinese journalism. Generally speaking, publicizing Western democratic methods of journalism is more practicable and effective than openly repudiating the communist monopoly of the press. Western textbooks that emphasize journalism theories, ethics and news reporting techniques should be translated and used in journalism schools. Once these courses and ideas become attractive to the students, political indoctrination will automatically lose ground.

Meanwhile, efforts should be made to admit journalism students on the basis of their academic performance, especially their writing and communication skills rather than political background and allegiance. It is important to have an admission policy that does not discriminate because of gender, religion, family background, political belief or party affiliation.

It must be pointed out that minimizing political orientation and raising students' academic standards are two essentials of journalism education. With these two steps being set in motion, the reform of journalism education will be sure to have a sound beginning.

### News Competition and Commercialization

Since news media are mostly private enterprises in Western democratic countries,

competition and the profit motive become distinctive traits of the journalism value systems in those democracies. For them, competition is a strong stimulus for efficiency and reputation, and it urges the media to be responsive to readers' needs and to develop positive images. Profits are not only a yardstick of performance but also a requisite for survival. According to American journalism theory, the media cannot serve their audience unless they earn sufficient profits to survive. (Kurian, 1982, P. 976)

In China, however, the ownership of all the news media rests with the government, and competition is non-existent. Since the news media are totally financed by the government, it is not their concern whether they make money or lose money. People throughout the country hear only one voice -- the party's voice, and what is in the People's Daily normally will be reprinted by all other newspapers throughout China. News organizations have no incentive to compete with one another, and more truly, they are not allowed to compete. Since views in contradiction to the party's political line are regarded heresies, any private, unauthorized publications are condemned as illegal, underground, or even "counterrevolutionary."

The 1989 Tiananmen democratic movement exposed the Chinese news media to an embarrassing situation in which a sharp contrast was seen between the international media and the Chinese media. On the one side, news organizations from more than one hundred countries vied with each other to bring breaking news events before the eyes of the world in a timely and objective manner. On the other side, the Chinese news media attempted to cover up the events or to distort the facts. In addition, the unauthorized student newspapers disclosed the true situation in Tiananmen Square which was contrary to the accounts by official news organizations. As a result, demonstrators and civilians turned to foreign news media and student newspapers for information, and called the Chinese news media "rumormongers." This may have hurt the conscience of the Chinese journalists who

subsequently took to the streets to demand that the government "not force us to tell lies." An unprecedented openness followed, and true competition among the Chinese news media was witnessed for the first time in the history of communist journalism. This press freedom, however, was short-lived, and it was soon shattered by the June 4 gunfire.

An important component of China's journalism reform would be to gradually commercialize the news services and to turn news and information into consumer goods so as to encourage competition among news organizations. This step should be based on the new press law which would allow private publications and radio stations to operate. Had private news services become legal, competition would become a natural trend. Not only do private news organizations have to compete with one another in order to survive, but the official news media also have to join the competition if they don't want to lose readers. News commercialization would bring about competition, and competition would promote profit-seeking. In this sense, news competition and commercialization are the most basic criteria for a free press, and no press would be truly free without being financially independent.

As stated earlier, moderate journalism reform that does not openly oppose, at least for the time being, the party's control over the news media is not impossible in China. There are several reasons to back up this argument.

First, the communist regime opened up China to the outside world and carried out economic reforms in 1979 in an attempt to rescue China's collapsing economy after the Cultural Revolution. Even after the June 4 crackdown, the regime still said repeatedly that policies for opening -up and economic reform would remain unchanged. So long as China did not completely shut its door to the outside world, it would be impossible for the Chinese government to prevent Western democratic ideas from infiltrating China. The Western news media would continue to report the truth about China and the world and would continue to contrast sharply with China's news media. Likewise, the Chinese



people's thirst for freedom and democracy would not be quenched completely as long as they still could find sources, though limited, to learn about democratic ideas.

On the other hand, the Communist regime still woos the "compatriots" of Taiwan and Hong Kong to attract more investment and capitals to boost its endangered economy. While Hong Kong serves as a window for the Chinese people to see the prosperity of the world, Taiwan will serve as a mirror through which the Chinese people can reflect on the question: Why, being both Chinese, are the living standards of the people on different side of the Taiwan Strait so different? And why, with the same cultural tradition and historical background, do the people in Taiwan enjoy comparatively freer rights to speak, to run the press and to participate in government, while the people in the Chinese mainland enjoy none?

It will be, therefore, legitimate for the mainlanders to demand the same living standard and political freedom as their Taiwan compatriots do. Also, the tremendous changes in the Soviet Union and the East bloc will be a good source of inspiration for the Chinese people in struggling for freedom and democracy. For having copied everything from the Soviets, ranging from military organization, economic system, educational methods to political structure, the Chinese communist regime would have difficult time to totally negate the reality of the unprecedented social reforms in the communist world. Thus, the Chinese people would again have a legitimate right to ask: Why the Soviet Union, the communist forerunner, has initiated changes to divert from the socialist course, while the Chinese Communist Party which used to be a loyal follower of the Soviet Big Brother refuses to keep abreast of the historical trend?

Unless the situation became out of control, the communist regime might not risk damaging its reputation by turning back on its own promise. As a matter of fact, the ten-year economic reform had given the Chinese people some freedom which would have been

inconceivable during Mao's era.

In the last ten years, many capitalist elements were introduced into the socialist economy, and more than one hundred thousand students had been sent abroad to study in various capitalist countries, including the United States, Britain, Germany and Japan. Many publications which were banned during the Cultural Revolution had been restored, and many new publications had been allowed to register for opening. Compared to the news reporting during the Mao era, news and information had become more accessible, though still far from truthful. This situation helped enlighten the population in the self-isolated Middle Kingdom. At the moment, it seems unlikely that the communist regime would shut China's door again and pull it back to the Middle Ages because it still wants to attract foreign investment and technology.

Second, the 10-year-long limited freedom and contact with Western countries kindled the people's desire for more freedom and human rights. With the changes taking place in the Soviet Union and the communist East bloc, more and more people in China are no longer willing to have their fate controlled by the government which tells them what to say, what to know and how to think. The 1989 Tiananmen incident proved this. In addition, when more students return to China to spread the democratic ideas they learned from Western democracies, it may serve as a catalyst for more democratic changes in Chinese society. It must also be noted that since this openness and economic reform, many young people with higher-level education have been promoted into leading positions, and many of them benefited from the reform and became liberal-minded. Even some top party officials have shown interest in seeing China moving toward a freer and more open society. All these seem to be beyond the control of the Chinese government unless it takes the risk by shutting China's door again.

Third, the Constitution of the People's Republic of China clearly states that Chinese

citizens enjoy a variety of freedoms, including freedom of speech and freedom of the press. Unless things get out of control, it is unlikely that the communist regime would tear up the law made by itself. At least, it may observe it superficially to create an image of a civilized government. If the press law and journalism reform use the Constitution as the theoretical foundation, and borrow some terminology from it as a protective shield, there would be no reason to worry that they would be banned by the government immediately.

Data drawn from this study point to the conclusion that, in drawing up the press law and reforming journalism education, proper strategies and tactics should be given full consideration. It is vitally important to remember that, under the present situation in China, it would be naive and unrealistic to seek something which could not be achieved for the time being. Making the transition to democracy is a time-consuming and painful process which should not be expected to complete overnight. Much must be done step by step, and aiming too high might invite failure.

A tragic lesson can be learned from the 1989 Tiananmen student movement. Had the students halted their demonstrations at a proper moment instead of pressing for more when they had already forced the government into dialogues, it might have given party liberals some leeway to compromise with the party hard-liners, and might have helped consolidate the freedom the demonstrators had already achieved, such as the unauthorized student newspapers and objective reporting by the official news media.

Since the students failed to stop at the right moment, it gave the hard-liners a chance to look for excuses to carry out the crackdown which led to the complete loss of the freedom the students had already obtained.

As a result of the current study, the hypothesis that there is no difference between objectivity in reporting the Tiananmen student movement by the People's Daily, the New York Times and the Central Daily News is rejected. In general, the People's Daily, being a party-controlled newspaper, performed biased and incomplete reporting on Tiananmen.

The Central Daily News, being a party organ of the Nationalist Party which has been hostile to the Chinese Communist Party for more than four decades, generally speaking, had thoroughly and objectively reported the student movement, though emotional and exaggerated accounts were occasionally seen in its reporting. The New York Times, as a third party, did objective and comprehensive reporting on this historical event. In designing this research, an assumption was made that the New York Times is the model of a free press and it will serve as a standard against which reports by the People's Daily and the Central Daily News will be compared. Comparison and analysis of the performance of the three newspapers have proved this assumption to be basically true. Despite the news blackout and information control imposed by the Chinese government which resulted in numerous rumors and hard-to- be-verified information, the New York Times could still produce highly objective news reports by abiding by its journalistic principles of truthfulness and thoroughness. Compared with the New York Times and the Central Daily News, the People's Daily proved to be weak in its journalistic performance. Numerous examples showed that the People's Daily could not shake off party control to act as an independent news organization, rather it parroted in its reporting whatever the party and government had said.

This study is by no means a thorough one, and more studies need to be conducted to explore appropriate ways for China's journalism reform. It is thereby recommended that some further research be conducted to study the "double-entendre" characteristic of the Chinese news media, that is, to study the way the Chinese media use to get their messages across through hints or insinuations under the totalitarian rule of the communist regime. Before China achieves its free press system, it might be of some significance to investigate the effectiveness of such strategies and tactics adopted by the Chinese journalists and to find out to what extent such methods of journalism help inform the public.

In conclusion, this study points out that the current press system in China cannot meet the demands of the people for truthful and timely information, and thus it will not be able to help promote economic and political reforms in Chinese society. Therefore, the study concludes that a reform of the press system must be carried out to enable the Chinese people to enjoy their fundamental rights of free speech and free press. As the first step toward social change, journalism reform will play an important role in enlightening the Chinese population of its sense of democracy.

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