

20/5/89

'\$1m collected for students'

By Our Political Desk

THE pro-China Hongkong Federation of Education Workers last night decided to go ahead with plans to send two of its leaders to Beijing with donations of more than \$1 million for the student protesters.

The money was collected within 48 hours, before the students in Tiananmen Square decided to call off their hunger strike and before army trucks began converging on Beijing.

The federation is the first Hongkong left-wing group to participate directly in the mainland movement.

Federation chairman Ho King-on and executive Cheng Kai-nam will seek to convince Beijing officials to hold talks with the students.

Mr Cheng said: "We're surprised by the warm response. Most of the donations came from pupils, teachers, white-collar workers and reporters."

The flagship of Hongkong's liberal forces yesterday announced plans to hold a mass rally in Victoria Park at 6 pm today, then to march to the New China News Agency (NCNA) office in Happy Valley.

The Joint Committee for the Promotion of Democratic Government is expecting more than 1,000 to join the protest.

Meanwhile, local support for the Chinese stu-

dents continued to pour in from all walks of life.

Seven 1988 Outstanding Industrialists Award winners placed an advertisement in major Chinese-language newspapers, saying they would invest in China only if the Government there was willing to listen to its people.

Among the latest to join the fray were several civil servant unions, including the Federation of Education Department Staff Associations and the Government School Non-Graduate Teachers Union.

Lecturers and staff members of the Hongkong University Political Science Department urged the National People's Congress to convene an urgent session to discuss the people's demands.

The 1,700-strong Hongkong Polytechnic Staff Association and 160 staff members of the City Polytechnic issued similar statements.

Other solidarity messages came from members of Kwun Tong and Wong Tai Sin District Boards, Tsing Yi social workers, the Hongkong Chinese Reform Association and the Association for Democracy and People's Livelihood.

In New York, the Chinese dissident group which was earlier branded by Beijing as the culprit behind the pro-democracy movement appealed for the international backing.