

Tian'an men Diary

Original transcription from handwritten notebooks, as typed by the author, Fall 2008

By Karen Linnea Searle

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The following is excerpted from the journal I kept while I was a student at a university in Beijing in spring 1989. I arrived in Beijing in early January, and left on May 31, four days before the June 4 crackdown in Tian'an men Square. The names of my Chinese friends have been changed, but the events are all as I witnessed them.

—Karen Linnea Searle
October 21, 2008

4/22/89

Today was the funeral of Hu Yaobang. I had made plans to go down to Tian'an men this morning to watch with various people at various times. In the end for some reason I left notes for everyone and went down by myself. I ran into another 'foreigner' and we rode together to the Square. Getting to Tian'an men was not easy, there were various road blocks and such, but we made it down to Qianmen. My friend had to leave before they opened up the Square.

After she left, I got a bit lost and ended up at the Kentucky Fried Chicken (please forgive me). When the Square was opened, I wandered around for a while and ended up smack in the middle of things, not where I intended to be... It was pretty scary there for a little while. People would start running. I had visions of stampedes. There were so many people!

I asked a few people what was going on and had various responses. In truth nobody could really see. There were hundreds of policemen outside the Great Hall of The People and the students were standing outside and shouting. I'm not sure what they were shouting – probably asking the government to resign. After that I decided that the periphery was probably a far better place to be so I wandered around towards the Memorial to the Revolutionary Martyrs.

Hu Yaobang died last Saturday. He left office two years ago, but still is/was in many ways the symbol of political change for many of the intellectuals and students. So the students have taken advantage of the situation to criticize the government -- call for more democracy, call for the resignation of the whole government. Some of their demands are more realistic than others I suppose – but it's not clear that any of it is going to do any good. I agree that the government has made mistakes in the area of education in the past ten years, and they know that. I just can't see how they are ever going to manage to reform it. Where is the money ever going to come from?

But what seems most amazing for me this week is not the activities at Tian 'anmen, but what's been going on around me. This week -- last Tuesday to be exact, Elise asked her class at the hotel where we teach, to write an essay on the following topic: "A Conversation between Mao Zedong and Deng Xiao Ping in Heaven". I thought it was a great topic and the essays were just brilliant -- One had Mao coming out to greet Deng -- to inform Deng that he, Mao, was now a porter in a hotel in

heaven. It was a wonderful essay. Most of them were pretty boring, but good fun. WELL! What a scandal that has turned into! The Chinese staff at the Center is up in arms -- Elise had to call the Personnel Manager at the Hotel to explain to him that it was just a writing assignment. My students today told me that they have all been told that if the foreign teachers ask them questions about politics, they should not answer the questions, but instead change the subject.

What really irks me is that the Management would never say something to us like, "Don't ask political questions," instead they tell the students not to answer questions. All this talk was going on about Elise's essay -- everybody knew about it -- the students in all three classes (mine too), the class masters, all the local teachers and the hotel staff, everybody except Elise!

The only reason it got back to Elise is that her supervisor wanted an explanation from her in case he had to do some explaining to someone else at some point. There is just a wall beyond which one cannot pass -- not even Elise -- who is an overseas Chinese and looks Chinese. That's the thing that's so daunting about thinking about working and living in China -- no matter how good my Chinese became, I would spend the vast majority of my time not knowing what was going on.

April 26, 1989

The students called a general strike of classes on Monday, an indefinite boycott to be ended when the government gives in to their demands. I still can't figure out exactly what they want, but they seem to be most concerned about official corruption and the pointlessness of education -- i.e., no jobs, low salaries for educated people, that kind of thing. Anyway, when I went out yesterday after class, there were leaflets everywhere saying, "Chinese People: What are you going to do?" It was a call for Chinese people to support the students in their actions.

All along the street there were clumps of people -- standing, trying to listen to the words of students who were speaking, explaining, and relating the events that had occurred outside the Great Hall of the People on Friday night and Saturday. They were explaining it because the newspapers had not. I was/am very impressed by the coordination of the students. Apparently, they have organized a citywide council of the student leaders -- all of this leading up to May 4th. It's an exciting time in Beijing.

May 4 1989!

We got back to Beijing around 6:00 and I promptly went to sleep for a few hours. At around 11:00, or even before, I found Tony and had coffee with him and we decided to head on down for the demonstration -- here I've become so blase about demonstrations! The students must be too -- God knows how many times they've marched down to Tian'an men in the last couple weeks. It was an amazing scene down there -- I found it to be much more exciting than Hu Yao Bang's funeral. I don't know why, perhaps because I didn't feel any of the panic I felt before -- things were not well controlled on the April 22nd.

Today there were tens of thousands of students and probably a few hundred thousand onlookers in Tian'an men alone, but it was extremely well organized -- and, yes, very exciting. The air simply

crackled at the moment that the students marched into the Square. They walked in -- holding banners high in the air with a look of confidence and triumph in their eyes. The onlookers -- masses of them -- cheered the students on, which made the students walk even taller, shout even louder.

It was an exciting experience. I was also amazed at the government's response to the demonstration.

They did make a feeble attempt (according to other students here) at blocking off some of the roads to the students, but when the students pushed through the lines of policemen standing three people thick, the crowds roared with approval and the police simply backed off. Apparently, there was some violence at certain points in the day, or in the morning, but there wasn't a policeman in sight, anywhere in Tian `an men. The government did the best conceivable thing, which was to let the students freely enter the Square. The students marched, the onlookers cheered, but that was all -- no confrontations -- no blockades and no violence at all in the Square itself. The students stayed until about 4:00 and then left to march back to their respective schools.

Once again, it was when I was on my own that I could begin to absorb all of the feelings -- the atmosphere around me. Here begins the adventure. This was a little after 5:00. I ended up getting back at 9:00!! My first mistake -- well, actually, there were two mistakes. The first was to try to leave from the south end of the Square, and the second - and most serious - was to leave after the students. Every road was blocked off. I hadn't had a lot of sleep the night before, so I decided to get a taxi back. I spent 45 minutes in the taxi and we went nowhere -- maybe two subway stops. He finally told me he didn't really need my money so I just got out. I went down into the subway stop and it was absolutely jammed.

I decided to walk north on foot, perhaps to find a taxi somewhere north ChangAn Jie, so off I went. I made it to the next large intersection, which I only later realized was ChangAn, and had to wait there for a half an hour or so before the intersection was clear enough to walk across. But at this point I really didn't care. The weather was gorgeous, and I kept myself going by bouncing from Popsicle stand to Popsicle stand. Somehow, though, to my amazement, I ended up in Xi Dan. I'd never been there before, but it didn't take me long to figure out. I stopped to ask directions and ended up getting pointed to a W2 bus, but after some more reconnoitering; I found that the bus went to the zoo, so I decided to get a taxi from the Xi Yuan Hotel. Well, when we looked up the street where the Xi Yuan was (albeit a great deal south of the Xi Yuan) the bus ran into a group of students - so I got off to go march along side them, to see what that part was like. I did have an interesting conversation in the bus with two students from some government school -- cagey -- they did not want to talk to me about the demonstrations. Very interesting to see them squirm.

And what did I think of the demonstration? Well, not for me to say -- I'm simply an observer, not a participant, because it's not my country.

Joining the students marching back was by far the most interesting thing I did all day. The students marched down the middle of the road, with the bicycle lane full of people accompanying them. The side of the road was lined with people watching, clapping as the students went by. The windows of the passing buses were filled with faces - sometimes smiling, sometimes just staring. But in every bus there would be people leaning out the windows, clapping for the students, cheering them on, supporting them. The students would respond with smiles and with hands held up in the air,

obviously deriving energy from the crowds, as much as the crowds derived energy from the students.

The next day . . . May 5, 1989.

Taught class today. I tried to explain slogans to them. I launched into a discussion of Kentucky Fried Chicken's "finger lickin' good." They all thought I was crazy! I guess in a culture where it's easy to get sick, they don't lick their fingers. Some things just don't translate.

May 6, 1989.

Tony and I went to visit Mr. Chang. We had a nice talk - although I was speaking cloudy, fuzzy Chinese - happens every so often. We talked all about the student uprising. Chang agrees that the government did remarkably well by letting the students into the Square, by not resisting or arresting any students. The government was playing with fire, and they must have known it. It was a quiet demonstration, but with the slightest provocation the students might have been off. But the Chinese government couldn't handle that right now - couldn't risk it - especially with the meetings being held inside the Great Hall of the People at the same time!!

But apparently the students are pretty satisfied now and they are going to start going to class, as Chang explained it, the students criticized and yelled slogans and whatever, and the government said, "Yes, you're right, we're sorry and will promise to change," what could the students do except give in?

Of course if no changes happen in the next year, I'm sure they'll be out again, but so far this is nothing like the '86 riots/demonstrations. No sacrificial heads have fallen. There has been no visible crack-down, and maybe I do have to wait to see the foreign press reports. But as far as I can tell - with my extremely limited access to knowledge about what's really going on, it seems to have done some good, and now to be dying down.

May 8, 1989

It's another day - two days since I last wrote. I've heard all sorts of things since then. Xiao Mei (my Chinese friend) told me all about the student demonstrations. It was amazing listening to her; according to her, every time she turned around someone else was crying, sometimes from shame, sometimes out of anger. I guess it was a fairly moving experience for all who attended.

Apparently, student representatives from here or from the unofficial students' union came here and called all the students together. Then they spoke to the students and allowed the students to vote on their actions.

The students here agreed boycott classes, and then agreed to attend and march in the April 27, demonstration. Apparently that was the big day - all the students were warned not to attend but did anyway. Apparently, that was the turning point. There were too many students for the government to ignore. According to her and according to what I saw, other Beijing residents supported the

students by clapping, by giving them bread, ice cream and soft drinks. According to Professor Zhu, the cynic, the people were only giving stuff to the students because they wanted to keep the entertainment going. Anyway, it did all fizzle out with Zhao Ziyang's words. What else can the students do?

May 10, 1989

I read an amazing sentence yesterday. Listen! From Vikram Seth's *From Heaven Lake* "Increasingly of late and particularly when I drink, I find my thoughts drawn into the past rather than impelled into the future. I recall drinking sherry in California and dreaming of my earlier student days in England, when I ate dalmoth and dreamed of Delhi. What is the purpose, I wonder, of all this restlessness? I sometimes seem to myself to wander around the world merely accumulating material for future nostalgias."

I had another conversation/tutorial with Zhu the cynic today. Actually, he's fairly refreshing. He's not all caught up in the seriousness of it all, and can freely laugh at the fact that all the newspapers' journalists are going to resign and that all the newspapers are going to be filled with advertisements and nothing else! I was amused at that too, to tell the truth. The funniest thing is that it probably wouldn't affect their circulation at all.

He also broke down the whole struggle of the Chinese intellectuals into the fact that they are being buffeted between the two extremes -- two extremes that they've been buffeted between since the Ming Dynasty (at least since Confucius, anyway). I can't quite read his writing, but the first attests to the uselessness of knowledge and the second to the riches that can be gotten through knowledge. Historically, Chinese intellectuals have been buffeted back and forth between those extremes. The students are rebelling because they are uncertain of what the current situation is. They want to protect their rights as intellectuals.

You know? I used to think that in getting an understanding of the situation in China today, it is sufficient to start at 1949 - okay, 1911 and work up. But that's wrong. The country and the people are still the same, have the same history. I am going to have to start back further. Zhu agreed. When I expressed this to him, he said that what was important was to trace the intellectual history of the country. Seeing what changes have come and how outside influences have affected changes within China, or not affected changes. So my new challenge -- only 5,000 years to catch up on!

May 15

Scene has changed now drastically! I'm at the Hotel Shangri-La at 8:30 a.m. about to have a lovely cup of coffee. Now that I don't have class, I've got to keep myself busy somehow, so I thought an early morning ride -- ah! That first sip! Heaven and Earth! -- Would be just the thing and the loop around down to the Shangri-La and back by the Olympic is a nice ride. I thought the Shanghai would be a bit livelier than it is and it's quite empty. Everybody must be out at the airport waiting for Gorbachev to arrive.

Yes! It's true. He's on his way to China even as we speak, even as I write. Yes, it certainly is an interesting time to be in China.

Yesterday I went down to Tian `an men with Li Qiu and Da Wei just to see what was going on. The students are on to something new now. A mass hunger strike on the Square. When it started Saturday afternoon, by the time we got there, they'd been fasting for 26 hours. I don't envy them although the temperature wasn't all that high; in the direct sun it was awfully hot. And for Chinese to fast! The culture that lives for its food, it's fairly serious.

The news reported this morning that several students had fainted. Forty-eight hours isn't a long time for a fast, but these aren't the healthiest of human beings to begin with. The scene at Tian`an men was very different than before. There were far fewer people than from either of the previous demonstrations and they were all gathered in clumps. As far as I could understand, they were relating details of the previous night's discussions. The Mayor of Beijing, accompanied I believe, by a member of The Secretariat, came to the Square at around 2:00 a.m. to try to convince the students to leave.

The students, it seems are past listening to anyone, so they stayed in the Square surrounded by the glare of the television cameras! The students are fortunate in their timing surrounding all of this -- it really is quite incredible. First, the Hu Yao Bang dies just two weeks before May 4th, so there is a reason to continue to protest that long. And now, just 11 days after May 4th, here comes Gorbachev! China has been in the world's eye as never before.

According to the radio this morning, the students have agreed not to disrupt Sino Soviet Summit with their protests, but if there are protests, if they continue the hunger strike, how can they help but disrupt the proceedings. Or, even if the proceedings are not "disrupted" in the literal sense, the protests will certainly form a back drop to the entire summit, which is certainly to be exploited by all the foreign journalists covering the event.

I can already hear Dan Rather saying, Gorbachev arrived today in China to begin his four day historic visit. Meanwhile hundreds of Beijing students continue their hunger strike in Tian`an men Square in protest of the government unwillingness to grant their demands, etc. Gorbachev could not be eclipsed, but it's certainly not a scene in a time that the Chinese government can be the least bit pleased with.

I read an interesting article in the Far Eastern Wall Street Journal. As early as April 24, Deng Xiao Ping was ready to violently suppress the student protests. In an editorial, written by him in a speech at the summit signaling the Party reaction to the demonstration was released on the 24th or 25th calling for suppression of the protests. Hinting that they were being led by counter revolutionary bourgeois rightists, etc. in words not heard since the Cultural Revolution. His plans went so far as to warn local hospitals to expect many casualties on the 27th, the day of the protests.

Many students including my friend Xiao Mei, wrote out their wills the night before out of fear of what might happen. But, it seems that Deng was over ruled by other high-ranking cadres, convinced the Politburo members in charge of the PLA and Beijing Police, not to use force on the

students. Thank God they did. Beijing -- no -- China would be a very different place right now had the uprisings been violently suppressed.

To the Beijing Spring continues! The students continue to fast, and according to Mei Mei, are once again going to boycott classes. Although according to Xiao Mei, the mood is very different now. Of course, most students, notably the ones in Tian'an men right now, are as convinced as ever. But I can't help but feel that the movement has lost its momentum. If it weren't for Gorbachev, probably nothing would be going on right now. Yesterday it was announced that the intellectuals of Beijing (not just the students) would march in Tian'an men today starting at 2:00 from Fu Xing men.

That certainly has the potential of being an enormous demonstration, but I agree with Xiao Mei that it will be fairly small. That possibly only a few thousand people will attend. I think that's just as well. The government can't possibly allow hundreds of thousands of people to march in Tian'an men. Not today with the cameras of the world trained in that very spot. If there aren't many people, they would be able to prevent them from marching in the Square and probably prevent them from even reaching Fu Xing men.

Well, all that's left is to watch TV this evening -- see what happens. This is one demonstration I think I can miss. It's just too close for comfort. Li Qiu asked me yesterday if this were my country, would I go. I think I would. I think it's an important issue, although if the truth be known, I've actually lost the thread of what this is all about. What the students really want. But, if they were making demands that are answerable, I think that forcing the government to answer them is a good thing and an important thing. The government has to do something about the endless official abuses of power that go on here and abroad, and the status of intellectuals, that is if they want any of them to stay here. And the third point? Freedom of the press. Probably one of the trickiest. The government has to understand of course -- does understand the power of the press. It's toppled more than one government in recent years.

May 16, 1989 11:45 a.m.

On Chang An Jie just to the west of the Great Wall of the People without a camera. All that is left is to describe the scene with words. To create images. To my left hanging over Chan An street are rows of small flags. Decoration, no doubt for Gorbachev's visit. The colors alternated. The first being pure red, the next rows of various colors -- pink, blue, yellow, red, green.

There are people everywhere. The students march past in long groups of three or four across. The boys dressed in light windbreakers -- blue pants, black pants. The girls, some of them in skirts, brightly colored, carrying bags full of water, salt, sugar, fortifications for Thursday. Now they stop, waiting perhaps for others to catch up. The next group arrives, chanting slogans with a banner. One student instructs the others. Directs them to a certain place.

Everyone around them stares, workers, probably a few intellectuals. They carry a copy of today's newspaper with its back cover full of pictures of the demonstrations. One student rides past on his bike holding up the newspaper for all on the side to see.

The square is jammed with people. The focus of attention is the large circle surrounding the student hunger strikers. The lines of people surround the circle, trying to peer in. In the circle very quiet, subdued, students sit in the blazing heat of the sun, water bottles next to them. Some lean over to talk with friends, but most sit quietly - on their faces is a mixture of boredom and defiance, a complete oblivion to the scene around them.

Behind me is a line of policemen looking serious, but carrying no weapons. They form a line to prevent people from entering the street, standing shoulder to shoulder, but not at attention - relaxed.

Two lines form, forming a pathway in the road. An ambulance drives through the middle, carrying students and all the students and onlookers on each side clap as the ambulance drives through. Suddenly, the lines melt and the students continue the march. Hearing another ambulance, the third in the space of a minute, the lines form again. By the Great Hall of the People, hundreds of people gather on the steps. They are alternately chanting slogans - for the benefit of whom? Is Gorbachev inside? Whenever clapping begins, streams of people rush up the stairs. The clapping stops and people come down the stairs. Nothing is static, in any direction.

Students - no, probably workers stream past. There is a lull in the students marching past - another scream of applause from the Hall. Two women stop to watch me write. The policemen continue to mill about, keeping their approximate places, but leaning to one side or the other to talk to the other policemen. Another cry, more applause. Chang an is quiet now. The students have stopped coming -- time to move to a different spot!

May 16, 1989
12:00 noon

Now I am directly in front of the Great Hall of the People. The students have formed a column for the moving ambulances - only students. A few run back and forth ordering people to leave; to me, though, they ask politely that I move. The students look around, talk to each other, and eat Popsicles - looking serious, tense. An old man walks by with a long beard, holding signs. The students applaud him as he passes.

Behind me two men are standing on a cart. They watch me, and ask me what I'm writing. I explain that I am writing what I see - in the absence of a camera, I write. They respond with a nod, telling me that I speak Chinese well. More students, workers, and peasants stream by. Every class of Chinese people. I try to pass through the crowd, to cross over to Tian 'an men, but the way is blocked. A group of students, also hoping to pass, are forced to abandon their bikes and they go back to park them.

Meanwhile, the chanting in front of the Great Hall grows louder and louder - three hundred yards away, the sound is still loud, although I don't know who is inside, nor what they are shouting.

It's been one month now since this started, and it strikes me that this is a movement that has fed on itself, more than any particular issue involved. At first, when Hu Yao Bang died, the issues involved promoting democracy, clearing Hu Yao Bang's name. However, the next large

demonstration - the 27th - the principle issues changed. Of course the calls for democracy and freedom continued, but now the students were protesting the government's reporting of the events of the 22nd.

On the 4th, the issues were again brought into play, but the main issues continued to be the student demand that the government admit that the students were *right* to protest on the 22nd and on the 27th, not merely "good", as Zhao Zi Yang has admitted, but "right." Now - the demands of the students now have to do with this same issue. The government must agree that the students are correct.

The signs everywhere now, though, rather than calling for democracy are talking about the hunger strike. I asked Xiao Mei repeatedly yesterday, "What does the government have to do to get the students to eat, to break the hunger strike?" Two points. They have to say the students are right, and they have to initiate a dialogue with the students on equal footing. But how? The first is a concrete task, but the second is so subjective! The government has been holding talks with student representatives for two days now, but from all accounts the students are not convinced that it is on equal footing. But how can it be? (Another ambulance goes past)

But again, the easiest part of all of this for me is that I continue to go to Tian 'an men day after day. I see the conviction of the students, watch the crowds at Tian 'an men swell as more and more people come to watch, to tacitly support the students, merely by adding their bodies to the scene. But never, not since the 22nd, have I felt any presence of the government! Where are they? Are they watching? Listening? Of course they are, they must be, but how would anyone know?

12:40

It's a surreal scene. In front of me is a large circle containing a few fasting students, lying on the ground under sheets. Now I see a band! Playing music, marching music on the side of Tian 'an men, people are listening, clapping! Holding up cameras over their heads to take pictures of scenes they cannot see, with doctors and nurses sitting around them. A disturbing scene.

Meanwhile, students, young men two -- 20, 22, usher people past explaining the situation, but forcefully moving people past. It strikes me that the students are so well organized and are behaving extremely responsibly. They have control of the situation. They have created it. It is their show.

Right now the Association of Writers is going past. Someone here explains to me that all people support this movement -- the first since liberation -- the writers go past singing a song about freedom, with all onlookers clapping.

Another worker has stopped to talk to me. He asks me if I support the students. I ask him the same. He says, "It's not just me, it's all of us - it's something in our hearts that we cannot say." He was quiet, looked up at me and said, "40 years."

Now a group of maybe 20 has gathered around. They ask if my country has this kind of movement. "Of course." Does the government interfere? "No." They are all men. Two women look on from a distance. People tire and walk away.

Two women - young girls - walk by, one in a tight yellow mini skirt, the other in black - going to a protest?

Members of the Academy of Social Sciences were approaching; again the people clap as they pass. Another group passes by -- they aren't students, they are older. The clapping grows and grows. People in their 30's, 40's, more signs than I could count, shouting slogans, march past.

All of a sudden, a banner appears. My companions look at me; excitedly tell me that it's workers! Probably the first ones. Everyone runs forward. Seeing workers striking adds a new element. It has spread, it's not just students, it is academics, perhaps some workers, even if only a few, of course the significance far overshadows the numbers. Someone in a PLA uniform wanders casually past, holding hands with his girlfriend, smiling.

2:15

I'm getting tired. I think everyone else is getting tired too. Now a breeze is blowing, a few seconds respite from the heat. But how do the students do it? They've been out here for days! The afternoon headache is creeping over me. I've parked myself in one of the road blocks now, using my bike as an improvised desk. I think I'm close to achieving oneness with my bike here. It seems I'm on it all day, every day. Such a wonderful means of transport.

Things do seem to have quieted down, since I ducked into the Beijing Hotel for some food. I feel a little -- what's the word . . . odd eating while all the students are striking. But once again, it isn't my country.

4:45

It's like a county fair out here. I say this after consuming my third popsicle today. Observation #873, people selling popsicles must be making a fortune. Anyway, was I wrong -- it has not in the least bit quieted down. In fact, it's like a parade!

Organization after organization keeps parading by! The biggest draw so far has been The Chinese Women's Magazine. (Another ambulance) Some Hong Kong University organization and some of the more popular newspapers. They've blocked off both sides of Chang An Jie. It's only people. I have no idea what's happening in the Square itself. I haven't been over there, but it is beginning to have a holiday like atmosphere here. They are right to call this the "Beijing Spring".

Since I last left you, I've been having an amazingly free-ranging discussion on almost everything under the sun. We talked about Chinese politics, American politics, demonstrating, police reaction, government reaction, interesting people, and an ever changing cast. The only problem was that

whenever I opened my mouth, particularly when it was on a political topic, a crowd would gather. So I would shut up for a while and wait for everyone to go away.

I'm sitting under a tree right now. Thank God there's a little shade somewhere. There's a little girl here, who wasn't able to wait, so, down she went. I guess the tree needed a little extra watering anyway.

And more ambulances!

My first conversation with a Chinese reporter, and some tough questions too. If there were this kind of demonstration in America, what would the government do? If there was a student demonstration, would Bush open a dialogue, on equal footing, with the students?

If there was a hunger strike, would the government send ambulances? Take care of the strikers??

Extremely tough questions. What did I say? That the government doesn't do anything when there is a demonstration, that Bush would never have a dialogue on equal terms with the students. That organizations would take care of the hunger striking students, not necessarily the government. Was I right? I don't know. But it does strike me as absurd that the students expect the government to open up a dialogue on equal terms. How can they? What are students? They are young kids! I think I just dashed this reporter's hopes - but it's time. I can't imagine Bush ever opening up a dialogue with students; even if he did, the decision would be his.

Oh, sometimes I wish my Chinese were a lot better than it is. I wanted to explain -- tried to explain, that we elect representatives - we elect them to make decisions for us. We can advise, but that's what they are elected to do - make decisions.

But here they don't elect people. The people in power have assumed power, but say they are part of the people. In that sense, maybe the people do have the right to demand dialogues with the government. We've given up that right, or maybe the right is assumed by the way we elect our government. One tough question. This one is going to take some brooding.

5:45 and it's a lovely evening!

People are still streaming past. There's been no visible break in the hours that I've been sitting here. The students/doctors/professors/ reporters still march past, in smaller groups, 10, sometimes 20, chanting slogans with smiles on their faces.

People that I've spoken to seem to be most incensed that the government hasn't said anything at all; apart from saying they couldn't broadcast the foreign news because of technical problems. They just haven't responded. One the radio this morning the reporter said the government was putting the student requests on the agenda . . . Great Response. Not exactly aimed toward creating an atmosphere of good will!

8:00

I was looking for food, but I neglected to remember that Zhong Nan Hai was right smack in the center, and virtually impassable. It was the liveliest place I had seen all day. Chang An was packed with people, demonstrating, marching past in both directions (changing shifts) with a whole slew of people and bikes stuffed in between. Those in front of the gates, hanging out of trees, standing on bikes, were alternately chanting slogans and clapping loudly. There's no other word for it -- it was just exciting!!

9:00 p.m.

What a scene! I'm in the crowd on the east side of Tian'an men. It's just grown dark and there are thousands of people everywhere. The students have formed a path for the ambulances which keep rushing back and forth. What a back drop to this scene and the constant sound of the sirens, the ambulances flying back and forth occasionally with doctors on bicycles. The crowd claps in support as they rush past. Never in my life have I seen so many people!

9:15

I'm still in the crowd about half way up now. I just climbed on one of the carts to see the whole scene. It's amazing. There are people everywhere. A sea of heads, flags, banners in every direction as far as I can see. The most striking thing is, that ever direction I look, I see every kind of person. Young, old, in suits, in jeans, in jogging outfits. And children. So many children! Babies! Obviously people aren't afraid.

May 17, 1989

This morning I had coffee at the Olympic, and when I was coming out, I saw a whole group of students with huge balloons with characters written on them. Leading them was an open bedded truck with probably 15 crammed on it. Well, I couldn't resist. I leaped on the bike and took off! It turns out they were professors at the Beijing Meteorological Institute. I guess that's where the balloons came from.

I was hijacked, so to speak, by another attractive young man, this time wanting to practice his English. Today I didn't mind. In fact, it was a relief to have a conversation when I didn't have to concentrate so hard. I walked the way down with them right in the middle.

There go my future visas to China! I can't help but to think that the government has more pressing concerns right now than foreigners accompanying students demonstrating along the Chang an, but who knows. At one point the road was packed on both sides by spectators with only room for five or six across. I was slinking along on the side, trying to make myself as inconspicuous as possible. The person in front of me was carrying a sign and carrying on a constant dialogue with the spectators. They were laughing and he would say "hao bu hao?" they would all say "hao le!" Meaning, roughly, "How's it going?" "Its great!"

It's an amazing atmosphere here today. More like a county fair than I've ever seen. According to Zhang, this is the big day and group after group keeps entering the Square. Shouting, and carrying

fairly inflammatory slogans but with smiles on their faces, being greeted by applause, more smiles, laughter.

The sky is perfectly clear, hot, but beautiful with a gentle breeze. Flags and banners are everywhere. The flag poles in front of the movement are filled with banners, signs of all different colors, giving the whole scene color and life.

The institutes/units/schools have all put enormous amounts of effort into their banners. There are drums, tape recordings of the Internationale. The Opera Institute students just pass by singing traditional Chinese songs with beautifully clear voices.

It's all so ironic. The city is all decorated. Chang An is draped from head to foot with beautiful flags blowing about. The government put them up to add beauty when the motorcade carrying Gorbachev drives up and down Chang An.

But now! Chang An is blocked. Only people and bicycles could fit. The motorcade has been relegated back to the futongs (alley ways) and the decoration is now all for the benefit of the protesters. Not what the government intended.

Later on May 17, 1989

There are far too many people!! Tian `an men is PACKED. Chang An and all the streets around are packed. Workers, middle school students, reporters, doctors, teachers, EVERYONE is here!

When I left Tian `an men at 2:00, there were marchers backed up from Tian `an men to Xi Zhi men, with throngs of supporters lining the roads all the way. On the overpass at Xi zhi men. People were hanging over the railings crammed in to the stairs clapping shouting on the marchers. Everyone is on bikes now, at least as far as they can go! I saw at least two commandeered city buses careening down the road. A flag with characters written on it in the front. It looked as if the bus was following the flag down the street.

People - again- people of all description. Clapping, shouting, urging the demonstrators on. And the signs! LiQiu would read them and exclaim `ay ya!' I know it is shocking and still no sign of police ANYWHERE. Today's marchers included Security Bureau workers - IN UNIFORM! Young pioneers - The Youth Party members! PARTY MEMBERS!

It really is as if everything that had been inside these people for fifty years has come bursting forth in one breath! A breath that grows stronger and bolder with every minute that passes.

Almost 7:00 Back at the Square again.

To say that the atmosphere here is infectious would be the understatement of the century! It's sizzling - frothing over - building and building in itself.

The sun is almost two thirds down behind a cloud on the horizon. The sky is a dusty blue. Mao's Mausoleum is clearly outlined. So static, unmovable, almost in total contrast to the movement and color on every side. It almost appears to be standing in defiance - watching the scene, frowning upon the scene, isolated.

Demonstrators continue to walk past in the background as the sound of more and more ambulances carrying off students who have fainted – 700 at last count, but that was from noon today. How many more have been added since then?

To my left a group of students had been sitting, resting -- now they have all gotten up. Perhaps 20. Smiles all over their faces, they unfurl a banner and proudly start to march.

A group of demonstrators on motorcycles drive past. Everyone around me gets up and runs to the road. The spectacle over, they now move forward up the Square.

It is amazing how suddenly crowds form and dissipate. It makes the whole Square appear elastic. Shapes form, change, move.

A small girl looks over -- takes a few steps towards me. As I look up and smile, she moves away. Her brother sees me, looks at me, screams and runs back to the arms of his father. Two more girls in miniskirts stroll past, with Mao still scowling away in the distance. All of a sudden there are people everywhere around me! A middle school. Their faces are so young! All in uniform! Blue track suits. They start running. The demonstrators are pushing almost a hundred feet in front of me - again. A crowd forms around them.

The police officers! Soldiers! Are running though the ambulances lane. People are rushing in every direction to see them. The crowd clapping, cheering them on. The cheers grow and grow.

11:15 Back at the dorm

Trying to calm myself down. Late night musings while listening to Simon & Garfunkle. My sunburn hurts, blistering under the heat. But far too excited to sleep. Hoping that writing will bring me back to myself.

CCTV said 1,000,000 people were at Tian `an men today. The ride home was like nothing I'd seen before. Between Fu Xing Men and Xi Zhi men, primary students lined the road offering water to the returning demonstrators. Primary students! Every intersection, especially the overpasses crammed full of people. People clapping, supporting. Truly supporting the returning demonstrators and urging the demonstrators still heading to Tian `an men.

THE EVOLUTION OF A MOVEMENT

Last month after Hu Yao Bang died, there were people at Tian `an men apart from the students, but it was clear that they were there to see what was happening. Not because they supported the students in any fundamental sense, but no, NOW! all of Beijing is certainly supporting the students.

Somehow all has been transformed. The city is a completely different one that it was just two weeks ago.

One million people in Tian 'an men and countless thousands lining all the merging streets in town. Regardless of the Government's actions after Gorbachev leaves, even if they clamp down. What is done is done! One million people here lifted their voices in support of the students. Lifted their voices against the government! How can things be the same?

Some images when returning tonight. Through Xi Zhi Men, even through Fu Cheng men, hundreds of people line the road forming a narrow path for the demonstrators to travel through. Not in the bike path, but on the main road. As I rode through people smiled, clapped, held out their hands to me offering their support to me as much as thanking me for my support.

'Support' is such a crucial word for everything here. The students from so many institutions started tentatively by supporting each other. Soon more students joined in. Then professors, reporters, intellectuals and now factory workers. Perhaps it was the hunger strike - certainly fueled by the hunger strike. As a metaphor for the governments resistance to change as well as a reality, has caused the change in Beijing. The people in the Square hear the ambulances. Does the government? The people answer no. The government, by not agreeing to the students requests is allowing the students to starve themselves.

The people hear the sirens. Therefore, they march in support of the students, but not only that, they march equally against the government. Oh, I keep hearing LiQiu in my mind,"ay ya!"

May 18 10:55

I want to keep yesterday in my mind. The people, the bright sun, the mood, the feeling. Express it all before I go back to Tian 'an men. The weather today is overcast. The forecast calls for thundershowers. Time to write home.

Here's what I wrote to Dad.

May 18, 1989

Dad!

A dark and stormy afternoon, after two of the most exciting days I have ever experienced. I'm sure you've been reading about it in the newspapers and due to the air time, by now you probably even know some of what the outcomes will be. I couldn't begin to guess what the government will do - the students - or, more importantly, the workers, which is the part of the equation that is most at stake.

It is hard to say what will happen, but China cannot be the same after it. The experts say that 1 million people were there yesterday, but that's only in the Square. Every major road for miles

in every direction was lined with workers - cheering, clapping - supporting the demonstrators as they rode to or away from Tian `an men.

To say the mood was electric would be a vast understatement. The movement didn't start like this. A month ago, when H Yaobang died, the protesters were only the students of Beijing. Although there were others at Tian `an men, I couldn't help but get the feeling that they were there more out of curiosity than from any more fundamental feeling of support for the students. Much like the people who will stop their cars to see accidents or fights between people in the street. But now it's all changed.

Perhaps it was the hunger strike, the specter of students willing to starve themselves for change, which had transformed the movement. But now it encompasses everyone.

Yesterday protesters included all the main newspapers, universities, factories, ever party organizations. I saw a group of off-duty People's Liberation Army Officers! All chanting extremely anti-government slogans along with calls to save the students!

It was as if forty years of pent up thoughts, frustrations were being expelled, freed in one collective breath! Even primary school children, little kids were lining the streets at 9:00 last night offering water to demonstrators returning home.

It was incredible, made even more incredible to me from the remarks of my Chinese friend. She would see a group of demonstrators and read the signs and banners and utter things like `ay ya!' out of shock at what she saw. She just kept saying over and over, how she'd never seen anything like this ever before. She couldn't believe this was happening.

Apart from all the political ramifications, the scene itself at Tian `an men had to be seen to be believed. There were at least one million people there, but there was no police presence whatsoever. Can you imagine that happening in any western country? Any country? The students, along with a number of medical people, had the situation completely under control. They formed pathways for the ambulances to pass back and forth through. And when no ambulances were approaching, they would allow people to cross the path. Constantly giving commands "quickly, hurry, all on this side". Commands issued in very strong, commanding voices, but at the end of every sentence, they would thank people for their cooperation.

These were 19-24 year olds, completely self-possessed, controlled and responsible. Apart from the ambulance paths, students were directing groups of protesters to their spots on the Square easing tensions when crowds got too over zealous around the Great Hall of the People and attempting to solve unbelievable traffic problems at various intersections. I have nothing but respect for these students. It's as if they acknowledge that they have created this situation, and have taken complete responsibility for it.

Other general impressions? The day was gorgeous. People in better spirits than any I've ever seen before in China. There was no hostility, practically no tension. There was music, multicolored banners and flags flying everywhere.

Chang an, the main boulevard leading to Tian `an men, was especially beautiful. Decorated with flags brightly colored flags in every direction put up for Gorbachev, but ironically ending up providing a beautiful backdrop for the demonstrators.

The only disturbing element was the constant sound of sirens from the ambulances, but in a way they provided a sense of urgency to the scene. But I cannot forget the thrill that passed through me as I listened and saw demonstrators clapping and supporting each other as they passed in the roads. The support, cheering from the crowds as the demonstrators passed, seeing people hanging out of bus windows, workers standing together six stories up on a construction site cheering the demonstrators, banners hanging from the windows of the Bank of China building! It was a day - one day, a month I won't forget. And one that I can't imagine the people of Beijing will ever forget either. Again, it does remain to be seen what will happen.

Things seem to have quieted down now, but then, perhaps that's only because it's raining and I'm in my room rather than at Tian `an men.

There are numerous times before when I thought it was over. Anyway, I just wanted to let you know that I'm well, enjoying every single moment of it. Thrilled to death to have been lucky enough to end up here right now! If there are any interesting articles in the paper, would you save them?

Aaah - - the rain has stopped. Have to get back on the bike! Take care and I'll write you soon!

Love,

Karen

May 19, 1989 10:05 a.m.

I'm getting scared now. Everything is on the verge of chaos. Even the student leaders are beginning to think that the public demonstrations are getting out of hand. All sorts of little signs are appearing. There are no more newspapers anywhere (foreign news) because the delivery trucks couldn't get through. The number of people selling produce in the streets is down according to the radio. Some factories are reporting slow downs due to the demonstrations.

All it will take is the death of one of the hunger strikers and that's it. All will fall apart, and the minute that happens no doubt the tanks will begin to roll. There are a few ominous signs too.

I went to LiQui's dorm last night as I have done practically every three days for months! The entrance was locked, so I went to the next entrance and there were two men sitting outside who asked me to register. They wanted to know the name of the person I was visiting so they could see if she was there. Deeply disturbed, I just left. Of course I didn't mind giving my name, but I don't want to cause her any trouble. I will try to phone her and ask her first if she minds. If she does, we

can always meet outside somewhere. I guess this isn't the time to be flaunting Sino-American friendships.

Apparently, the demonstrations did continue yesterday unfettered by pouring rain. I saw the pictures of the scene on the news last night. Tian `an men is now covered with buses in which the striking students are now staying.

Growing numbers of students are refusing water as well as food now. The news had some incredible interviews with the mother of one of the students, tears pouring from her eyes as she expressed her fear for the striking students. At the end -- barely able to form the words, she said (in Chinese) "5 days without food, three days without water, I'm scared, but I understand him and support him." It was a very powerful image shown on all the TV stations, and guaranteed to bring another million people out to the Square today.

Last night - evening - around 6:00, I went to Xi Zhi men to watch demonstrators travelling to and from Tian `an men. Or more accurately, to watch people watch the demonstrators. I met a young man eager to practice his English, who told me that the people in Beijing are happier now that they have ever been. That I do not dispute. The atmosphere continues to be absolutely electric. He too though expects that it will come to an end. Not the next day or two, but soon. Not come to an end, but be brought to an end militarily.

Even here inside the safe walls of a foreign hotel, the atmosphere is tense. To my left is a group of Chinese, evidently hotel staff (including a chef, white hat and all) arguing in hushed tones now gathered around the radio. I didn't know what they were saying, but what else could they be talking about?

On my ride down here this morning, I heard bits of radio broadcasts along the way out of cars. As I rode next to people carrying radios, and of course from the loudspeakers set up outside of The People's University -- all talking of nothing other than the demonstrations. I heard some ominous words coming from loudspeakers, but I did not stop to listen - something about 24 hours . . .

This morning riding down, I passed a group, small group of perhaps ten students, wearing the headband and carrying a banner. They hailed down a passing truck, already loaded down with demonstrators. The truck stopped immediately and called for the students to climb aboard. Gone are the bicycles even! On the sides of the road, large banners, "Students, Workers, with a united heart," is one I remember.

A fever is the only way to describe it.

11:30 Somewhere along the Chang An

A very apt descriptive metaphor almost (if I knew exactly how to express it) is the transport used to travel to Tian `an men. Perhaps it's just in response to the duration of the movement. But first, it was on foot - hundreds of students massing outside the universities and slowly making their way downtown.

Next came the bicycles, fleets of protesters, small flags attached to their bicycles, bearing them to Tian'an men. Now the bicycles are all being displaced, at least for the organized protesters. They are now packed, stuffed in the back of trucks, busses and taxis. Flags are waving, hands everywhere in the V sign.

I just saw two buses pass on the other side of the road, with protesters not only inside, but also on top of the buses! Sitting cross-legged, waving with great ease to passers-by on the street. A stream of taxis also passed by - probably 20 in a row, with flags, people hanging out of the windows.

The scale of the protests and demonstrations has changed. I haven't been to Tian'an men yet, but there are far fewer people out today, not only demonstrators but also supporters. Chang An is relatively free from bicycles. The pitch has decreased. Perhaps a good thing. On to the Square!

12:10

South of Tian'an men - in front of the Kentucky Fried Chicken, having just devoured my first popsicle of the day, and having nearly lost my life in the struggle to buy today's copy of the newspaper. What a scene! The poor newspaper man was being pushed backwards in circles, over bicycles by 20-30 screaming people shoving money in his face. Looking totally bewildered and having lost all control of the situation, he was mindlessly being pushed around.

I gave 2 Yuan to someone to buy a copy for me. He wasn't successful, so I tried myself. I had no more success so I gave up. But as I was attempting to retrieve my bicycle, I looked back and he was directly behind me so I grabbed a paper forcefully out of his hand and threw the money at him. Not exactly proper business practice, but he made a profit out of it! So did the other guy who still has my 2 Yuan.

The jam up of protesters started at Xi Dan. I took a detour at the next road to avoid the masses. I'm more south of the square and it's as lively as ever. The flag poles next to Qian men are covered with flags. The atmosphere is once again electric. The weather is perfect, crisp, clear, traces of clouds high in the sky to give it definition it seems, not to obscure the scene. Shouts everywhere. Students, young people, milling along the street, leaping, climbing into passing trucks already filled with demonstrators.

Demonstrators throw bottles out of the trucks. Deng Xiao Ping, a play on ping which also means bottle, smashing bottles to symbolize the smashing of Deng Xiao Ping. Two trucks of demonstrators pull up next to each other. A student in one truck shouts slogans; the students on the second respond. Sirens, the ever present sound of sirens -- still whine in the background. A group of demonstrators on motorcycles pass. Behind me, people walk their bicycles towards the intersection, totally distracted by the scene on the street. I've grown used to the sounds of crashing bicycles. The sound is now as familiar to me as the sound of the sirens.

Some passers-by toss a pack of cigarettes to demonstrators on a truck. They thank him, show him the victory sign as they drive away, and pass the cigarettes among them. A subdued truckload of demonstrators pulls up, all women.

Another truck pulls up, the sides are lowered and thirty kids hop out! Onto the street to travel to the square on foot. On the road earlier I saw a woman sitting on the side, an old woman, perfectly white hair, creased face, raising her hand to give the victory sign to passing protesters. Is she really supporting them? What must she have seen in the last 70 years. Does she think it's just the same, or is this something different?

12:40 - In the southwest corner of Tian 'an men.

This is so well organized! The trucks of demonstrators at Qian Men have been routed by the students south, so as not to block the south side of the square. On this side of the square security people (blue uniforms) and PLA (green uniforms) are holding the area free for the ambulances. There are fewer people here today, but if possible the atmosphere is even more charged than two days ago. But again it is early - the sun has not reached its peak.

11:45 p.m.

At Moira and Michael's house, GLUED to the short wave radio, listening to BBC. It's happening, right now, 1000 trucks full of troops are moving towards Tian 'an men. According to the BBC, a million people are at Tian 'an men. The object of the students is simply to provide so many bodies that the government cannot come through!!

According to the correspondent, all social order has broken down in the city. Tian 'an men is filled with people and absolutely electric. The correspondent feels that the army is too disciplined and is not going to give in to the students. They have just announced that Beijing TV has said that people should pay attention to the TV because something important is going to be announced.

It's 12:40 now - but the next news is not until 1:00 a.m. and I can't stand it! I'm getting a cold - too late, I've got a cold and part of me is tired and just wants to go to sleep. That's the body part. But my mind is ON!! What I really want to do is get on the bike and ride down to Tian 'an men to see what's going on! Luckily my intelligent side (the body, not the mind) is winning out on that one. That would be a stupid thing to do. Apart from the obvious danger of the situation, I have absolutely no business being there.

I'm not Chinese and I'm not a journalist and as I said to Lauren years ago when she wanted me to go to Beirut, an individual's actions can have much larger implications, so the last thing the students need now is a bunch of foreigners running around. So here I am lying in bed going absolutely crazy - one half of me wondering how I'm ever going to stay awake - the other wondering how I'm ever going to go to sleep!

Did I say the hunger strike has been called off? At least temporarily. Earlier the students were unsure - one group said it was over, another said it wasn't, but almost an hour ago the BBC reported that there was an announcement at the Square over the loudspeakers to the effect that the strike had been called off.

Moira and Michael and I went to the Jian Guo for dinner. We ate with our training manager down there. The rumors he had heard! The first was that tonight was the night - that troops were massing

and were going to move in. Also, according to him, one general or colonel of a command a little ways outside Beijing was told to prepare the troops to march into Beijing. He was reputed to have answered, "If there are foreign troops in Beijing, I will prepare my troops. If it is only to march against Chinese I will not." Reports have it that he either resigned his post or was "relieved".

He also told us about Li Peng's talk with the students yesterday. Apparently he started out saying, "Yes, I have three sons. They are not in the least bit corrupt, etc." The student leader replied, "Yes, that's very nice, Premier Peng, but that's not really what we came here to talk about, But about the issues." Li Peng responded, "You want issues? Here are issues," and he went on to say how irresponsible it was for students to be out there endangering their lives, etc. . . .

It seems the government is now harping on this hygiene issue. Can you imagine? The city without a sewer system is worrying about sanitation and hygiene in Tian `an men, especially now that the students are on buses. Well, in the leader's eyes, I'm sure it is an issue around hygiene. As Michael said though, there is spiritual pollution everywhere you look in Beijing!

May 20, 1989 12:45 a.m.

Martial Law has been declared. The first troops were blocked from coming into the square by the students, who let the air out of their tires and blocked the convoy by holding hands and standing in front of the trucks. Earlier today one convoy turned around and left. They shook hands with the students, left with smiles on their faces, declaring that they are the *people's* army. But, as of the last BBC report, armed troops are massing in from the southwest of the city. The people - students - are still packed into the square. There are conflicting reports about the hunger strike, but the last report I read is that all 200,000 people in the square are now striking. Who knows? At this point rumors are flying everywhere.

New news bulletin - it's going from bad to worse. The armed guards have met the students at the Luili Bridge. The students are pleading with the soldiers not to continue - to turn back, but as of yet they haven't. The students are also climbing on top of the vans and reading out a petition in support of Zhao Zi Yang - who apparently has resigned, since he was not in support of sending in troops. CNN has been forced to stop its live broadcast by the Chinese. There is Martial Law, and a general curfew will go into effect tonight at 10:00.

It's so strange here. There's no question that Beijing is falling to pieces around us, but I can't tell in the least, looking out the windows it looks like a normal day. But then the news comes through the radios and everything gets tense again.

May 21, 1989 2:20 p.m.

Ducked in a park just south of the second ring road - hoping fervently that no one notices the foreigner, that no one takes me for a journalist.

It's a very different Beijing than the one I've been away from for two days. Yesterday I was safely ensconced away glued to the BBC. I could have been anywhere. The reports I heard could have

been from any city. But it's only from being out in the streets again that I can reconcile the reports I heard with the reality. It is the same Beijing. The reporters had not created a story out of nothing.

Beijing has changed. The mood, where last week so exciting and carefree, is now controlled, subdued, serious. Every corner even beyond the Ring Road is manned with students from five to as many as 20, stopping cars, examining the drivers, convincing those with no business in the city to return. The city is in the control of the students now. The leaders may have attempted to take control, to impose Martial Law, but thus far the attempts have been in vain.

People stop to read the latest report, photocopied and attached to trees. Others stop to look at the photocopied photography tacked up on the trees, pictures of yesterday's clashes with police and of the thousands in the square. On occasional blocks the remnants of last night's barricades remain, perhaps - most certainly to be restructured tonight as night falls.

There isn't much discussion in the street, and relatively no cheering as the trucks of students pass. Gone are the multitudes of colored banners. It is as if the spring is over. What there is now is a stalemate, a draw between the students, the city, and Li Peng. It is in the hands of the army now.

The question now -- all of it -- revolves around the patriotism of the People's Liberation Army -- the 18, perhaps 16 year olds who will be sent in to suppress the popular uprising of their own people. If the students and the people of Beijing can convince them to turn around, can continue to convince them to turn around as they have done so far been able, then they have won.

What Bush, Gorbachev, the thousands of foreign journalists here, myself, what all non-Chinese people say right now is irrelevant.

This is a uniquely Chinese situation and will be solved - concluded? - by the key players, the people, the government, and the army.

At present it is a draw. Two groups of troops have turned around; have been held back by the pleas of the students, and by the blockades. Two nights have so far passed.

I, myself, am feeling more nervous than I ever have on the streets of Beijing. One young man caught up with me as I was cycling and started to talk to me. As we were riding, and nearing an intersection, a green jeep pulled up close to us on the side - presumably preparing to turn at the intersection. One another occasion such a move would have caused me to raise my fist, and utter a few choice obscenities, but not today. We were at the time speaking of the students' demands and the timing of the car's maneuver seemed too coincidental. My companion urged me to ride faster and we left that corner. I continued to cycle with him, but our conversation turned to safe topics, age, and occupation.

We stopped near a market, he bought me a bottle of soda and asked me to wait and we would continue to the square together. I drank the soda, waited for a little while, and then ripped a piece of paper out of my notebook and scribbled out the following:

"I couldn't wait. I've gone ahead" -- and I left!

I do feel uncomfortable. There is a ban on foreign reporters, and a ban on foreigners speaking with Chinese citizens, although the "rulers" are, at present, the students, and are not likely to enforce such a ban. Still it makes me feel insecure, unsure, and I feel more comfortable proceeding on my own.

5/21 - 3:35 p.m.

On the Square itself, the mood is subdued, a combination of the afternoon heat - the tension of previous nights, wondering what is to come. One student stands defiant on top of a bus, holding up his school flag. Other students sit or sleep in the shade of the buses, in the sun, even on top of the buses. The flags and banners are still waving.

The brightly colored purple, yellow and red flags wave and hand holding up the victory sign - still blowing, the Square still colorful although the sight is marred by the heaps of garbage in every direction as well as the faint but pervasive smell of urine. Outside the Square, there are now lanes blocked off on either side of the square. Hundreds of people continue to cycle past the square in both directions, although fewer ride and walk in the square itself.

Many stop to talk to the students. One man, a worker, possibly from the countryside, dark-complexioned and quiet, shyly walks to the students and hands one young woman a bag of bread. He then turns and walks away, quietly listening to the thanks as he strolls away.

Another student stopped me a few minutes ago and asked me to sign his shirt - with a wide-felt marker. I gladly obliged, although I did not quite sign my own name . . .

Meanwhile, the speakers continue to blare off speeches in the background. Whose words? I don't know.

A cart is lifted down to the road from the sidewalk, with a small baby lying on top, sleeping soundly. The people cycling by - who are they? All complexions, all ages, even a fair number of foreigners like myself, defying the ban.

10:30

It's coming, this time it's really coming. I see the pictures on TV and it's just ripping me apart. I see Tian `an men -- it feels as if I'm looking at my home - at a place that is so familiar to me - but that may be over soon. The government has given the students - the people - until tomorrow morning at dawn, and the general feeling is that tonight will be the night.

Apparently the troops are massing, may already be heading down to the square. The students have sent the word out that they need as many bodies as possible out on the streets -- to block, by mass, the troops from entering the city.

I'm so scared - scared not for myself, although things certainly would get unpleasant, but more to the loss of what was this week. It was an exciting week - so much enthusiasm shone, joy in the

people at being able to express themselves. It may all go - oh! What can I do? I want to go outside to be a part of it, but it's not my country, not my place to be out there.

But again, what else can the government do? The students have not only occupied the square, they've occupied the whole city! They are fully in control. The government, given that its primary goal is to keep itself in power, has no choice but to try to gain power back forcefully. The irony is that by gaining power forcefully, they are giving up any mandate they have to rule with, the support of the people, and ultimately, without the slightest shred of support for the people. How can they continue to rule?

12:15:

I'm now safely holed up in the window of Mom's hotel room, waiting, and waiting. No, Tian `an men Square is not beneath us, but the National Library is, and from here I can see two buses catty-corner to each other - blocking the road. People are milling around on all sides, bicycles, loads of people, and more continue to stream past.

According to the latest reports on CNN, one million people have gathered in Tian `an men. One of the student leaders has just spoken to reporters. He announced that if the government wishes to move the students from the square, they should do it through a dialogue with the students, in a democratic fashion. However, if the authorities do decide to use force, they cannot and will not resist.

But the students are only a fraction of the people in Tian `an men right now - there are 1 million people down there, and who is to say the rest of them will follow the students' nonviolent tactics.

The students have been tremendous through all of this, disciplined, orderly, responsible, and through no fault of their own are about to get blown away in Tian `an men. It's a tragedy.

The buses still stand - it looks as if they are placed in such a way as to not prevent cars from going by now, but if need be, the one farther away from me can be backed into place to create an effective barrier. All over Beijing today, I saw the remnants of last night's barricades, all the dividers, and slabs of concrete with pipes/poles running between them have all been ripped apart. Obviously, they were used to block the road last night, but were hastily put back into place this morning.

The latest news report said that there are still major decisions with the top party members about what to do about this situation. That, at least was good news. Perhaps there are reformers voting for more restraint in the government.

But still . . . a million people in Chang An and Tian `an men is too many. There's no room to move, and nowhere to go.

6:55 a.m.

Nothing happened!! Nothing!

May 22, 10:30 a.m.

Down at Tian `an men again. I'm sitting next to the fence that separates the Square from the Great Wall of the People, facing the Square. First, the ride today was like night and day to yesterday. Gone is the tension that enveloped the city yesterday. Rather than students, some intersections are now manned by PLA officers and city policemen. Not as a military presence, but simply as if they are doing their jobs as normal on a Monday morning.

The streets are once again alive with the vehicles, normal vehicles, not all of which seem to have been commandeered. The barricades are gone. Cars are no longer being stopped. Along the route however, there are many students, looking tired and dirty, but relaxed and calm. Now Tian `an men, the scene, although not quiet, does seem fairly relaxed.

To my left a large crowd, perhaps a few hundred are gathered around a man standing on a stump reading news/speeches to them. Periodically, frequently, they burst into loud and prolonged applause.

Along the sidewalk next to the Great Wall of the People, clumps of people in twos and threes lay sprawled out on the pavement, in the shadow of the trees that line the road. A few people walk back and forth, carrying umbrellas to protect them from the sun.

The Square itself is still brimming with people, although it seems to be closed off to non-students. The Square looks cleaner than yesterday although the entire appearance of the Square brings home the reality of the length of this ordeal. The banners are not flying as high, signs are drooping. The sounds from the speech continue. The applause growing louder and more frequent. I can now and then catch a few words, such as 'freedom,' and 'democracy.'

On the Square, the loudspeaker continues to blare out words which I believe are the governments. No one appears to be listening. Across from me, a student sitting on the ground in the shade writes in a journal like mine, while his companion sleeps.

A government helicopter flies over and drops leaflets in the Square. Everyone looks up, applauds. Crowds run in every direction to get copies of the leaflets. There are hands in the air everywhere. People leaping, huge smiles on their faces. It's like a game, a race!

Being small and invisible, I do manage to get one, but my latest companion tells me that the government has already broadcast the information, and that it's useless. Nonetheless, people continue to leap. Perhaps it's just something to do, to avoid the tediousness of waiting.

My companion has told me some interesting news, though. According to him, the effort is being coordinated by the All Chinese Student Federation. I said to him, you mean the "illegal organization?" He responded by telling me that this was a part of the students demand that was conceded to the students. The organization is no longer illegal. But, of course, he said, that that was stated by Zhao Zi Yang.

The second part which had been agreed to was that the movement had been reorganized as being a patriotic demonstration movement, but again he assured me that this was by Zhao Zi Yang, not Li Peng. According to him, the announcement coming over the speakers are for the students.

There was a government broadcast this morning. My companion laughed as he told us about it. The government said one thing, the students followed with an announcement in direct opposition to what the government had announced.

How interesting, he said, laughing. I asked him about the near panic in the Square last night. He said, "It was very nervous, excited. More people than now. They've left to escape the heat of the sun," he replied, "but they will return."

The students have secured a victory with last night's continued stalemate. With every hour, particularly every night that the government remains incapable of moving, their credibility erodes.

Troops are now amassed in villages on all side of Tian `an men, but the government is not acting. Not calling them in. From all reports and from any logical assessment of the situation, there must be intense struggles occurring in the higher echelons of the Communist Party.

Another student stops to chat. What is the mood in the Square right now?? It's been ten days, the government has not yet moved. Are the students happy? Nervous? "Nervous," he replied very quietly. "The troops haven't arrived, but the government hasn't agreed to the students requests. There's no resolution and the lines are being drawn more and more strongly." After that was silence.

Interesting news. A new companion from the Hebir said, that Xin Hua is broadcasting in one of the Provinces that everything here is being squashed. Therefore students do not need to boycott classes and shouldn't travel to the capitals! My companion just returned - asked me to sign his hat.

As I sit here and observe the scene, feel the commitment, the persistence, I am again stuck with the thought of what this is all about. There are so many difficult levels. Yes on one level it's about 'democracy' and 'freedom', But when asked what they mean by those words -- the students are hesitant and uncertain. Of course the students do have concrete demands formulated over the weeks of protests up to this point, but I'm still convinced that at its foundation, this is a struggle over the role of the intellectual in Chinese Society. The intellectuals are asserting their rights and their ability to lead the country, to assert themselves and prove to the country that China needs them.

When looked at in this light, this is anything but a new struggle in China. Even perhaps in the length and the success of the struggle, but not new in the sense of the struggle for a place in Chinese Society for the intellectuals.

It is a fascinating reoccurrence of the thousand year struggle. New circumstances, new tactics, and a new, totally new impact in China and the world in the new global environment, but nonetheless a very old struggle.

1:55

In the Beijing Hotel. Anyway new stories! New images! At the Beijing train station there were cars full of soldiers leaning out the windows, hugging, kissing, students standing outside showing the victory signs. Wishing each other luck? In one town last night where the tanks were coming in, the whole town came out to protest -- old women lay themselves down in front of the tanks. According the reports and the stories, the soldiers, distraught, let the air out of their own tires saying that the people in the town had done it, so that they wouldn't have to continue.

In Wu Diao Ko, the students have now taken on the train station. There was word that a train was coming full of soldiers who hadn't eaten or had anything to drink in days. So the students told people in Wu Diao Ko that the soldiers would need food and water. The people collected all sorts of supplies. When the train came they stopped it and fed and gave water to the soldiers. The soldiers thanked them and said their work, their presence was not going to affect the students or the people and that they would not harm them.

Tian `an men itself is amazing. It looks like an actual village had been set up there with tent houses. I stood for a long time watching one student wash his hair in a bucket outside next to a water tank. Students are eating, sleeping and milling around!

2:35

Back out on the Square, this is all just too much to be believed -- the biggest crisis ever to hit the Communist world and all I can figure is that it's a big party! To say that spirits are up would be a huge understatement. The helicopter is flying over again dumping out thousands upon thousands of leaflets. People clap, scream, leaping around the Square to catch them. In our direction, I saw hundreds of little bits of paper fly back up again. Here on my side every one laughs as the hundreds of leaflets go flying into the Forbidden City. And then a few hundred fly into the Revolutionary Museum.

In front of the Forbidden City, people pose to take pictures. Some with Mao in the background, some with the Square. More and more groups march, run into the Square. The mood is more of elation. I can't tell if it's from not enough sleep or too much sun. Who knows, but what fun everyone is having.

Meanwhile, the speaker keeps on blaring away. I hear applause, more shouts. The crowd of excitement seems to be rising with the momentum! More horns honk. People continue to pass back and forth. WHAT A SCENE!

3:05

There are moments when all of a sudden, you realize that your lips have firmed themselves into a huge smile. Your heart longs to sing out. That's what this moment is to me right now. The march has begun again to the heart of the Square. The New World Symphony is being played over the broadcast system. Students are lined up on top of the buses filling the Square, waving their banners in the background - foreground. Everywhere is the sound of cheering, clapping. Euphoria - downright euphoria!

Over the loud speakers now they list schools, organizations that have come and still continuing to support the students with music. All classical, triumphant. The haze of the morning has cleared up and a beautiful afternoon is emerging. Warm, but with a gentle breeze. The voices over the broadcast system sound poised, confident, and strong.

I think about how I can sit in one place for hours just watching. Not talking to anyone, but just drinking in the atmosphere. Perhaps if I stay here long enough, all this will become part of me. A real part of me that I will never forget, that won't fade or that won't vanish away.

I wonder if the little children here will remember any of this when they grow up. I wonder how stories of this time will be told to them. In what form? Printed in history books? Or will any memory of it be erased, through endless revisionist party histories?

Many people say much of this is like the Cultural Revolution when students were demanding vehicles, parading the streets, travelling free on trains and being fed. But the feeling of this has to be different. The students weren't told to do any of this. The euphoria, the success came finally from inside them, and has grown stronger by their own efforts. Their own organization. They aren't worshipping or following anyone, it's entirely their own movement. It must be different. I hope anyway.

Later, I ride back through the streets of Beijing. The day, daylight is coming to an end and once again the students prepare for the night. Tonight it is different. There have been no warnings from the government. I have visions of a smoke filled room, people sitting around large circular tables, changing places, rearranging themselves as the factions change and re-divide. In Chinese tradition, the most honored seat is facing the door. Who must occupy that seat right now? Deng? With signs, posters, slogans all over the city requesting him to return to Szechuan?

But now, as night falls there is still some amount of uncertainty. The barriers are erected; the streets brim more and more full of people, of students in the road, with onlookers gathering around the sides. Trash cans, road blocks, all moved into place.

5/23 12:45

Back home. Again it seems that the crisis is over, that the tide seems to have turned. For another night there was nothing, some clashes between students and troops, but no major clashes. Yesterday over 100 top military officers submitted a letter to Li Peng that they would not order their troops to fight against the Chinese people. The crisis, it seems, is over. But is it? Or has it, in a very fundamental sense, just begun?

The government seems to have lost all of its mandate to rule at this point. Even with Zhao in charge, what respect, or even fear, is left for a government that has been openly and successfully defied for over a month - not by a handful of students, but by the nearly 11 million residents of Beijing and the millions in other large cities all over China.

Is China going to be lost to ten years or more of chaos?

As I rode back this morning from the hotel, the scene was almost as normal - relatively normal. The markets seem to have plenty of food - trains, trucks and city buses are travelling as normal.

Posters remain posted on trees, but the larger discussions with groups of people standing on the side of the road, arguing, seemed to be restricted to areas outside the universities. No one wants chaos - no one is looking for it.

As I returned to the dormitory, I had a brief discussion with the other foreign students. Tense, everyone tired of talking about it - and not wanting to listen to anyone else's analysis of the events. Tempers are up, patience is low.

More images - from other days - yesterday as I stopped for a rest in the shade in the road along the square. One student sits down beside me to talk. He's been here for days with members of his school. He looks tired, dark from being in the sun for so many days. He tells me of the situation in the Square - tells me that the students are nervous, unsure of what will the next move be. Slowly, predictably, a group begins to form around us, but as we are off the Square, away from most of the people, their numbers remain small, six, perhaps seven.

They begin by asking me the questions I've learned to expect, "What country are you from?" "What do you think of this?" - and most recently, "Are you a reporter?" To the first question I answer honestly, gone are the days of playful teasing, responding that I am from Japan or South Korea.

In response to the second question, I am far more hesitant. I continue to answer, "It is not my country, it is yours." Therefore, what does my opinion mean? But that answer is becoming more and more difficult for me to say, and far less satisfying for my listeners. Now it is simply, "What do you think?" followed by "Do you need to ask yourselves which side you are on? Am I not a student in Beijing?"

They continue to ask me questions, but as they are not speakers of perfect Mandarin, I have a very difficult time understanding and answering. They seem very concerned about what American people are saying in response. The American people and the government, "Do they know what's happening?" "Does the government admit to them what is happening in China?" "Does the government control the news?"

My answers are hesitant, controlled, but in most ways, honest. But soon the discussion leaves me and the people continue to talk among themselves. Others stop by, join in the conversation and leave again. They relate stories, incidents of the past days.

One man begins to speak of one person in the Square who has been talking about the similarities of this event and the French Revolution. "200 years ago," he said, "the French had their Revolution, only now is China having its own Revolution." As I listen to this, I can't help but wonder what happened to the Long March? To 1949? Obviously events from the distant past.

We show each other copies of letters and leaflets we have received. I read a copy of the letter composed by the students to give to the members of People's Liberation Army. It is a beautiful

letter, laying out in succinct words the history of the movement, the desires of the students and pleas for the army not to open fire, or to fight their own people. The owner of the letter has only one copy, so I begin to copy it down, but my companion from An Hui quickly offers to take the pen and paper and copy it for me. As he writes, the conversation continues.

All this seems so normal to me. The discussions, people freely expressing their opinions to each other - to strangers, to foreigners openly! While sitting on the side of Tian `an men Square. It is difficult for me to remember how inconceivable this would have been before, even 2 weeks ago. I remember back to the hushed conversations in LiQiu's room about the Party and the government. I remember how we used to talk about the leaders, not with words such as "I think" or "I believe", but instead saying "people think" and "people feel." But now those conversations are happening everywhere in Beijing, openly and defiantly, and yes, many Chinese are running around with cameras, obviously pictures are being taken and perhaps there could later be reprisals, but how? Against whom? All the citizens of Beijing? Are they going to put 11 million people in jail?

Beijing has changed in a fundamental sense in the last few weeks. It is hard to imagine how these conversations could even be brought back inside again, how the people will ever submit to being silent again. But again, foreigners who have lived in China and studied China have learned over the centuries that it is impossible to second-guess China or its people. The tide turns, and everything can change, and it's simply anyone's guess right now as to which way things will go.

May 23rd, 7:30 p.m.

The word is - it's over. The students called for the largest protest they could and now they are going home. I feel curiously empty, though, as though I missed something, but I'm not certain what. It has to end, but has it really? Li Peng is still in power. Has there been any change? What has happened? As many of the students lie ill in their hospital beds, what has changed? What has been accomplished?

Something, at least in the minds of the Chinese people, and what a message it is for the world that such an event would happen. That such a mass movement occurred, in a city as large as this, and the students were so disciplined and so organized that the army didn't have to intervene. The city was brought to the brink of chaos, but it never became chaotic and it never crossed that barrier. It is all on the shoulders of the students, all the credit for leading a non-violent movement that they, as well as the world, can and does feel proud in and share in.

But it still lacks closure to me, and I am distressed at the movement because I wasn't as close to it, part of it, as I possibly could have been. But I was there, I marched, I watched and I listened, and most importantly, I wrote - for myself to remember this period. This turning point in China's history, that I was lucky enough to be a witness to.

9:00

I just had an hour long conversation with Zhu, my friend the cynic. His stories are wonderful. More images - not ones that I've seen, but that he described to me. He told me that at the Universities, they have broadcast systems set up by the students. The broadcast continually, all night long.

Whenever they see the numbers of listeners dwindling, they begin to say, "They're coming, they're coming, save your children!" and everybody comes scurrying over to listen.

According to him this whole thing is being organized by a group of people, all of whom oppose the government. The information is being communicated by a motorcycle gang. They cruise around the city, if they see something happening, they hurry back to one of the control points and spread the word. They are also the ones who put up all the leaflets all over town and communicated all the news between the different areas of town. That's why Li Peng was forced to bring in the Army. The threat was beginning to be against the party, in a very fundamental sense.

Zhu also said that the soldiers are sitting outside the city being lectured at by a bunch of little old ladies. One woman is reported to have said, "My son is in the military; he's on the Vietnam border fighting Vietnamese. What are you doing here, preparing to fight your own people! If you were my son, I wouldn't let you go. I would disown you."

Then all the local people would give them food and things to drink. The soldiers would thank the students, tears streaming down their faces. The students are out there, giving them newspapers, telling them everything that has been going on. The soldiers were ordered to cover their eyes and look at the ground. But slowly, the hands move, their eyes come up. The army is lost. Besides, even the army right now doesn't know how many of them are still supporting the government and how many of them are now with the people. They could easily find themselves fighting against each other, and both sides have arms!

The students just broadcast a story about how all the announcers who have to broadcast Li Peng's speeches keep having to run off to the bathroom for some reason.

May 24, 1989 - 10:55 - Back home and snug in bed.

IT'S NOT OVER!

I was wrong! Wrong, wrong, wrong. These people are indefatigable -- and stubborn as hell. It turns out we -- excuse me, they -- are marching again tomorrow! This time they are demonstrating to welcome back Wan Li, who just returned tonight from the States. He's been wandering around Canada and the US being very vocal in his support for the student movement and apparently he carries some weight.

He's the Chairman of the People's Congress. So, he's back and will add a great deal of strength to Zhao's side - the reformers side. It's still anybody's guess how this is going to turn out. One can't walk in the streets of Beijing for five minutes without wondering how Li Peng is ever going to survive this. He is hated, detested, despised, and many far more descriptive terms in Chinese. Being caricatured on posters, signs litter the city calling for his resignation. He was being made fun of all night at the People's University broadcast. How can he survive this? Well, if he never has to leave Zhong Nan Hai, perhaps it's possible, but I pity him at his next speaking engagement outside the hallowed walls of his compound. Roasted alive, vilified.

CNN reported tonight that the press restrictions are going back into effect at midnight tonight. They've been virtually ignored for the last day and a half, ignored by all concerned, Chinese and foreigners alike. But now the government seems to want to crack down again - perhaps a sign that the conservatives are in the lead again? Holding the reins? It's difficult to find an apt metaphor for the power struggle that is still continuing.

I spent a couple hours hanging around outside the People's University, listening to the broadcast. Conversing with a more educated crowd than the people I've been running into in the Square.

Somebody walked up and asked me what I thought of the demonstration, and they all told him to shut up, because he shouldn't be asking me questions like that; it's not my place to answer them. It was nice not to have to do the explaining for once. So, they interpreted for me, well, not exactly; they re-explained for me, when I didn't understand - none of them spoke any English. But I did understand the part about the demonstration tomorrow.

I felt sort of let down on the Square today. It's still full of people, still looks and smells like a cesspool, but they've started letting traffic go past, and the alleys on either side aren't roped off anymore. It's just not the same. I feel like an old radical who woke up one morning to find the 60's were gone! So I was glad to see hundreds of people outside The People's University tonight, even if most of them did, at one time or another, want to occupy the same spot as I did! But what a lively crowd! All listening, talking, discussing what was being broadcast, laughing, clapping - it was fun. This really has brought people together in a way that nothing has in the last 70 years at least! Perhaps more than liberation? Who knows?

According to one man, all the universities have organizing committees. And work units as well. They assign people to different jobs, to coordinate different areas of the city. This man was assigned to one corner. They stopped three army trucks, explained everything to them, and the trucks turned around and went back!

Over and over again it was broadcast at the People's University, over 100 hours of (martial law) and still not one single military vehicle has made it into the city (A defiant voice booms out through the broadcast system and is met by clapping and cheering on all sides). The people are EMPOWERED in the most basic, literal meaning of that word.

May 25, 1989 2:15 at Tian'an men Square

There's movement everywhere around me - people - students this time, moving in all directions, preparing for the afternoon's demonstrations. I was wrong; it is not over, by any stretch of the imagination. In Tian'an men Square, there is an unreal atmosphere. It's like a city within a city. Thousands of students are here, milling around, standing in what look like never-ending lines for food. They are sitting under tarps, tents, on cots and on the ground, surrounded by piles of clothes and blankets and sleeping bags. As the sun beats down ferociously on the Square, it's hard to imagine that there could ever be a need for so many blankets. But it's yet another reminder of just how long the students have occupied Tian'an men Square.

As in the larger Beijing, the Square is a model of organization. Schools on each side have their own areas. In several places are makeshift clinics, filled with doctors and nurses tending minor wounds as well as more serious bouts of fever. In the middle, surrounding the monument is another roped-off area. Inside is the area in which the student leaders are camped. They are fiercely guarded and protected by a number of “pickets” as they are called. On one side lies the tent in which the student broadcasters rest and work. This area is equally well guarded.

The Square is a mess. Piles of scraps of food and paper lie everywhere. This garbage combined with the intense heat must be turning the Square into a breeding ground for disease. However, amidst all of this, the students continue their lives. The atmosphere is that of the second or third day of a weekend party. The edge is off, the euphoria over. The heat, the lack of adequate food, the sheer number of people must be getting to them, not to mention the ever-present possibility that the army and its tear-gas may still arrive – at any time.

I spoke to a number of the students guarding the command camp. Their thoughts were mixed – proud at the success they have had so far, but yet concerned about the number of students who keep arriving on the Square. There are three to four thousand new students a day, according to one student. The students were concerned about the added burden these new arrivals impose on the city – the extra food and blankets that are needed to keep them. But, says the student, with the growing numbers, they cannot continue to be ignored by the government.

The news this morning was ominous. Li Peng has secured the support of the generals who say that their troops will obey orders. Wan Li has arrived in China, but according to Beijing Radio, he is being kept in Shanghai for “medical treatments.” Beijing Radio was only ten minutes long this morning – world news and China news – without a mention of the current struggle. In one very strange story, the news quoted some obscure Congress Official who is supporting the officers sent to occupy various offices in Beijing, “including the Beijing Radio offices.” That was a not-so-subtle reminder to the audience that the announcers are being watched, and that they are not free to report the situation as they see it.

Around me there continues to be activity on all sides. Students continue to approach me to ask me to sign their student cards, T-shirts, back, hats, everything. I should be asking for their signatures, not visa-versa. On my left, conversation continues around the pickets. The conversation turns again to the student leaders who have now been elevated to celebrity status. Imagine, nineteen and twenty-year olds who have brought the largest country in the world to a standstill. Celebrities they are. Their age and status is discussed and praised. The reporters from NBC, two enormous furry men dressed in jeans, smiling relaxed. This is what they do -- nothing new, nothing special for them.

3:15 in the Beijing Hotel. Okay, here’s the point at which I give into full-scale paranoia. I stopped writing in the Square because I became surrounded by students. As I continued to talk to them, about three people took my picture. One of them sneered at me as I turned to leave. I don’t know, is it a stupid thing to go to the Square? Is this photo going to prevent me from ever getting a visa to come back to China?

But it is getting serious, that occurred to me as I was thinking about the consequences of this photo that was just taken of me. If Li Peng survives this, and goes on to rule China, what need will I have of coming back anyway? Maybe it was just a student and not a government agent. But how am I to know?

There is a demonstration going on now, but it's totally different. It lacks the spirit of previous days. Perhaps it's the heat, but these people are tired and bored. The initial euphoria is gone, and has been replaced by a dull sort of plodding though the moves of a demonstration. How long can they keep it up? How long can the government! At least Li Peng probably sleeps at night. I doubt you can say the same about the student leaders. God knows how long it has been since they slept – how long can they last?

10:40 back at my room. Okay, I know I've said this before, but I think it's over, and the wrong side has won. It makes me so angry. Li Peng is clearly back in power, and secure. That's it. This month of movements, demonstrations, outrageous actions perpetrated by the people, all to waste. Or so it seems. But it all seems so predictable. Now Li Peng is in power, firmly in power the first thing he will do is purge the universities of all the students who were active in the movement. No doubt purge a number of workers, leaders of the various units as well, and clamp down the doors again. This is the worst possible thing that could happen to China right now. Ten years of opening to the world stand on the verge of collapsing, all to further the careers of the men in power. It's just not worth it. It makes me so angry, but what can I do? That thought must be echoing through the heads of millions of people in China right now. People who have supported, backed, bonded with the students throughout these demonstrations. These people have done everything they could, including putting their lives at stake just to consolidate the power of the despised leaders.

One more thought before I go to sleep. When I was speaking to the students today, one said to me "You are very lucky to have experienced something like this – nothing like this has happened in China since the Cultural Revolution." Immediately 10 students jumped all over him! They said, "No, this is nothing like the Cultural Revolution! That was orchestrated – this comes from the people!"

May 26, 1989 Late at night. I'm back in my room and am more angry and depressed than I can ever remember being. Angry, depressed and overwhelmingly frustrated. How can the government be so stupid? To squander away a generation of motivated, keen and aware young minds. To squash them back into subservience and oppress them.

I just had such a sad conversation with Li Sha and Hong Feng today. Before, I always used to say "Well, yes, America has its good points, but so does China," but I just couldn't bring myself to say any of that today. Not a word. This just wouldn't happen in America. That's what democracy, however flawed, is all about! This much public pressure would cause change in America. Here, it is meaningless.

They were closing up shop at Tian'an men today. I rode past this morning and all the buses were gone, except one. One lone bus covered in graffiti, looking like it might never move again. The flags were still waving. Students were still camped out – at least 20,000 according to one source, but it's not the same. The Beijing students are all gone. Many have gone home. The student leaders

have “disappeared,” but it’s not known whether it was of their own volition or not. It’s over. Really over. Of course it will take months of shuffling around before things get themselves sorted out, but everything else is gone. The euphoria is gone from the streets – the feeling of togetherness – of the whole city of Beijing working together as one – it’s all gone. Life – disparate, separated life has resumed. It is sad.

May 28, 1989 8:30 a.m.

Things are getting bad everywhere. In the little microcosm of my universe, my room, everything is in complete chaos at the moment, and it makes me too depressed to do anything. I get up, throw two or three pieces of paper away, run out of things to do, become overwhelmed, and I just have to sit back down again. It’s not that there’s nothing to do. It’s just completely unapproachable. Where do I begin?

Outside, things aren’t much better. There’s another demonstration called for today – a “Global Demonstration” all of the world. I suppose I should go, but it’s all so different now. The chaos is beginning. Li Peng has firmly consolidated his power; even Wan Li is saying pro-government things now: the students are patriotic, it’s just a small group of counter-revolutionaries, you know the rest. The student leaders have disappeared – the organization of the students is gone. The student movement is in flux, they don’t know where they are going or what to do. What was their movement has now been grabbed out of their hands. It’s turned into a factional struggle in the highest reaches of the party, and the wrong side won. The students are all wondering what happened, and are wondering how to get back to their demands, none of which have been met. There are rumors of a new hunger strike happening today. Chaos. The hunger strike worked once, but I strongly doubt it will gain the support now that it had two weeks ago.

I just heard on the radio – now they are blaming all of this on certain elements within the communist party i.e., Zhao Zi Yang. This wasn’t the point. The students are not going to give up. They are nothing if not totally committed. They will fight if they have to, but they are in no way prepared for tear gas and cattle prods. They still have the commitment, but they seem to have lost the organization, and they are probably losing the commitment they had to carrying out a non-violent movement. It is ominous.

May 30, 1989 11:05 a.m. On the Square on the last day. My last day in China. But is it the student’s last day? The Square is full – full of students, people milling about. In the middle of the Square is a new site – a statue – all in white. From appearances it looks like it’s made of paper mache. The figure is of a woman – with hands raised up to the sky, clapped together in defiance, holding a torch. It’s perhaps 40 feet high? Erected for the last meeting of the students, but the government has added its own special touch to the scene. Voices, booming out from the loudspeaker, unbearably loudly, to prevent the students from holding their meeting?

The voice stops. Some quiet has descended on the Square. But the feeling is very different – quiet – as thousands of people converge on Tian’an men to watch and listen, to the last minute of what was a spectacular struggle.

But, again, it's not over. Some students are leaving the Square, but not many. They are staying! They are defying the government and vowing to stay on. Everyone has come down to the Square to see the Statue. Of course the government is up-in-arms, once again, and telling the students to take it down. As they said on the radio this morning, "Tian'an men is a respectable, solemn place, a memorial for those who died in the war and for Sun Yat Sen. People are not allowed to put statues up without permission," etc. A solemn place! A memorial! The place is a cross between a rock concert, a camp ground and a garbage heap! Gone is the solemn, stable, Tian'an men Square, yet it still may be the spiritual heart of the country, but it's certainly not what the government wants to think it is.

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