

splendid shape, the Tories might, at a squeak, be able to afford the luxury of appearing before the electorate as a divided party. But that is far from the case." The question, it stressed, is whether the Tories can resolve their differences "while Mrs. Thatcher remains as leader. After this awful week, it is difficult to conclude in the affirmative. Only if she goes will the party be able to unite and wage effective electoral battle. . . . The only way Mrs. Thatcher can give her party a chance of victory is by resigning and then supporting her successor. It will be up to senior members of the party to persuade her that this is the best service she can render to the nation and the party."

The lion that didn't roar

The *Independent* is one of the British Establishment dailies most sensitive to how Britain is seen on the European continent. The paper would have been acutely aware that the Thatcherites' crude attempts to whip up anti-European sentiment among Britons have flopped miserably, both in Britain and across Europe.

For example, the pro-Thatcher mass-circulation *Sun* tabloid, a mouthpiece for the Rupert Murdoch interests, called on Britons to mobilize on Nov. 2 against France and Jacques Delors, the French president of the European Commission. On Nov. 1, the *Sun* had published an editorial entitled "Up Yours, Delors," which recommended that Britons congregate the next day, turn in the direction of France and make an "Up Yours!" gesture, as a message to Delors where he should put the ECU currency notes that would be the currency of a united Europe. The editorial was filled with wild anti-French ravings.

On Nov. 2, a grand total of six people showed up at Trafalgar Square to "gesture" against France. Four of the six were Thatcherite Tory loyalists, and two were *Sun* readers. The embarrassment should not be underestimated: Trafalgar Square is named after the Battle of Trafalgar, where the British Admiral Lord Nelson defeated the Napoleonic French fleet and broke French sea power. The demonstrators gathered at the Square's famous statue of a lion, which is supposed to symbolize the British lion. The French press, needless to say, had a great time.

To add insult to injury, a correspondent for the *Independent* reported on Nov. 3 that he had spoken to numerous farmers in Germany, expecting there to be anger against the United States over the emotional issue of cuts in agricultural subsidies. Instead, he found a violent anti-Thatcher mood.

Feelings against Thatcher are so high in eastern Germany, that a *Financial Times* reporter advised British travelers in an Oct. 29 column: "If you find yourself conversing with anyone east of the Elbe, do not get into a discussion about Mrs. Thatcher's views on German unification unless: a) you have an aeroplane ticket to leave Germany extremely fast, b) you are under police guard, c) you are talking to an ex-member of the [East German communist party] Politburo."

Communist China

Is the People's Army reliable?

by Mary M. Burdman

The People's Liberation Army of China is undergoing the biggest internal shakeup since at least 1985. In the months after the June 4, 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre, when PLA troops fired on civilian demonstrators, reportedly at least 3,000 officers and soldiers were purged for mutiny, for refusing to fire on the demonstrators. Now a much more thorough purge is afoot.

Military strongmen President Yang Shangkun and his brother Gen. Yang Baibing are trying to consolidate control of the PLA and squeeze out Communist Party head Jiang Zemin, appointed as chairman of the Party Central Committee Central Military Commission by Deng Xiaoping. Chairman of the Central Military Commission was, until 1989, the only official post held by Deng Xiaoping, indicating its power. The Yangs, who occupy second- and third-level positions in the Military Commission, however, are raising "very heavy" opposition for their pains, Hong Kong analysts report.

What role will the Army play when the death of 86-year-old Deng Xiaoping, or 85-year-old, but still much more active Yang Shangkun, forces the fight for power in China into the open? One exiled Chinese dissident said earlier this year that in China, in case of civil war, the Army would split: "It would be very messy, and many people would die."

Unconfirmed reports in the British press Oct. 15 say that senior PLA officers in Guangdong and Beijing have formed a secret organization committed to forcing Prime Minister Li Peng and the Yangs from power, and restoring ousted party head Zhao Ziyang. The secret group has "funds and friends at the top, as well as in the Navy and Air Force commands. . . . There is now a division between northern and southern units."

There have been steady reports of discord between the Guangdong Military Region and Beijing. Guangdong's leaders were the last to state their support for the Beijing government after the Tiananmen massacre. However, the overwhelming concentration of military power is in the northeast; Guangzhou is weak in comparison, lacking enough experienced soldiers to form five divisions.

The leadership of the seven Military Regions was completely shaken up in April and May this year, and new commanders appointed in six regions. Then, on July 6, the *Liber-*

ation Army Daily announced that the General Political Department of the PLA, under the leadership of Gen. Yang Baibing, would administer the PLA's Commission for Discipline and Investigation, which had been under the jurisdiction of the Central Military Commission. Yang Baibing said that in the next six months, the PLA would investigate certain unnamed "new factions in the leadership" in order to make sure they had already adopted the correct measures to "maintain integrity."

Eight of 17 generals were ousted this year, and middle-level officers are being given the "helicopter" treatment if their record on June 4, 1989 is right. The regional command changes were not even announced at Central Military Commission meetings. Last May, Yang Baibing went from region by region, announced the changes with no advance notice, and ordered the officers to their new posts within a week's time. The changes were by no means all disciplinary. The new commander of the vital northwest Lanzhou region is Fu Quanyou, 60, enforcer of martial law in Chengdu Military Region (Tibet). When martial law was lifted on May 1, he was transferred to the "new flash point," Xinjiang, Hong Kong's *Tangtai* reported.

Morale is destroyed

The PLA has been called out for three crucial interventions in the past 18 months: in Tibet, where martial law was proclaimed in March 1989 and never really lifted; in Beijing; and, in April this year, to suppress an armed rebellion of Turkic Muslims in Xinjiang province. In June, the *Liberation Army Daily* warned that "the possibility exists of local wars and military conflicts in the border areas of our country."

There is no doubt that the communist regime also fears bloody revolution inside China. But the Army which the Beijing regime finds so essential for keeping China under control, is wracked with internal dissension. The Beijing regime's treatment of the PLA after the massacre did little to foster loyalty. In "official" accounts of the massacre, especially that of Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong, the troops were blamed for finally opening fire when pushed beyond endurance by the demonstrators—taking the blame for the actual killings away from Deng, Li Peng, and Yang Shangkun. Overall morale among the 3 million troops is reported very low, due not only to rancor at the PLA's role in the Tiananmen massacre, but also because of miserable conditions, so bad that PLA troops in some areas must grow their own food. The Army has also reimposed Mao Zedong "struggle sessions" as a substitute for military training, and miserable conditions. In September the PLA daily announced that "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought" is "the guiding ideology and theoretical foundation for the building of our party and Army," and that "criticism and self-criticism," the brainwashing methods that prevailed in the Cultural Revolution, will be the mode of interaction.

Despite such efforts, there has been a 20% rise in crime

and disciplinary violations since last year among lower ranks. The greatest increase was registered in the category of political "crimes," such as putting up posters, "conspiracy," theft of weapons, sheltering "rebels" and even assassination of unit leaders, Hong Kong's *Cheng Ming* reported in August. In the crucial Beijing Military Region, 40% of cadres and soldiers had relatives or friends at the 1989 demonstrations.

All this calls the question: Can the PLA be relied upon to maintain the Communist Party leadership in power under conditions of revolt?

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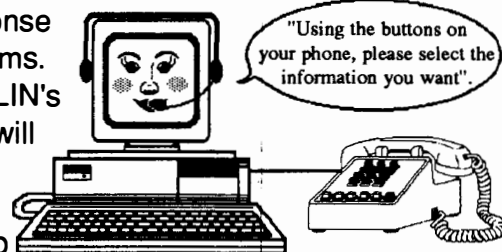
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