

because to our vast surprise there wasn't machine gun fire and blood in the streets. There was a rapid retreat by Marcos from confrontation, and then from power. He left from the back lawn of the Malacañang Palace, got his wife on board the helicopter but left all of her shoes behind in the cupboards, and the Philippines moved on to an imperfect but genuine democracy, which it still enjoys today.

In the three years after 1986 in Manila, there were *five* attempts in Asia to copy this technique. Three of them were quite successful, in South Korea, in Thailand and in Bangladesh, where military regimes were removed from power by non-violent popular resistance. And in their place came, again, imperfect but genuinely democratic regimes. There were also two terrible failures. One was in Burma, where the same tactics were deployed in a similar situation, but where notably there were very few foreign television cameras and no live uplink. In Rangoon, the protests were drowned in blood (and Burma is still a dreadful dictatorship today). And there was the very near-run thing in China, on Tienanmen Square in May-June 1989.

I'm sure you all remember what you saw on your television screens in those three weeks when Chinese students occupied the main square in the centre of Beijing, demanding civil rights, freedom of speech, democracy. They made their demands with perfect courtesy, employing the non-violent tactics that are now available to any reasonably well-educated person on the planet — and they came very close, in my estimation, to succeeding. It was a much nearer-run thing than people remember. At the time, nobody in Beijing knew whether those willing to risk violence within the regime would win out over those who wanted to compromise with the students, those who saw the way forward for China in a gradual shift away from the kind of confrontation between regime and people that had been building through the 1980s.

In the end, of course, the Chinese attempt to democratize in Beijing was drowned in blood, though it was done with great difficulty. Not only were there huge arguments within the regime before the decision was taken, but also it was done by night precisely so that they could minimize television coverage. And the non-violent persuasion had been so effective in terms of sapping the will of the soldiers of the Beijing garrison to use force against the protesters that the regime took the precaution of pulling all those troops out and bringing in fresh soldiers from outside the city who had not been contaminated by contact with the students and the citizens of Beijing. Moreover, the troops were sent in shooting in order to guarantee that there would be no human contact before the killing started.

It succeeded in suppressing Chinese democracy. Nine years later now, China is certainly not a democracy, although the subject has not gone away. Just last week the new Chinese prime minister was asked in a fairly open press conference: what about Chinese democracy? And he said: "Yes, in time." You don't have to believe him, but