

win the Olympics in 2000. He refused to leave before getting back letters the prison authorities had confiscated. Once free, he immediately resumed his work for democracy. He was rearrested, and after a 20-month incommunicado imprisonment he was sentenced to another 14 years.

Although censorship insured that few Chinese heard of Mr. Wei after 1979, he has remained a touchstone of the democracy movement. In January 1989, Fang Lizhi, the astrophysicist, wrote a public letter to Mr. Deng asking for amnesty for political prisoners, mentioning only Mr. Wei by name. That letter touched off more letters and petitions and was one of the sparks of the student movement and the occupation of Tiananmen Square.

There is no visible dissent in China today. Some of the activists went into exile, many were arrested, others gave up politics and turned their talents to commerce.

The moral force of Mr. Wei's writing recalls the prison letters of other famous dissidents, such as Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter From the Birmingham Jail," Adam Michnik's "Letters From Prison" and Vaclav Havel's "Letters to Olga." Mr. Wei's letters are less eloquent, however. He is not a man of words, and he was probably not writing with an eye to publication.

But the most important thing the others had that Mr. Wei does not is widespread international support. Mr. King, Mr. Michnik and Mr. Havel knew that people all over the world were looking out for them and their governments were under pressure to free them, treat them well and heed their cause.

This security is as important to a political prisoner's survival as food and water, and Mr. Wei and his fellow Chinese dissidents do not have it. Their names are not widely known. While some American and other officials have brought them up during talks with Chinese leaders, in general the outside world treats Beijing officials with the deference due business partners.

Today Mr. Wei suffers from life-threatening heart disease. Because of a neck problem, he cannot lift his head. All indications are that he has not seen a doctor in more than a year. He is due to be released in 2009—if he lives that long.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

#### VISIT TO THE SENATE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC, HIS EXCELLENCY VACLAV HAVEL

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I am proud to present the President of the Czech Republic, His Excellency, Mr. Vaclav Havel. He is here on the floor.

#### RECESS

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate stand in recess for 7 minutes, so the Senate may greet him.

There being no objection, at 5:35 p.m., the Senate recessed until 5:43 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer [Mr. SMITH of Oregon].

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Arkansas.

#### ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 9:15

a.m. on Wednesday, the Senate resume consideration of S. 717 and Senator GREGG be recognized for up to 10 minutes in order to withdraw his amendment, and there be, then, 20 minutes of debate equally divided between Senators GORTON and JEFFORDS; and immediately following that debate, the Senate proceed to a vote on or in relation to the Gorton amendment No. 243, to be followed by a vote on or in relation to the Smith amendment No. 245; immediately following that vote, the bill be read a third time and the Senate proceed to a vote on passage of H.R. 5, the House companion measure, if it is received from the House and if the Senate language is identical to the House bill. I further ask consent that there be 4 minutes of debate, equally divided in the usual form prior to the second vote and 4 minutes equally divided between the chairman and ranking member prior to the third vote and, additionally, the second and third votes be limited to 10 minutes in length; and, finally, immediately following those votes, Senator STEVENS be recognized to speak in morning business for not to exceed 45 minutes, to be followed by Senator LEAHY for not to exceed 45 minutes, and further, following that time, the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 31, H.R. 1122, a bill to ban partial-birth abortions.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### WEI JINGSHENG

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. President, most of the time when I stand on this floor following Senator WELLSTONE, I will be on the opposite side of Senator WELLSTONE's comments. This evening, I would like to associate myself with the comments that Senator WELLSTONE made. I think between the two of us, we pretty well cover the political spectrum as we stand today on the floor of the United States Senate and call for the immediate release of Wei Jingsheng, China's most prominent political prisoner.

Because of his courageous stand as a voice for democracy and human rights, Wei Jingsheng was sentenced in 1979 to 15 years in prison. He served 14½ years of his term and was released in September 1993 as part of China's bid to host the Olympic Games in the year 2000. Wei continued to speak out for human rights and was detained, again, by the Chinese Government less than 6 months after his release.

Wei Jingsheng was first jailed in 1979 because of his peaceful activities and writings during China's democracy wall movement, notably his famous essay, "The Fifth Modernization—Democracy." Following his release from prison in September 1993, he met with journalists and diplomats, wrote articles for publications abroad and continued to assert the rights and aspirations of the Chinese people.

Mr. President, on December 13, 1995, Wei Jingsheng was tried and convicted

of the totally unfounded charge of conspiring to subvert the Chinese Government. He was sentenced to 14 years in prison and 3 years deprivation of his political rights.

Human rights organizations and governments around the world have condemned the trial and severe sentence. We, the Congress, have unanimously adopted resolutions calling for Wei's immediate and unconditional release. The European Parliament has also called for his release, declaring that Wei had been "persecuted because he was demanding democratic rights for Chinese people."

Mr. President, it is my understanding that Wei's family has appealed to the United Nations for help, increasingly concerned about his failing health, which has further deteriorated. Though he is no longer in solitary confinement, Wei is under constant surveillance from other inmates while cell lights are on 24 hours a day, visits by his family are restricted, and he has no access to outside medical care.

Wei Jingsheng remains a symbol of hope in China for those within China who are voiceless. They have steadfastly refused to give up their beliefs, their principles and their commitment to democratic reforms, despite the suffering and punishment that they have endured.

I believe that by honoring Wei for his courageous commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms, we will draw attention to the ongoing struggle for fundamental human rights in the People's Republic of China at a crucial time in that nation's history. Calling for the immediate release of Wei sends a strong message to China on behalf of the entire international community.

On Friday of last week, I joined a bipartisan and bicameral effort in honoring Dr. Nguyen Dan Que, along with Mr. Harry Wu, at the third anniversary of the Vietnam Human Rights Day. As I speak today, Dr. Que still remains in prison unable to leave Vietnam to seek medical attention and unable to speak freely about the abuses he has suffered at the hands of the Vietnamese Government. Of course, Mr. Wu, who fought for representative government and human rights in China for many years, was persecuted and held as a prisoner of conscience by China's Communist dictatorship. He was eventually allowed to emigrate to the United States where he has, thankfully, continued his efforts to help the Chinese people gain liberty and human dignity.

On August 25, 1995, Mr. Wu was expelled from China and returned safely to San Francisco. While this case was notable because Mr. Wu is a naturalized American citizen, the Chinese Government holds many thousands of prisoners who, like Mr. Wu and Wei Jingsheng, are guilty of nothing more than speaking out in defense of human liberty.

While the cases of Mr. Wu, Wei Jingsheng and Dr. Nguyen Dan Que

may differ, they are all representative of human rights abuses around the world, and especially by the Chinese Government.

For too many years, Mr. President, these courageous individuals have been deprived of the opportunity to exercise the right to self-determination concerning fundamental human and political aspirations. I say again, for too many years, they have been denied those rights.

Furthermore, it has been almost 3 years since the United States formally delinked American trade with China from its human rights performance of abuse. I say to my colleagues that much has changed in China, but it has not changed for the better. We now see a human rights situation that is worse by every measure: persecution of Christians, forced abortions, sterilization of the mentally handicapped and kangaroo courts for democratic dissenters.

Mr. President, I am deeply concerned with the mounting campaign of religious persecutions waged by the rulers of China. The Roman Catholic Church has effectively been made illegal in China. Priests, bishops, and people of faith have been imprisoned and harassed.

China's recent moves have menaced Hong Kong, in violation of their agreements with Britain and their assurances to the United States. Forty percent of education and social services in that colony are currently run by church-related agencies. China's action in suspending the Hong Kong Bill of Rights threatens the freedom of speech, the freedom of assembly and the freedom of religion.

I believe that these arguments will come to a boil again in coming weeks, when this Congress votes once more on most-favored-nation status for China. It is the obligation of the American Government to uphold the principles of democracy and freedom for all peoples. We must not turn a blind eye to the oppressed in the interest of expanded trade opportunities. The idea that expanded trade would somehow result in improved human rights conditions in China has been disproved. It simply has not happened.

Today's statements calling for the immediate release of Wei Jingsheng heeds hope for those who are victims of oppression. I look forward to the day when all peoples enjoy the countless freedoms that we have in the United States. I salute the efforts of Wei Jingsheng, Mr. Harry Wu, Dr. Nguyen Dan Que, and I urge my colleagues to stand up and voice their opposition to the treatment of these political dissenters and these defenders of liberty and, furthermore, we should stand against all human rights abuses around the world.

Thank you, Mr. President. I yield the floor.

Mr. SANTORUM addressed the Chair. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I be able

to speak as in morning business for as long as necessary.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION

Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, I rise today to begin the debate on the issue of partial-birth abortion. This is an issue that, obviously, has garnered a lot of attention over the past couple of years, both in the House and Senate and across the country. While the bill is not formally before us tonight, the bill will come up tomorrow. I have been informed that it will come up approximately at noon tomorrow, when we can actually begin debate on the bill itself.

So the debate on partial-birth abortion will begin tomorrow in the U.S. Senate. For those who have been following this issue, the questions that I have been asked, and Members are being asked on both sides of this issue, is not whether this bill will pass. I believe this bill will pass. The question is whether we are going to have sufficient votes to override what appears to be an almost certain Presidential veto.

In the House a few weeks ago, the House passed the legislation with 295 votes, more than the 290 needed to override the President's veto. We only need 67 votes in the U.S. Senate to be able to override the President's veto.

At this point, I think by all accounts, we are not there yet. We are still several votes short of the 67 votes committed publicly to supporting this legislation on final passage and supporting it in the face of a Presidential veto.

I will say we are at least four or five votes short at this time, and we are narrowing down the time here in which decisions have to be made.

So while I am not particularly optimistic of our opportunities at this point to get the votes necessary to override the President's veto, I think this is an issue that is going to continue to percolate, not only from the time that we debate in the Senate over the next few days, but also after the vote is taken, during the time that the President is considering it, and when the bill comes back here. So there will be plenty of opportunities for further debate, further evaluation as to whether the votes cast by all the Members are the votes that, in fact, will be the votes on the override vote itself.

What I would like to do in starting the debate is to fill in for those Members who may not have been involved in the partial-birth abortion debate—and we have a lot of new Members this year—to fill in the who, what, when, where, why, how and how many. All of the questions that normally would be asked about anything, let's ask them about the issue of partial-birth abortion.

This has been an interesting topic of discussion only because of the fabrications that have been built around what this procedure is about, when it is used, how often it is used, who it is

used on, where it is used, how many there are. Those have been the subject of a lot of publications and debate about how the people who oppose this legislation have constructed a fantasy, if you will, as to what this procedure is all about.

So today, as I tried to in the previous debate, I am going to attempt to lay out the truth as we know it. I say as we know it, because a lot of the truth is based upon what the opponents of this legislation tell us is the truth. An example of that is how many of these abortions are performed. The Centers for Disease Control do not track how many partial-birth abortions are done. They only track the abortions and when they are done. They do not track the procedure that is used to perform the abortion. The only people who track that, at least we are told the only people who track that, are the abortion clinics themselves who oppose this legislation vehemently. They are the ones that those of us who have to argue for its passage have to rely upon for the number of partial-birth abortions that are done. That is hardly a comforting position when you have to rely on your opponent for the information that you are to use in challenging the procedure.

But let me, if I can, walk through first what is a partial-birth abortion. I caution those who may be listening, this is a graphic description of this procedure. I just want to alert anyone who might be watching who might feel uncomfortable with that.

A partial-birth abortion is, first, an abortion that is used in the second and third trimester, principally in the second trimester. It is used at 20 weeks gestation and beyond by most practitioners of partial-birth abortion. So, by definition, it is later term, you are into the fifth and sixth month of pregnancy.

The procedure is done over 3 days. You will hear comments by Members who come to the floor of the Senate and suggest this procedure needs to remain legal to protect the life and the health of the mother. First, there is a life-of-the-mother exception in the bill. Very clear. It satisfies any definition of what life-of-the-mother exception needs to be.

Second, health of the mother. I just question anyone, just on its face, not as a medical practitioner, which I am not, but on the face of it, if the health of the mother is in danger, particularly if there are serious health consequences, why would you do a procedure that takes 3 days? That is what this procedure takes. It is a 3-day procedure. You have a mother who is at 20 weeks, or more, gestation, who has to have her cervix dilated. In other words, they have to create the opening through which the baby can come in the womb, in the uterus. And so it takes 2 days of drugs given to the mother. She does not stay at the hospital. It is not an inpatient procedure. She takes the drugs and goes home. If there are complications they happen at home, not anywhere else.