



LIU YU

Tung Chee Hwa, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong SAR, and Edmund Ho Hau Wah, Chief Executive-Designate of the future Macao SAR, on the Tian'anmen Rostrum.

PRC Marks 50th Anniversary

Some 500,000 elated members of the armed forces and civilians held a grand military and civilian parade at Tian'anmen Square on the morning of October 1, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

The parade featured 90 floats and 38 square formations of people from various walks of life, 42 formations of troops and the latest weaponry including tanks, armored vehicles, and missiles and a fly-past by 132 warplanes.

The grand ceremony began at 10:00 am, with a 50-gun salute. A national flag guarding contingent consisting of 200 armed police in olive green uniforms walked down the platform of the Monument to the People's Heroes in the southern part of Tian'anmen Square, marching northerly on a 10-meter-wide red carpet spreading along the north-south axial line of the Square toward the national flag post. While a 1,200-strong military band played the national anthem, a soldier pressed the button to raise the flag to the top of the 30-meter pole.

President, General Secretary of the

Party Central Committee and Chairman of the Central Military Commission Jiang Zemin, in a Chinese tunic suit, reviewed the 42 troop formations composed of the People's Liberation Army's (PLA) three services, armed police, army reserves and militia in a Hongqi-brand convertible limousine along Chang'an Avenue east

of Tian'anmen Square in downtown Beijing.

Returning to the Tian'anmen Rostrum after the review, Jiang delivered an important speech (see p7. for full text).

This was the first time that the third generation of state leaders have reviewed the troops at the National Day ceremony.

Then, the military band broke into a march. A guard of honor made up of the PLA's three services began marching past the Tian'anmen Rostrum. Following were the 42 troop formations made up of more than 10,000 people and 400 vehicles with weapons. It is worthy of note that in the last formation were home-made surface-to-air missiles, with a red head and a green body, operated by the air force. They are said to be one of the latest weapons for the Chinese troops and are advanced by world standards.

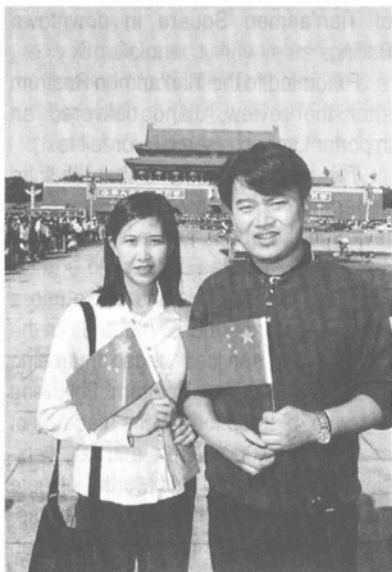
While the audience was still applauding the rumbling tanks that slowly roared past the square, 132 planes in 10 groups flew overhead. The show involved air-men from the army, navy and air force, a combination that appeared for the first time on a National Day military parade.

The Chinese-made aerial refueling tanker which made its debut at the show attracted special attention. When the refueling tanker dragging a long pipe flew over the square along with oil-receiving



A foreign journalist delivering an on-the-spot report.

PI DAWEI



LI SHIGONG

A young couple at Tian'anmen Square on October 3.

planes, no one would doubt the marked improvement in the long-range combat capability of the Chinese air force.

Also unveiled was the "Feibao", or flying leopard, China's first generation of fighter-bomber which belongs to the naval air unit.

Then there was a civilian parade featuring 38 formations with 90 floats, a great number of models, sculptures and banners illustrating new China's achievements over the past five decades.

The 50-minute parade covered three themes on "the Founding of New China", "Reform and Opening" and "Marching into the New Century". The pictures of Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping and Jiang Zemin, respectively representing the cores of the three generations of the Chinese collective leadership, appeared in the three parts of the parade.

The first part recalled how the Communist Party of China led the people to win national independence and the people's liberation before 1949, and illustrated the facts that after 1949 when New China was founded, China provided ample food for the world's largest popu-

lation, conducted nuclear tests, launched man-made satellites, and built big oil fields.

The second part showed the achievements in various fields over the past two decades, illustrating the fact that China is catching up with or surpassing developed countries in many areas.

The third and the last part expressed the idea that the entire Chinese people are rallying closely around the Party Central Committee with Jiang at the core and are striding forward toward the 21st century.

Floats featuring all China's provinces, autonomous regions, municipalities, Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan symbolized that the Chinese nation is a big united and happy family.

An eye-catching banner at the float representing Taiwan said, "The issue of Taiwan cannot be put off indefinitely,"



LI SHIGONG

Festive mood.

expressing the strong aspiration for a peaceful reunification of the motherland of the entire Chinese people.

The whole parade illustrated the country's political stability, economic development, national unity, social progress, improvement of people's living standard and the increasing improvement of China's status in the world.

At the end of the ceremony, hundreds of thousands of balloons and 50,000 homing pigeons were released in Tian'anmen Square. Some 14,000 young pioneers, with flowers in their hands, surged toward the Golden Water Bridge in front of the Tian'anmen Rostrum,

cheering and shouting, bringing the celebrations to a climax.

Attending the grand celebration ceremony were Party and State leaders, representatives from all walks of life and officials from foreign embassies in China. Also at present were Tung Chee Hwa, Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and Edmund Ho Hau Wah, Chief Executive-Designate of the future Macao Special Administrative Region.

Although the ceremony ended at noon, the Chinese capital was saturated with a festive mood. Residents in the city, deeply impressed by the grand military and civilian parade, could not stop talking about it.

"I saw all the weapons in the parade and feel very much encouraged," said Ms Li Xiulian who lives in the Dongcheng District of the city. "Our country is now

really powerful and the living standards of the people rose remarkably."

In the evening, some 100,000 people from all parts of China gathered at Tian'anmen Square, singing, dancing and cheering, celebrating the birthday of the motherland. About 200 kinds of fireworks were set off at different times from 11 sites in Beijing during the grand gala, transforming the city into a world of happiness.

Besides the capital, all over China, in big cities and small villages, celebrations in various forms were held. Chinese embassies in foreign countries held National Day receptions. Chinese students abroad also celebrated the motherland's birthday in their own way.

Governments of some foreign countries have expressed their congratulations to China. The foreign press paid special attention to China's National Day celebrations. They featured reports praising China's achievements in the past five decades and predicting that China would make greater contributions to world peace and development in the next century. ■