

RELEASE IN FULL

From: Mills, Cheryl D <MillsCD@state.gov>
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2012 6:37 PM
To: H
Subject: Fw: Chen Guangcheng Media Roundup VI -- April 29
Attachments: CGC Media Roundup VI -- Press Only.docx

From: Choi, Sung W
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2012 06:16 PM
To: Mills, Cheryl D; Sullivan, Jacob J; Campbell, Kurt M; Moy, Kin W; Carlson, Aubrey A; Lang, Stephan A; Rosenberger, Laura M; Marchant, Christian M
Subject: Chen Guangcheng Media Roundup VI -- April 29

Dear All,

Below are additional links, with excerpts, to pieces on Chen. The full versions are attached in a Word document.

Thanks,
Sung

PRESS

- **The New York Times, In Crisis Over Dissident, U.S. Sends Official to Beijing (4/29)**
<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/30/world/asia/us-official-in-beijing-to-discuss-chen-guangcheng.html>

The Obama administration scrambled on Sunday to contain a growing diplomatic crisis between the United States and China, sending a senior diplomat to Beijing to discuss the fate of a blind dissident who fled house arrest last week.

Amid intense secrecy, including a nearly blanket refusal to comment, the administration sought to negotiate over the safety of the dissident, Chen Guangcheng, who is said to be in American hands in Beijing — though it remained unclear late Sunday whether he was in the embassy, in a diplomatic residence or somewhere else.

The senior diplomat, Kurt M. Campbell, an assistant secretary of state, arrived Sunday to meet with Chinese officials concerning Mr. Chen's case, and to try to keep the matter from undermining the administration's longstanding effort to improve economic and security relations with China, senior officials and diplomats in Washington and Beijing said.

A senior American official said that China's leadership met Sunday to work out their response to Mr. Chen's escape before scheduled meetings this week with Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Treasury Secretary Timothy F. Geithner. Mrs. Clinton is scheduled to leave Washington for China on Monday night, assuming the trip proceeds.

"They're trying to figure out what they're going to tell Hillary Clinton," the official said of the Chinese leaders, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the diplomatic sensitivity surrounding the case. "We'd like to

know as much as we can before she leaves.”

...

The administration's only public comment so far on Mr. Chen's case came Sunday from an unexpected quarter: Mr. Obama's top counterterrorism adviser, John O. Brennan.

Asked about the matter on "Fox News Sunday," Mr. Brennan declined to discuss Mr. Chen's whereabouts in any detail, but he acknowledged that "we are working very closely with the individuals involved in this."

He went on to say that the administration sought "an appropriate balance" when advocating for human rights in strategically important countries like China.

"I think, in all instances, the president tries to balance our commitment to human rights, making sure that the people throughout the world have the ability to express themselves freely and openly," he said, "but also that we can continue to carry out our relationships with key countries overseas."

...

In the only comment by a Chinese official so far, Vice Foreign Minister Cui Tiankai said Saturday that he did not believe the Chen case would "occupy much time" at the talks.

...

Other advocates who have spoken to him since he fled say he does not want asylum that would force him to leave China.

That could create an opening for resolving a standoff with the United States, the officials said. "The federal government doesn't have to take this as a threat," the senior American official said Sunday, noting that Mr. Chen had not escaped from official detention, but rather from harassment at the hands of the local authorities.

...

It was possible, however, that Mr. Chen was not in the fortresslike embassy itself, but in an apartment or some other building, and thus still vulnerable to arrest, diplomats in Beijing said. That could explain the administration's refusal to discuss his case or his precise whereabouts.

Officials in Washington and Beijing refused Sunday to talk about Mr. Campbell's mission or any negotiations he may be conducting. The senior American official said that much remained unclear, including China's response to what has become a major embarrassment to Beijing. "It's not something that's going to be resolved quickly," the official said.

- **The Washington Post, Obama wants to strike 'appropriate balance' on Chinese dissident, official says (4/29)**

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/obama-wants-to-strike-appropriate-balance-on-chinese-dissident-official-says/2012/04/29/gIQABzthpT_story.html?hpid=z2

A senior White House official said Sunday that President Obama wants to strike the "appropriate balance" in dealing with a Chinese dissident who fled house arrest last Sunday and reportedly is under American protection inside the U.S. Embassy in Beijing.

Comments by John O. Brennan, Obama's top counterterrorism adviser, were the closest the administration has come to confirming the whereabouts of dissident lawyer Chen Guangcheng, and the difficulty it poses for U.S. policymakers.

The president tries to “balance our commitment to human rights” while continuing “to carry out our relationships with key countries overseas,” Brennan said on “Fox News Sunday.” “We’re going to make sure that we do this in the appropriate way and that appropriate balance is struck.”

Obama “has faced similar situations in the past in terms of this balancing requirement,” Brennan said, and “will do whatever he thinks is in the best interest of the United States as well as the individuals involved.”

...
Brennan made the rounds of three Sunday talk shows to mark the first anniversary of the U.S. Navy SEAL raid in Pakistan that killed al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

- **The Washington Post, Dissident drama recalls story of Fang Lizhi (4/28)**

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/dissident-drama-recalls-story-of-fang-lizhi/2012/04/28/gIQA3WSeoT_story.html

“When somebody comes to ask for asylum, you have to make sure they have really thought through what they are undertaking,” said the former diplomat, who spoke on the condition of anonymity. “You run through a checklist of things to discourage them.”

...
Chen, the blind legal activist, is a far less contentious figure than Fang, against whom Deng, China’s paramount leader until his death in 1997, bore a deep personal animus. China’s quarrel with Chen, by contrast, involves mostly low-ranking officials in Shandong province.

Fang, denounced as a “black hand” behind the Tiananmen protests and pilloried as a dangerous criminal by party-controlled media, faced a formal Chinese arrest warrant. Chen has been technically free — though closely monitored — since his release from prison in 2010. This, said John Kamm, a longtime campaigner on behalf of Chinese political prisoners, “means there should be no legal impediment for him to leave the country.”

Nonetheless, any U.S. role in protecting Chen will likely set up an acrimonious and possibly long tug of war between Washington and Beijing. A foreign dissident seeking refuge, added the former U.S. diplomat who was involved in Fang’s case, is “something enormously unwelcome. It creates huge problems politically and, also, logistically.”

...
Chen, the blind lawyer, is the “real McCoy,” said Princeton’s Link, and “is a completely different case” from the former police chief, who presided over a brutal crackdown on alleged gangsters, trampled due process and deployed torture to force people to confess.

“The U.S. was right not to get involved with Wang Lijun,” Link said. If Washington rebuffs Chen, however, “I’ll be the first to write an op-ed article denouncing the decision.”

- **The Washington Post, In China, Chen Guangcheng case poses test for Premier Wen Jiabao’s reform talk (4/29)**

http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/asia_pacific/in-china-chen-guangcheng-case-poses-test-for-premier-wen-jiabaos-reform-talk/2012/04/29/gIQANMTdpT_story.html

Chen’s case also poses an immediate quandary for Premier Wen Jiabao, who has repeatedly advocated putting China under the rule of law and making this authoritarian Communist regime more accountable to the people.

...
By appealing personally to Wen, Chen was deftly avoiding the accusation, often used against dissidents in China, that he was “subverting state authority.” To the contrary, Chen was pointing the finger at abusive,

corrupt local officials and calling on the premier — a self-styled reformist — to assert the power of the state over the local government and over a security apparatus that many critics feel has run amok.

...

Since March 14, when Wen appeared at a lengthy news conference at the close of the national legislature, the premier has been forcefully advocating a reform agenda, including the importance of establishing a law-based society in China.

...

“The rule of law is the foundation of the governance of the CPC and critical for realizing long-term stability,” the People’s Daily, the Communist Party’s main mouthpiece, wrote in an editorial that was widely reprinted in all the state media. “Anyone who breaks the law shall be convicted and punished.”

Now Chen, through his escape and in the videotape, is directly using that same argument in appealing for Wen and the central government to take action against those who abused him and his family members and illegally held him captive for 19 months.

- **The Washington Post (Opinion – China Aid’s Bob Fu), With the Chen case, U.S. credibility is on the line (4/29)**

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/saving-chen-guangcheng/2012/04/29/gIQAHUwtpT_story.html

Chen is my hero and friend. He is under the protection of the U.S. Embassy in Beijing. His status and safety present a pivotal test for freedom in China and for U.S. credibility as a defender of freedom.

...

One netizen, He “Pearl” Peirong, provided logistic support for Chen’s escape, picking him up in Shandong province — where Chen and I both hail from — and taking him to Beijing.

I am awed by the courage of those who helped Chen escape. Pearl told me she is willing to die with Chen because he is such a “pure-hearted courageous person.”

...

Chen is often described as a “dissident,” but that is a misnomer. Despite years of brutal treatment for seeking to bring attention to those victimized by China’s “one-child” policy, he has never established a political party or organization. He has never advocated overthrowing the Communist Party. In the video he posted online after his escape, he says that the injustices his family experienced “hurt the image of our Party.” And the first thing he did after escaping was tell me that he wanted the outside the world to know that he was not going to leave China but to “fight to the end for the freedom of my family. . . . I want to live a normal life as a Chinese citizen with my family.”

...

This is a pivotal moment for U.S. human rights diplomacy. The United States must stand firmly with this broadly popular individual or risk losing credibility as a defender of freedom and the rule of law. There is a reason Chinese dissidents revere this country.