

## Soul-Searching After China Crackdown

*U.S. scientists are having to make difficult decisions about maintaining scientific cooperation with China in the face of evidence that repression there is continuing*

TWO MONTHS after military tanks rolled into Tiananmen Square, U.S. research institutions and scholars are still soul-searching over how to best respond to the continuing repression against intellectuals in China.

The Chinese authorities would like Americans to behave as if nothing happened. At last month's International Geological Congress in Washington, D.C., they made sure that their delegation was even bigger than announced before the clash of army and protesters. Whereas 56 scientists from China had originally been signed up for the conference, 100 showed up, according to the meeting's general secretary Bruce Hanshaw.

The Chinese government has been enthusiastically urging U.S. researchers to continue to travel to China to maintain cooperative links. This has presented U.S. organizations—and individual scientists—with a tortuous dilemma: do they visit China as if nothing happened or do they stay home even if the decision further isolates Chinese scholars already oppressed by their government? Although their numbers are relatively small—some one thousand U.S. scientists visit China each year—their decision will have symbolic importance.

The response has been mixed. Many meetings scheduled to be held in China this summer and fall have been canceled, some for practical reasons because martial law is still in effect, others as a show of protest. Merle Goldman of Boston University, a scholar of Chinese intellectual society, favors going even farther. Goldman says that major U.S. research organizations should stop sending official delegations to China because “nothing is more important to Deng Xiaoping [China's senior leader] than science and technology. Unless we deprive the Chinese leaders of scientists, they won't respond to the criticism of what they did.”

The U.S. National Academy of Sciences has taken the toughest stand among the major groups engaged in joint programs with China. Immediately after the killings at Tiananmen Square, Academy president Frank Press announced the suspension of all its activities with China and sent a cable to several scientific institutions in China to express “outrage and sadness”—a cable to which he has received no personal response

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from Zhou Guang Zhao, president of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and a foreign associate of the U.S. Academy.

More recently the U.S. Academy's position has softened somewhat, and it now “welcomes” Chinese scholars to visit the United States as long as they are legitimate researchers, said Robert Geyer, of the Committee on Scholarly Communications with the People's Republic of China, which is sponsored in part by the Academy.

American sociologists also are expected to debate whether to suspend research in China at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association in San Francisco 9 to 13 August. Thomas Gold of the University of California at Berkeley, a China specialist, favors halting U.S. sociological research in China for the next 6 months for practical reasons. Gold argues that it would be pointless to conduct research now because the Chinese will be increasingly suspicious of people asking them questions. “Now they have reason to believe that there is a right and wrong answer.”

Gold contends that associating with foreigners could be “poisonous” for Chinese colleagues now, since Chinese hardliners “hate non-Marxist social sciences.” The government “would love an opportunity to shut down sociology,” he says.

But for every view that the U.S. scientific community should stand at arms' length from China for the present, there are scientists and scientific organizations that are advocating the opposite tack. Nobel laureate and physicist Yang Chen Ning of the State University of New York at Stony Brook, who has long nurtured relations with Chinese scientists and institutions, said, “It is absolutely essential for the United States to keep traffic and intercourse with China go-

ing as much as possible.” Reached by telephone in Hong Kong, where he has worked this summer, Yang said, “The best policy is to try to maintain scholarly exchanges as before. It is extremely important. It will benefit both countries.”

Yang supports the Bush Administration sanctions, which halted visits of U.S. and Chinese military leaders, stopped bilateral discussions among high-level government officials, and suspended several arms deals. But, he says, “if the United States imposes sanctions that are too strong, there is a danger that China will close its doors and the United States will have no influence on Chinese policies. That would be a disaster.”

One major private institution that is maintaining its collaboration with China is the Ford Foundation. Sponsor of a \$5-million China program, the Ford Foundation will continue its exchange programs, which focus on economics, international relations, and rural development. This fall, it plans to sponsor eight U.S. scholars to teach economics in China, and about 125 Chinese scholars to travel abroad. Foundation representative Peter Geithner said in a telephone interview from Beijing, “It's important to maintain contacts and help those not responsible for what happened.”

The National Science Foundation, another major sponsor of U.S.-China research collaboration, is also continuing its cooperative program. “We are part of the government, so we have to be consistent with government policy,” says Alice Hogan, NSF's senior China program manager.

But, she adds, the program is “in a state of suspended animation.” Following the 4 June crackdown, NSF stopped staff travel to China and is advising participants in its cooperative research program to postpone travel plans. As a disincentive, NSF has cut off grantees' travel funds for China visits.

This kind of fence-straddling is typical of many U.S. organizations. Geyer, acting director of the China committee, expresses the dilemma common to many when he says: “I, among others, am struggling to come up with an appropriate response” regarding U.S. scholars' visits to China. In the case of his own organization, his sponsors, which include the Academy as well as the American

# Stories of Repression from China

Last weekend in Chicago, when leading Chinese student dissident Wu'er Kaixi stood before hundreds of fellow students to rally them to keep the pro-democracy movement alive abroad, an older man was near the podium as well. He was Wan Runnan, an engineer and entrepreneur who founded a company that was China's main hope in entering the modern computer world.

Now Wan, 42, who was general manager of the Stone Group, a Beijing company known as China's IBM, and who helped bankroll the student demonstrations in Beijing this spring, must start over. His is one of many whose lives have been torn asunder by the crackdown on Chinese scientists, engineers, and other intellectuals.

The oppression continues in China. Fang Lizhi, the astrophysicist, and his wife, physicist Li Shuxian, are effectively in exile in their own country, having taken refuge at the U.S. embassy in Beijing. Reports of arrests of scientists continue to filter out, although the Chinese government has cut back on publicly announcing them. As many as 10,000 people have been arrested in China since the massacre at Tiananmen Square, according to Western media. Among the scientists and researchers arrested, Asia Watch reports, are Yang Wei, a graduate student in biology at the

University of Arizona; Yang Fang, an engineering student from Hefei; Zhuo Duo, an economist at Stone Group; Liu Fuan, a student at Beijing Medical University; Bai Nansheng, deputy director of the Agricultural Development Research Institute; Yu Fangqiang, a student at Beijing Science and Engineering University; and two students from Shanghai University of Science and Technology, Wang Hongming and Song Mitu.

The Chinese government is engaging in more subtle forms of repression, too. An American source from Beijing told *Science* that researchers at educational institutions in the city have been forced to study speeches by Deng Xiaoping, China's top leader, and other political docu-

ments—a common practice for bringing those who have strayed from “correct thinking.” As part of a directive by China's State Education Council, university students this month must take part in “ideological reeducation” on campuses, according to a staff aide to the U.S.-based Committee on Scholarly Communication with the People's Republic of China, sponsored in part by the National Academy of Sciences.

The crackdown has made life even worse for students and scientists than before. They are already among the most poorly paid in Chinese society and their working and living conditions are generally miserable. Intellectuals are the only class that has not benefited from economic reforms in China, says Huang Yuan-geng, a graduate of Shanghai's Jiaotong University and a doctoral candidate in computer science at the University of Maryland.

Here in the United States, students and scholars report that they have been photographed and videotaped by Chinese authorities. They also assert that Chinese consulate staff are making harassing phone calls to them. Chen Bao Sheng, science counselor at the Chinese embassy in Washington, D.C., denied that any of the consulates in the United States have engaged in such activity. “There are rumors that we have followed students and made records” of their activity. “We have never done that. We have never made calls,” Chen said.

Chinese students who have openly opposed the Deng regime say they fear retribution if they return to China. Consequently, they are lobbying Congress hard to change their visa status so that they can stay longer in the United States and also work to support themselves. According to an engineering publication, *The Institute*, some high-technology companies would like to hire Chinese students, but are reluctant to do so because of their uncertain immigration status.

“If we are forced to go back, many of us—including myself—face imprisonment or worse,” said Zhongdang Pan at last weekend's Chicago meeting of Chinese students. Pan, an organizer of the meeting, is a doctoral candidate at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. Indeed, students were warned at the meeting by Yan Jiaqi, a close adviser to deposed Chinese leader Zhao Ziyang and head of the Institute of Political Science in Beijing, to postpone their return to China. ■ M.S.

*With reporting from Iris Chang in Chicago.*



Dissident Yan Jiaqi.

Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council, are split about how to proceed. The Council has decided it will fund eight U.S. researchers in the humanities and social sciences to study in China as planned by the committee before the crackdown began. But the scholars will study in China under the auspices of the American Council of Learned Societies, not the Academy. To make matters even more murky, the China committee has suspended plans to sponsor about 16 graduate students who had intended to study in China this fall.

Physicist Joseph Birman of the City College of New York, believes that striking a middle ground makes sense. He advocates maintaining exchanges, but taking every op-

portunity to condemn China's actions, especially when U.S. scientists meet high-level Chinese officials. Birman, who founded a program that has brought 50 Chinese physicists to study in the United States in the past several years, says, “We should differentiate between the authorities, who supported massacres and roundups, and students and scholars. We should operate with a scalpel and not a meat cleaver.” He adds that when Chinese officials call the crackdown “an incident,” I say, “No, it was a massacre.” We have to make noise as publicly as we can.”

Birman draws a parallel between the circumstances in China and the past plight of Soviet physicist Andrei Sakharov and *refuseniks*. “During the Brezhnev era, we contin-

ued to travel to the Soviet Union. At the same time, we visited *refuseniks* openly and insisted on meeting with top Soviet academy officials and we condemned their treatment of scientists. I think it was helpful.” Birman said regarding China, “If one only maintains business as usual, that wouldn't be right.”

Geyer plans to visit Beijing this month to assess the situation there. For the Academy to resume normal relations with China, he says, “there would have to be a clear indication that the executions and arrests of intellectuals have stopped and an environment conducive to meaningful collaboration has been restored.” He adds, “We'll be groping our way” to measure those changes.

■ MARJORIE SUN