

World and Nation

Divided army factions trade gunfire

From Associated Press reports

BEIJING — Armies loyal to hard-line and moderate government leaders traded gunfire Tuesday, witnesses said. Citizens urged soldiers they considered friendly to kill those who crushed a popular movement for freedom.

The U.S. administration said it appeared likely that China's senior leaders had left Beijing. The State Department in Washington urged the 1,440 Americans in Beijing to leave.

Three Chinese armies were reported in the Beijing area. Witnesses said soldiers from the 27th and the 28th armies briefly fought each other, but no casualties were listed.

It was the 27th that drove pro-democracy demonstrators from the center of Beijing last Saturday on orders from the hard-line hierarchy. The 28th was believed loyal to Zhao Ziyang, a moderate who challenged the conservatives and was stripped of his post as Communist Party leader.

White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater said the United States has been in contact with midlevel Chinese officials but failed to contact top-level officials. "The assumption has been that the top-level people

have moved out to other locations," he said. "It's like the place is closed down. There's no indication who the leadership is."

On Tuesday, in the first appearance of a top official since the crackdown began, government spokesman Yuan Mu said China is "not afraid" of the universal condemnation that greeted its action against the pro-democracy campaign. "The rebellion has not been completely quelled," Yuan said. "The situation in the capital remains very grim."

Soldiers continued firing into crowds around Beijing four days after troops began killing hundreds of pro-democracy protesters in the most violent suppression of a popular movement in Communist China's 40-year history.

Witnesses said a small boy was killed and a girl wounded in the head. Police in riot gear cruised the streets in vans as night fell, beating up and shooting passers-by.

Anti-government demonstrations spread to Shanghai, Nanjing, Chengdu, Shenyang and other cities.

Washington made arrangements for U.S. airlines to fly Americans in Beijing to safety. Other countries also

urged their citizens to leave the capital.

A State Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said China's most famous dissident, astrophysicist Fang Lizhi, was permitted to take refuge in the U.S. Embassy in Beijing.

President Bush told the Justice Department not to move against Chinese whose visas have expired. Department spokeswoman Margaret Tutwiler said they could stay indefinitely.

Yuan said on television 300 people were killed, including 23 students; and 7,000 were injured and 400 soldiers were missing. The evening TV news said 32 people were arrested, most of them for trying to set fire to public buses.

Government casualty totals appear to be low. Diplomats have estimated the death toll at about 3,000.

The political struggle between conservative and moderate factions of the Communist Party intensified as the military factions appeared to take sides.

A report that senior leader Deng Xiaoping had died added to the chaos. The report, from Taiwan, was denied

by the government.

Ming Pao, a Hong Kong newspaper, said a young guard shot conservative Premier Li Peng in the thigh on Sunday but the wounds were not serious. It said the guard was shot to death immediately.

Chinese sources said they heard the man shot Li because a relative was killed by soldiers in Tiananmen Square, focus of the student protest for democracy.

Zhao supported having a dialogue with the students and was driven from the leadership late last month in a confrontation with Li, President Yang

Shangkun and Deng, the conservatives who ordered the army action.

Most of the soldiers involved were from the 27th Army, which is based in Hebei province and apparently is led by members of Yang's family. The 27th, which fought China's brief 1979 war with Vietnam, invaded the city Saturday night and rolled into Tiananmen Square, killing hundreds on its way.

On Tuesday afternoon, witnesses said the 27th Army fought with soldiers from Shanxi province's 28th Army, believed loyal to Zhao. There were no reports of casualties.

Government sets casualties at 300

From Associated Press reports

BEIJING — The Chinese government says that 300 soldiers, "thugs," bystanders and students have been killed during the martial law occupation of Beijing.

But most other estimates of casualties are far higher. State Council spokesman Yuan Mu said on Tuesday that 7,000 people, including 5,000 soldiers, have been injured and 400 other soldiers are missing and may be dead or wounded.

Non-official sources say Yuan's figures on civilian casualties are far too low, but most have different estimates on the number of victims. They range from 500 to 12,000 people slain.

In Washington, U.S. intelligence reports indicate 3,000 people probably were killed, according to a U.S. official who spoke on condition of anonymity. He said estimates of the number of dead could go higher.

Nearly all of the deaths and injuries occurred Saturday night and early Sunday when troops, firing randomly into large crowds, smashed through barricades to reach Tiananmen square and attack demonstrators demanding democratic reforms.

One doctor said Sunday that a quick check of 10 hospitals placed the death toll at 500.

Other sources, compiling various reports and surveys, estimated more than 1,000 people had been killed.

That number has increased with additional details and rumors of killings.

Some officials of China's Red Cross said 2,600 people were killed but Beijing's Red Cross office has refused to provide any figures.

One Hong Kong newspaper reported 5,000 deaths and 30,000 injured.

An Eastern European diplomat, whose country has good relations with China, insisted that 12,000 people were slain by soldiers as they attacked protesters in Tiananmen Square.

That figure is certainly high. Probably fewer than 10,000 people were in the square when the troops moved in and most were able to escape unharmed.

But students who had joined the Tiananmen occupation said hundreds of colleagues from the Academy of Fine Arts who were huddled around their "Goddess of Democracy" statue in the square were shot or crushed by tanks. Beijing University students said 150 of their fellow students who were in the square are missing.

There were rumors that after the square was cleared troops burned many corpses in large bonfires and other bodies were removed by helicopters and garbage trucks to minimize the death count.

The exact number of people killed may never be known.

from page 1

China

and Taiwan also spoke. "As we watch television, in tears we cried out, 'No, no, no! You have no right!'" said Chesei Liu, who spoke on behalf of UNC students from Taiwan.

After the speeches, organizers led the crowd in chants. "Support Chinese democracy," "Down with the Chinese government," they said.

The crowd marched with banners and signs through the quad, down Cameron Avenue and Columbia Street, to the post office on Franklin Street.

The students collected signatures Monday and Tuesday on a petition they plan to send to Congress and

President Bush. They also collected signatures on a letter of support that they will send to China through Fax machines.

"We want the U.S. government and Congress to do something as a member of the international community," said Weiqiao Wu, a graduate student in sociology.

President Bush has already suspended military sales between the Chinese and U.S. government and visits between the two countries' military leaders, and is urging American citizens to leave China.

The students said they agreed with these sanctions, but more may be necessary if the violence continues.

"It's stopped being a political issue," said Weiqiao. "It concerns all humanity."

Weiqiao, who was a student at Beijing University before coming to

the United States, said he identifies with the protesters in China. "People who have been killed or injured could very well have been my friends," he said.

The Chinese Friendship Association collected more than \$3000 for the families of the protesters who were killed. The association has not found a secure way to send the money yet, but they are determined that it will get to China somehow, said Jijie Liu, association president.

The Chinese students from UNC also marched in Raleigh with Chinese students from Duke and N.C. State University Wednesday.

"We want to form an American front here," Jijie said. "We're all doing the same thing, just in different places."

"What the students were fighting for is worth dying for — that's what we want to get across," said Keqing Xia, a graduate student. "We will be heard eventually."

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