

PAPERBACKS

BY DAVID MCCOOEY

Keen eye for inscrutable

● SHOUTING FROM CHINA, Helene Chung (Penguin, \$16.99)

THIS expanded edition of *Shouting from China* includes chapters written in the wake of last year's pro-democracy demonstrations.

Helene Chung spent three years in China as ABC radio's first woman foreign correspondent. The time she spent there is the basis for this book, which covers a big variety of aspects of China and Chinese life.

Chung has a keen eye for both the miniature, such as the infestation of insects in her flat and her desire for Western food while in China, and the broader scheme of things, such as the political situation and

the general feeling of the people.

Her story presents a nation which is complexly contradictory; a nation which both admires and is suspicious of things Western; a nation which is torn by the demands of liberalisation and the inherent conservatism of a one-party state.

Chung's first reaction to the carnival atmosphere of the student demonstration was disbelief. Her account is worthy because of its detail. She notes, for instance, the students' lack of homogeneity in their demands, and their confusion over the meaning of democracy. The account is both moving and detached.