

Thatcher tells of Britain's shock over the bloodbath

By Nicholas Wood, Political Correspondent

Britain was "deeply shocked and appalled" at the Peking bloodbath, the Prime Minister said yesterday as she led the country's political leaders in condemning the indiscriminate slaughter of China's pro-democracy protesters.

Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, branded the killings a "crime against humanity" and a "crime against socialism", and he predicted that the people of China would triumph over their despotic rulers.

Mrs Thatcher also sought to reassure the increasingly fearful citizens of Hong Kong,

New York — President Bush, under public pressure to react firmly to events in China but constrained by US strategic interests, said he deplored the use of force and urged "a return to non-violent means for dealing with the situation". Mr Bush issued his cautious statement from his Maine home as Chinese protesters gathered in New York, San Francisco and other cities and Congressmen demanded a halt to military and technical co-operation with Peking.

who will come under Chinese control in 1997 when the Crown Colony passes out of British hands.

She said that Britain would continue to "stand by its commitment to a secure future for Hong Kong" and that the Government was confident that the Chinese Government would also continue to abide by its obligations under the 1984 agreement.

But Mr Paddy Ashdown, the Democrats' leader, said that agreement must now be in doubt. "How could we entrust a free society, a free people and developing democracy in Hong Kong to the Government in the wake of these events?"

"The Government must make clear that the Anglo-Chinese agreement covering Hong Kong cannot survive the bloody repression of

peaceful protest in Peking." The Commons foreign affairs select committee is due to take evidence from Sir David Wilson, the Governor of Hong Kong, on Wednesday.

Yesterday Mr Peter Temple-Morris, Conservative MP for Leominster and a senior member of the committee, said the events in Peking would increase the sense of foreboding among the five million people of Hong Kong.

But while it was important to convey to them Britain's sympathy for their predicament it was too early to talk about negating the agreement.

Mrs Thatcher said in a statement: "We are all deeply shocked by the news from Peking and appalled by the indiscriminate shooting of unarmed people. It is a reminder that despite some recent easing of East-West tensions, a very great gulf remains between the democratic and communist societies."

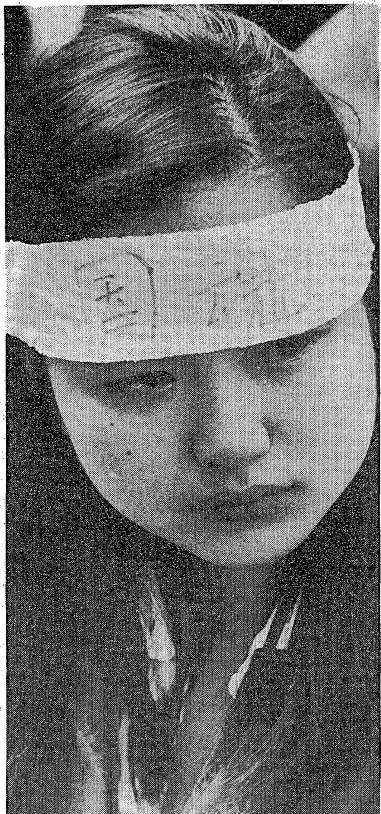
"We view these events in Peking with particular concern because of our responsibility for Hong Kong and our obligation, which we share with the Chinese Government under the joint declaration, to safeguard Hong Kong's future stability and prosperity."

"I understand the deep anxiety presently felt by people in Hong Kong and admire their steadfastness in the face of these tragic events."

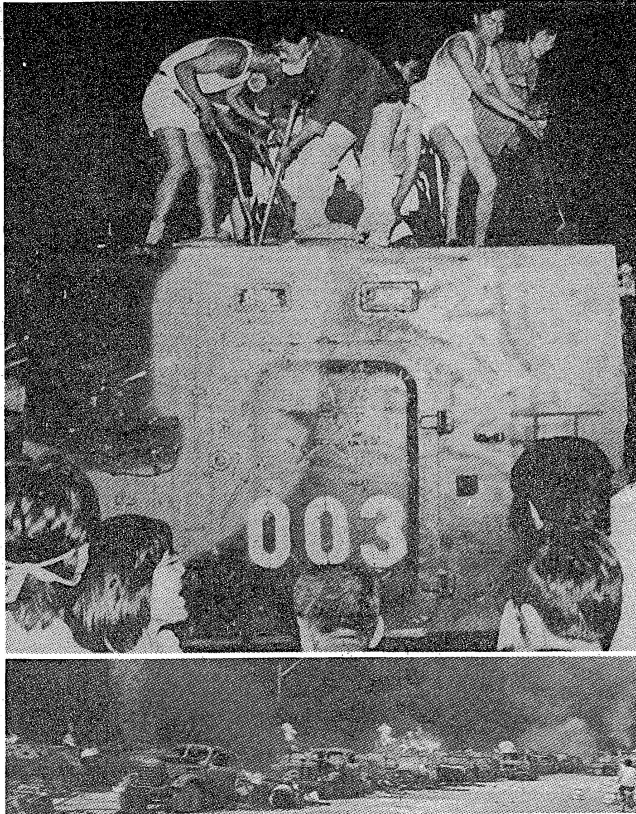
"Britain will continue to stand by its commitment to a secure future for Hong Kong. We are confident that the Chinese Government will also continue to abide by its obligations under the 1984 agreement."

Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, said the Government would be "expressing our sense of shock" and urging the Chinese leadership to "come to their senses".

On the possibility of sanctions, he said: "It is much too early to think in these terms."



Among the Chinese who marched yesterday in Gerrard Street, London's Chinatown, to pay tribute to the Peking protesters was this girl wearing a headband, inscribed "my country's soul". In Peking protesters climbed on to an armoured personnel carrier and prised open the hatch (top, right) while others set fire to army trucks which had carried troops to the city centre.



Thousand feared dead as tanks crush heroic resistance

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Jonathan Minsky of *The Observer* and Michael Fathers of *The Independent* — were badly beaten by plainclothes police.

"At the campus of Peking Normal University, a British student, Miss Ruth Herd, said that two small lorriesloads of troops had offered to hand their weapons over to students."

The carnage in Peking presented the British Government with a diplomatic problem of acute sensitivity, as hundreds of thousands of people in Hong Kong demonstrated against the action of the Peking leadership.

The Governor of Hong Kong, Sir David Wilson, spoke on the colony's radio of his "shock and deep sadness".

Many people condemned his remarks as an inadequate response and called for action, including changes in the British Nationality Act to give Hong Kong residents right of abode in Britain after 1997.

At a mass rally and march in the afternoon, the barrister, Mr Martin Lee, and Mr Szeto Wah both announced that they were withdrawing from

membership of the Basic Law drafting committee.

A general strike has been called in the colony for Wednesday to protest against China's action, and individuals have called for disinvestment in China and the abrogation of the Sino-British agreement on Hong Kong.

● Deng order: Mr Deng gave the orders for the bloody

military invasion of Peking from a hospital where he is being treated for prostate cancer, Chinese officials said yesterday (AP reports).

They said that Mr Deng's condition was serious. The officials, who work in the offices of the former President, Mr Li Xiannian, said that Mr Deng gave the orders a day before the army action.

"Even if they're functioning out of ignorance, they are still participating and must be suppressed," Mr Deng was quoted as saying. "In China, even one million people can be considered a small sum."

● China last night began jamming the BBC. A spokesman for the World Service said three out of five Chinese transmissions were blocked.