

OU Chinese want strong U.S. stand

By Amy Rauch
staff writer

Carrying yellow banners and wearing black arm bands — a symbol of mourning — Chinese students from Oakland University marched around campus, hurling their fists into the air and chanting "Long live democracy," and "Down with Marxism."

They were reacting to the tragic events in China over the weekend. And all of the students interviewed said President George Bush should take a more active stand against the violence in China.

The students, about 30 strong, marched on the Rochester Hills campus Monday afternoon to show their sympathy for the demonstrators killed by the Chinese army in Beijing last weekend. Estimates of the number of people killed in Beijing range into the thousands.

"DOWN WITH MARXISM" is a pretty strong statement and one that doesn't usually come from the students, according to Richard Stamps, coordinator for East Asian studies at the university.

"Can you imagine what it would be like to be 5,000 miles away from home and see your classmates killed on TV?" asked Stamps, who lived in the People's Republic for three years.

CHINESE TROOPS, backed by tanks, rolled into Beijing's Tiananmen Square Sunday, crushing and shooting indiscriminately at pro-democracy demonstrators, according to accounts.

The Beijing demonstrations will not bring democracy to China any time soon, Stamps said. "There will not be democracy soon. And what it (democracy) means to us and what it means to them are two different things. If they just get freedom of press and freedom of speech, it will be a step in the right direction."

He said that students who participate in demonstrations in the United States risk getting themselves into trouble over in China. But the students don't seem to care about that.

"THEY CAN TAKE me and kill me, but I want freedom. I want democracy," said Mengyao Yan, 30, a graduate student studying chemistry.

Yan, who has a 3-year-old son in Shanghai, said she tried to telephone her family for two hours, but could not get through because the Chinese government has blocked telephone lines.

She said that doctors who are trying to help the wounded are being killed by soldiers in China. "Even in World War II, people

didn't kill doctors," she said. Yan said she has contacted U.S. Rep. William Broomfield, R-Lake Orion, about the violence in China.

STUDENTS carried banners that said in both Chinese and English, "Down with Chinese Dictatorial Government," "Stop Killing" and, "What people are the People's Army supposed to protect!" As they marched past buildings, staff and faculty emerged and applauded the demonstration.

China has been under communist rule for 40 years. "The communist party leaders are not doing things for the people, but for their own power," said Qun Chen, 26, a doctoral candidate in medical physics at the university. "Once they get in, they don't care about the people."

Chen, who is from Shanghai, said he used to be a strong backer of communism but is now for democracy. Vice president of the Chinese Students and Scholarship Association at OU, Chen plans to return to China in about two years.

"I'M REALLY SHOCKED about



Students donned black arm bands in memory of those who have been killed by their government's troops.

the students who were killed by the government," said Shouhong Tang, 25, a graduate studying mechanical engineering.

"I really hope the American government will strongly support the Chinese students. The students really need outside support in order to stop dictatorship, get freedom."

Tang, who is from south China, was one of nine Oakland students who joined hundreds of Chinese students in mourning in front of the Chinese consulate in Chicago Sunday.



photos by JIM RIDER/staff photographer

As they marched around the Oakland University campus, faculty and staff came out of their offices to applaud the demonstrators.

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Mary Jia, 24, of Harbin, China holds her 1-year-old son, Gary Cai, while listening to speeches during Monday's march. Her husband, Wenjiang Cai, 32, is a student at Oakland University.