A Class Struggle special supplement, Summer 1989

CHINA

BUILDING DEMOCRACY?

INSIDE...
'cs' comment letters
what the M-L papers say
'we stand by the chinese people'

20p
The last issue of Class Struggle was published in London before the tragic events of May 3rd and 4th in Beijing.

In the Saturday night of that week, the Chinese students, workers and the People's Liberation Army (PLA) were ordered to crush the democracy movement and the demonstration outside of Tiananmen Square, with force where necessary. Through the night and the following day, the PLA shot at all and ran against the student demonstrators and the people who supported the students.

During the following days, mass protests took place in most other major cities in China and were also met with force.

Hundreds of arrests have been made. Some people have been tried and shot, and others are exiled and put in underground and are being hunted.

Within the Chinese Communist Party, it seems that the struggle for democracy and the development of the democracy movement has been provoked by the Party, which treats it as a counter-revolutionary movement aimed at overthrowing the party and state. Zhao Ziyang, who advocated the necessity of the imposition of martial law and the suppression of the student movement, has been sacked from his post as party secretary.

In the short-term, it is clear that the democracy movement has a long way to go. The official justification by the CPC and the PLA that the party and state were facing a revolutionary attempt to overthrow the socialist society in China, instigated by foreign agents. But outside mainland China, this version of events is not widely believed.

There are, of course, those who are making a constant effort to broadcast, and no doubt exaggerate, the numbers killed, arrested, and the suffering of people in American and British embassies and residences, all to condemning socialism in China. The CPC try to condemn democracy and human rights. Yet it is their imperialist system that underpins the denial of these same rights to millions of people around the world.

Similarly, the Trotskyist left in Britain is using every means to denigrate the Chinese, they have been right all along. They do not believe that any revolution whose main support comes from the police and the PLA is progressive and have always condemned the violence and counter-revolutionaries, they have issued to see to follow no set rule, book fashion - witness Russian, French, American and Western agents. These things as infallible. What I have is firm evidence there were the Communist Party leaders being very much against those who were sent in (unarmed at first) a large group of troops sent in to Tiananmen Square to test the effect of the open door policy and the extent to which the international press system has gained a foothold.

We are not in a position to quote yet essentially these issues. We have to make it a high priority to study and understand the movement in the forthcoming period.

Some points should be made now:

1. The democracy movement is not simply an army against only among students but among the working classes, students and workers of China. Support was particularly strong among workers and student workers in the PLA. There was also a strong movement in the CPC itself and in the PLA. Support for the democracy movement is growing, including students from mass movements. Progressive organisations in China exist which have many years defended socialist China, including trade unions, newspaper press, and workers' movements, and have condemned the violent suppression of the democracy movement.

2. Such support was based on the two central demands of the movement: for democracy and against corruption. These demands are clearly stated without socialist and reflected a desire for better socialist democracy and not quickly for the few practices.

3. There were clearly anti-communist elements in the democracy movement. These were the students of the famous universities, those who consciously planned to disrupt socialism China. And in the hope that this would end in illusions about democracy in China.

However, the broad support for the democracy movement meant that the PLA would not be able to hand down to any" with the effect. The implementation of martial law and the violent suppression of the movement can resolve these contradictions. It can only be done within the mass movement away from the party and state. We join with all other progressive forces in condemning the use of force against unarmed students and workers in the other cities of China.

3. The CPC will only believe in the present crisis if it makes a serious re-appraisal of recent events. This requires an open door policy policy, and the present crisis can be done in a way that links between the official and the public, and not only until the party has been seen opening itself up to media criticism.

We are not confident that the Chinese people will, in the long-term, overcome any setbacks and continue the road to a socialist society.

Dear Editor,

Regarding the events in China recently, my opinion is that there are no political or counter-revolutionaries, they have been seen to follow no set rule, book fashion - witness Russian, French, American and Western agents. These things as infallible. What I have is firm evidence there were the Communist Party leaders being very much against those who were sent in (unarmed at first) a large group of troops sent in to Tiananmen Square to test the effect of the open door policy and the extent to which the international press system has gained a foothold.

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We are not confident that the Chinese people will, in the long-term, overcome any setbacks and continue the road to a socialist society.

The CPC no longer uphold the criticism it produced during the ideological struggle between the ideological tendency of revisionism within the communist movement, and the genuine Marxist-Leninist current of thought. This is not only a part of a line, but also an argument in favor of the CPC's policies in China.

Dear Editor,

Last month's editorial touched on the normalization of Sino-Soviet relations. This has happened. How can we explain this event that of state-to-state relations and the normalization of Sino-Soviet relations? By avoiding any assessment of the extent of normalization of Sino-Soviet relations in their past strained relations.

The lesson is drawn out in the editorial that "no organization can go back to its past line of another". But it is a lesson that is relevant to the politics of going to practice, or is it going to,publish any public comments on the question of changing reality?

London North readers

(Letters are intended to make a distinction between the two parts of the question. It is not discussed in this letter. While welcoming improved state-to-state relations between the Soviet Union and China, it made it clear that this does not mean that the West considers the Soviet Union to be a reformed or non-socialist country. We have still to work through these changes more...)

Dear Editor,

This is yours, as well as ours. But in the last analysis, small group, full of vigour and vitality, are in the bloom of life, and full of energy, to shine in the morning. Our hope is that the world will come to know that the Mao Zedong, November 1957.

For the past weeks, those famous words of Mao have been ringing in my ears. And particularly since the June 4th massacre of students and workers in Tiananmen Square and surrounding areas, thatchers in Beijing, the government of China. No echoes of foreign attacks have been silenced, if not remembered by those murderers of the Chinese youth and I weep. As a writer, I express my anger and frustration at the collapse of the socialist system in China.

Gorbachev admitted that the Soviet Union made mistakes regarding the two countries. The bilateral relations between the Soviet Union and China still had some different views.

The Chinese leadership was less forthcoming and the West restricted itself to saying: 'Remember the past'. This is not enough. This reflects a general stance whereby the Communist Party is no longer capable of providing solutions and denunciation of other communist parties as "revisionist" are to be treated as historical issues, not dealt with in a forward-looking manner by disregarding trifling details.

Western Country reader
From "Unity," paper of the League of Revolutionary Struggle:

In Commentary, in the issue of 14 June, 1989, "Unity" reported:

On June 4th, troops of the 27th Army of the People's Liberation Army, backed by artillery fire and supported by tanks and helicopters, overran the University of Beijing. The government was determined to crush the students' movement. The students, workers and intellectuals who had been engaged in political activity had been arrested or forcibly removed in the mass arrests. And in most cases their lives were threatened or even lost.

The situation in Beijing in the past two months has kept developing from campus upheaval to the city and then to the country. The disturbances of various degrees have also occurred in some other cities. After the government took drastic measures, the result was quietly put down. Social order was restored and the political situation is now stable.

Unity 26-27, 13 June 1989
WE STAND BY THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S REVOLUTION

contribute

Springtime in China was the spreading of a popular movement in the People's Republic of China against corruption and an end to corruption. The movement was led by students, supported by intellectuals, and spread rapidly throughout the country. It was a spontaneous outburst of popular anger against corruption and inefficiency.

The popular movement was the result of a growing sense of frustration among the Chinese people. The government had become increasingly corrupt, and the economy was faltering. The movement began in January 1989, when students and intellectuals in Beijing and other cities organized protests to demand greater political freedom and an end to corruption and inefficiency.

The movement was a significant event in Chinese history. It was the first large-scale popular movement in China since the 1949 revolution, and it highlighted the growing dissatisfaction with the government among the Chinese people.

The movement was brutally crushed by the People's Liberation Army (PLA), which was shipped into Beijing from other parts of China. Over 2,000 people were killed, and many thousands were injured. The PLA印花了 students and intellectuals, and the movement was crushed.

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Chinese students and the Chinese communities in Britain have been unanimous in their condemnation of the June 4th massacre. A continuous picket was organised outside the embassy in the days following the attack on the democracy movement. Protests were made by Chinese people who have firmly supported the People's Republic over the years and they were among those who joined thousands of others in a protest march in London on June 11th. The great majority of that march of around 10,000 people were Chinese. There was quite a contrast between most of the British left marchers, who came from Trotskyist groups, and the Chinese. The former chanted slogans about "Stalinism" and some called for "Workers' Soviets Now" and other such kinds of silliness. Most of the Chinese slogans expressed sorrow for those killed and support for their demands.

One British protestor interviewed on television (no doubt for his anti-communist views), said: "There are Communist Party members here. But they have come to spy." In fact, there were members of the Communist Party of China there who had come to protest.

One party supporter said bitterly: "We have to forget that this is the country we loved. Deng Xiaoping has changed it all for us." Another told 'Class Struggle' simply: "The Communist Party is no longer a communist party."