

# Students demand new constitution for China

by Leo Scanlon

A powerful contrast to the cowardly actions of the Bush administration was provided by a new organization of Chinese students, the Alliance of Chinese Patriots, which held its first press conference in Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C., on June 7. The movement is a direct representative of the programmatic aspirations of the students in Tiananmen Square, and is keeping alive the demand of those students for the formation of a constitutional government to rescue the nation.

The first point made by the students was that this issue is not an academic matter, for the idea of creating a new constitution is being widely debated among leading Chinese, both before and after the massacre in Tiananmen Square. The U.S. Establishment, they point out, is fixated on preserving the rule of the Chinese Communist Party and therefore has found itself far behind the pace of events. Unless this folly is corrected, the next phase of developments in China will shock the United States even more than the notorious events of 1947.

One student emphasized that the current administration policy, based on Kissinger-style geopolitical theories which ignore economic realities, is not only foolish, but murderous as well. Trade and financial credits issued on behalf of the policy of stabilizing and "moderating" the regime, will produce the opposite effect. "The credits provided for trade and industry only preserve the ability of the government to carry out suppression of the population." He emphasized that China is undergoing a total economic collapse, and that that collapse is the only thing which will moderate the actions of the regime. "The government survives through the efforts of the military and secret police, and that costs money. Money to the Chinese government is blood money . . . there is no logic to the U.S. policy."

The Washington media have been presenting the anti-Bolshevik ferment in China as if it has been defeated. In this, the media is taking a cue from George Bush himself, who told a national TV audience the fantastic tale, that he had tried to reach Deng Xiaoping by telephone, but had been unable to get through, and thus did not know what was going on in the days leading up to the massacre. In fact, Deng gave a speech the day before the bloody events, in which he specifically attacked the movement for proposing to create an

"American-style" constitutional system. It is inconceivable that Bush remains unaware of this speech, and the continued suppression of the true picture by the administration is a betrayal of China's aspirations to freedom.

Even worse, National Public Radio and the *New York Times* have started a campaign designed to make the Goebbels-style "Big Lie" propaganda of the Deng regime credible. "More than two weeks after the Chinese Army gunned down demonstrators and onlookers in the center of Beijing, there is still no evidence to support the higher estimates of casualties, like an early estimate that 3,000 died," wrote Nicholas D. Kristof in the June 21 *New York Times*. Kristoff quotes a number of sources (all of whom would be killed for contradicting the official line) in support of his theme that government spokesman Yuan Mu might be lying, "but we'll just never know." This process of rehabilitating the government began with an exclusive interview granted to Tom Brokaw of NBC-TV news by Yuan Mu himself. The success of Yuan Mu's brazen lies was so complete that the government fearlessly played the entire interview on Chinese TV.

## Declaration of Chinese Patriots

*This statement was released in Washington on June 7.*

As the world watches, we, the Chinese people, are today engaged in an epic struggle to cast off the chains that have bound us for two generations. The present system has been tried in China and has failed. It has produced hunger where there should be plenty, corruption where there should be integrity, servitude where there should be freedom. The Chinese Communist Party and the government it created are today under siege because they have failed to understand that the Chinese people will no longer tolerate these conditions. The Chinese people yearn to be free. We yearn to join the community of free peoples. We will not rest until we do.

Therefore, we Chinese patriots, declare to the world the principles that guide our struggle for freedom:

1) Every individual is born with equal and inalienable human rights.

2) The basic right of every individual is the right to be free, the right to plan and live his or her own life. This right entails all other rights, including the rights of speech, press, assembly, association, religion, property, and privacy.

3) To secure these rights, individuals create government, to which they give only as much power as is necessary to secure their rights.

4) A government is legitimate only if it rests on the consent of the governed.

5) The people retain the right to deny legitimacy to their government by withdrawing their consent.

To secure these principles through law and legal institutions, we call for a constitutional convention where the people's representatives, selected in free and open elections, will write a constitution for a free China.