

## S. O. 52

China had a son who was demonstrating in Tiananmen Square. He was full of anxiety as to his son's fate.

Since the Second World War there have been notable public uprisings of this kind. There was one in 1951 in East Germany, in Budapest in 1956, and Tibet in 1959. There was the one in the Prague in the spring in 1968. There was that wonderful moment in February 1986 in Manila when an 82 year old grandmother with the power of prayer and a flower stopped a tank which had rolled out of the barracks. In the words of Jaime Cardinal Sin: "People power defeated the weaponry of the oppressor".

Now, in 1989, we have the slaughter in Tiananmen Square. What has led to the uprising? What has led to the tyranny which put it down?

I am told that there is a dichotomy in Chinese society between the urban and the rural population. Life is more difficult in the cities. Prices are higher. There is crowding and tension which leads to a good deal of anxiety. There is, of course, the yearning for freedom, a yearning for political freedom and perhaps more economic freedom. It is a yearning which might to our eyes and our ears be somewhat naive and idealistic.

I had the opportunity this afternoon to speak with Professor Leslie Green, a distinguished international jurist, a Professor of International Law at the University of Alberta who just in the last seven days has returned from lecturing at Beijing University and at Harbin University in Heilongjiang Province of northern China. While in Harbin, Professor Green was asked questions about human rights by the Chinese students. To quote the Professor directly:

—their questions were excellent. Let me give you an example because I think it reflects the student mentality in the area.

The question posed to the professor was:

In your country, Professor, if students wish to demonstrate, do they need Government permission?

Professor Green replied by pointing out:

—in Canada you don't need government permission but the police have to approve your route, and if you deviate from the route they will push you back. They didn't like that answer, they had been led sort of by western reaction to assume that all students have to do is come out and everything in the garden will be lovely.

They also said to Professor Green:

—in your country, if a visiting dignitary, a head of state comes, and wants to invite people to dinner, will the Government interfere if he invites a leading dissident?

You may remember, Mr. Speaker, that that is what happened with President Bush. Professor Green replied:

—I don't think it would happen in Canada, because the Chief of Protocol of External Affairs would ask to see the guest list in advance, and I think that is correct. They didn't like that answer, either. So you can see the sort of temper they were in, but they asked their questions the way that wouldn't embarrass me.

Within the Chinese society and the Chinese culture students have traditionally had a special place. The scholar has had a special place, as the incubator of tomorrow's intelligentsia.

Another factor which I believe has led to this tension in Chinese society is something that perhaps no society is immune from. We see it on our own continent, that is to say a resentment of the life-style of a leadership elite.

• (2300)

We also must examine the role of the western media both in the encouragement of liberation movements and sometimes in their collapse. We look back to the Budapest situation of October of 1956 and there is no doubt that in that situation there were broadcasts by liberation radio organizations in Western Europe which led the Hungarian people to the belief that if only they threw off the Soviet oppressor the western nations would soon come to their rescue. Of course, that was not to be. The West chose not to act in Hungary in 1956.

So we examine in the age of television what role the western media, playing to a western audience but bringing the picture directly out of the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square from Beijing into our own homes, may play in interacting with the attitudes of the students themselves.

Professor Green again had some comments to offer. He said:

When marshal law was declared and the western press made so much of the non-action of the military, the presentation of flowers and the hugging and the sitting crosslegged without weaponry, would have been the sort of thing to lead the government to assume that this was the beginning of something more than just a student protest. I also had the feeling from what we could see and sense that it was dying out, that if the government would have sort of let it run, it would have subsided quietly. Again, the students were a little unreasonable. You couldn't really expect the government to agree