

# News Digest

## Nobel Prize contender freed from Chinese jail

■ Human rights groups procured the release of the pro-democracy campaigner, who is now in Detroit.

BEIJING (AP) — China's most prominent pro-democracy campaigner, Wei Jingsheng, was reportedly released from prison Sunday and bound for the United States.

Wei, who has spent all but about six months of the past 18 years in prison, left aboard a flight to Detroit, his sister Wei Shanshan told Hong Kong Cable TV from her home in Germany.

Wei's release came less than two weeks after Chinese President Jiang Zemin returned from a state visit to the United States. Chinese officials had denied suggestions they would release Wei or other dissidents as a goodwill gesture, describing the prisoners as common criminals.

Chinese leaders usually are happy to see dissidents go into exile, where they often sink into obscurity. But none has ever been as high-profile as Wei, who has been mentioned for years as a leading contender for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Wei, 47, suffers from chronic high blood pressure and heart and stomach ailments as a legacy of his captivity.

Recently, he has been placed under 24-hour watch by fellow prisoners and held in a cell with one glass wall, which made him feel like

a zoo animal, according to the New York-based group Human Rights in China.

Human rights groups appealed to President Clinton before Jiang's trip in late October to demand the release of Wei and other captive dissidents.

Wei was first arrested in March 1979 as part of the crackdown on the Democracy Wall pro-democracy movement. Sentenced to 15 years in prison, he was released in 1993 in the midst of China's bid to host the 2000 Summer Olympics, but re-arrested a few months later after he met with the top U.S. human rights official.

He was sentenced in 1995 to 14 years in prison on charges of subversion and conspiring to subvert the government. "Everyone now knows that lack of democracy has seriously thwarted Chinese social development," he said in a 1979 essay "What Do We Want: Democracy or New Autocracy."

Human Rights Watch issued a statement welcoming Wei's release, but stressing that it should not be seen as a sign of major improvements in Chinese human rights.

"It is consistent with the 'hostage politik' that Chinese leaders have pursued since 1989 — when they need to offer a concession for political reasons, they release someone they should never have arrested in the first place," said Sidney Jones the group's executive director.

## U.S. asks for united power

WASHINGTON (AP) — Despite the outward opposition of Arab countries to a military strike against Iraq, the White House is confident the Arabs won't stand in the way of any U.S. action, President Clinton's top security adviser said Sunday.

Sandy Berger said that in any case the United States is ready to go it alone if necessary.

The Arab nations understand the threat posed by Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, National Security Adviser Berger said on NBC's "Meet the Press."

"In the end of the day, they are not going to impede our ability to do what's necessary," Berger said.

The administration campaigned hard among allies over the weekend for support of strong sanctions and possible military retaliation against Iraq for expelling American members of the U.N. weapons inspection team.

President Clinton on Saturday spoke to Russia's Boris Yeltsin, France's Jacques Chirac and Britain's Tony Blair, urging a united voice in confronting Iraq. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright has been making the same pitch in a tour of Persian Gulf states and with the Russian foreign minister, Yevgeny Primakov.

While support has been solid for stronger U.N. sanctions against the Baghdad government, France, Russia and the Arabs have resisted the idea of militarily pun-

ishing Saddam for his latest challenge to U.N. resolutions approved after the 1991 Gulf War.

Foreign Minister Sabah al-Ahmed al-Sabah of Kuwait, which Saddam occupied to spark the war, said Sunday his country does not support military action. The Kuwaiti cabinet issued a statement urging a diplomatic solution "so that the area could be spared the dangers of tension and instability, and the Iraqi people would not be subjected to more misery and suffering."

But on CBS' "Face the Nation," Bill Richardson, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, stressed that he was getting a different message from Kuwait's defense minister, and that Albright was successfully building support for U.S. policy in the region.

"We have no doubt that at the end of the day they will be supporting whatever action we take," Albright's spokesman, James Rubin, added on ABC's "This Week."

Defense Secretary William Cohen, also on ABC, said Kuwait and Saudi Arabia might not face an immediate Iraqi invasion, but they fully understand the dangers of Iraq's chemical and biological weapons.

"We intend to intensify that apprehension on their part" by making clear that Saddam has the capability to unleash devastating weapons of mass destruction if the

U.N. inspectors are kept out of the country, he said.

The administration officials stressed that in the emphasis will be on working out a diplomatic solution for now. "Failing that, we obviously would prefer if we had to work multilaterally," Berger said. But he added that if the allies don't join a military action, "the president has made very clear that he has ruled out no option."

In the event of a military attack on Iraq, Hussein's Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz told Time magazine in an interview, various groups sympathetic to the Iraqis "would be in that mood" to carry out terrorist attacks against Americans.

Asked about that, Defense Secretary Cohen said terrorist acts against Americans launched at the behest of Iraq "will be met with a rather overwhelming response."

As to when a decision on military force will be made, Cohen said, "There's no artificial deadline, but I think we're all aware of the ticking of the clock."

Iraq's ambassador to the U.N., Nizar Hamdoon, said on CBS and on CNN's "Late Edition" that Iraq realizes that in the eyes of the United Nations its expulsion of American inspectors is unacceptable.

But he said Iraq has "been cornered and forced into this situation" by the U.N. Security Council's refusal to lift crippling economic sanctions.

## Iraq hospitals cleared for attack

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interview with CNN that Iraq could resume building biological weapons within a week.

In Baghdad, fuel rationing forced U.N. monitors overseeing an oil-for-food program to halt their work Sunday. The monitors, who were unable to drive to work, said they expect to send teams out today after they secure fuel supplies.

The tightly monitored program allows Iraq to sell \$2 billion in oil for six months in exchange for food and other humanitarian goods.

Iraq, fearing the United States might target oil refineries and storage tanks in the event of a military strike, announced Saturday it was introducing gasoline rationing.

The government on Sunday ordered non-emergency patients to be removed from hospitals in Baghdad. It was not clear how

many people would be evacuated.

Hassan Abdel Jabar, a doctor at Baghdad Central Hospital, said the hospital would only accept emergency cases "because we are expecting a strike by the Americans."

The United States and Britain, meanwhile, worked to rally support for strong action against Saddam.

"He is not a man that is going to listen to any language of reason or sweetness unless the person using it is also carrying a big stick," British Prime Minister Tony Blair said in a BBC television interview.

Secretary of State Madeleine Albright cut short a visit to Qatar and left for neighboring Bahrain, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia to discuss the standoff.

In Qatar, Albright lashed out at Baghdad for refusing to comply with U.N. resolutions demanding the elimination of its weapons of

mass destruction.

"Unfortunately for the Iraqi people, instead of meeting these requirements, for six years, Saddam Hussein has lied, delayed, obstructed and tried to deceive," she said.

In Iraq, Foreign Minister Mohammed Saeed al-Sahhaf called for a peaceful solution to the crisis.

"The use of military force has proven that it does not lead to solutions, but to a complication of matters," he said in remarks broadcast on Iraq television and carried by Egypt's Middle East News Agency.

Intent on rallying support for Iraq, Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz planned to begin a tour of North African countries with a trip to Morocco on Sunday. Most Arab states oppose military action against Iraq.

**Everyone has an opinion**

**Here's your chance to be heard**

The Daily Nebraskan is now hiring columnists for the spring semester. Columnists do not have to be journalism majors. Pick up an application and job description at the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union. Applications are due Nov. 21. Finalists will be called in for interviews in early December. The Daily Nebraskan does not discriminate in its hiring practices and abides by all university policies regarding the same.

**We have spaces we need you to fill**

The Daily Nebraskan is currently taking applications for senior staff positions for the spring semester. Positions are open for: managing editor, associate news editors, assignment editor, copy desk chief, copy editors, sports editor, A&E editor, opinion editor, night editors, design chief, designers, art director, photo chief, senior artist, senior reporters and senior photographer.

Job descriptions and applications are available at the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union. They are due by Dec. 1. Applicants also must sign up for an interview by Dec. 1.

The Daily Nebraskan is an equal-opportunity employer and abides by all university policies regarding the same.

**Daily Nebraskan**

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