

State

Dancer freed from Chinese embassy

United Press International
HOUSTON — A Chinese ballet dancer was freed from his country's consulate Wednesday evening, ending 21 hours of detention because he wanted to remain in this country with his American wife of three days.

Li Cunxin, 20, of the Peoples Republic of China, emerged from behind the steel-gated embassy and said an agreement had been reached which would allow her and his wife, Houston Ballet Academy student Elizabeth Mackey, 18, to stay in the United States.

"I'm happy to stay with my wife and in America," Li said.

He added consular officials were "very nice to me and now I would like to do something nice for China and America."

The dancer, his wife and five

men dressed in formal wear then departed in five black limousines in which they had driven to the consulate late Tuesday to seek an extension of Li's visa.

Li's lawyer Charles Foster, who had charged earlier in the day the detention was illegal, said a federal court hearing scheduled Friday to hear the consulate's reasons for the action was now unnecessary.

John Kirkland, president-elect of the ballet company, said the talks were "constructive and sensitive negotiations for Li's needs as a dancer and the future of the cultural exchange programs for the United States and China."

Li had been scheduled to fly to China Wednesday, and after the couple went to the consulate, Mrs. Li chose to remain with her husband.

Cunxin has won extraordinary praise for his dancing with the Houston Ballet in Houston, and most recently in New York he was singled out by Anna Kisselgoff, dance critic of The New York Times, for his style.

He arrived in Houston in June 1979 to attend the Houston Ballet Academy's six-week summer session on scholarships provided by the ballet foundation.

The bride's mother, Janet Mackey, who said she flew to Houston for the wedding but stayed away from the justice of the peace ceremony because Li and her daughter were concerned about attracting too much attention.

"They felt it would be safer if only a few people were there. Only a witness went," said Mrs. Mackey. "It was with my blessing.

He's a wonderful, kind, lovely man who loves my daughter very, very much."

She said the couple fell in love during Li's visit to West Palm Beach in November 1979.

Houston Ballet Artistic Director Ben Stevenson said the ballet had been unaware of the romance. He said Li had great potential as a dancer and possibly great vulnerability to romance because of his strict Chinese upbringing.

"As a dancer, he is incredibly talented. He has really star potential," Stevenson said. "Both (Chinese) students are very handsome, conscientious, and tremendously popular with everyone."

"I think he is the type of guy that a woman could sweep off his feet. They (Chinese exchange students) are too shy. In China, the

situation is different (in that young persons have less experience early with the opposite sex.)"

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Men charged with planning island government takeover

United Press International
NEW ORLEANS — Financial backing for 10 mercenaries arrested on charges that they plotted to overthrow a Caribbean island's government apparently came from within the United States, a Treasury agent said Wednesday.

The men arrested in a remote area north of New Orleans late Monday were ready to invade Dominica, a tiny island republic 300 miles southeast of Puerto Rico, officials said.

An assortment of automatic weapons, dynamite, plastic explosives, blasting caps and fuses confiscated from the group indicated the plot was serious, said Michael Hall, a special agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms.

Hall said he did not know who financed the operation but there was no indication the money came from outside this country.

"As far as we know at this point, the financing is not coming from Dominica," he said. "We're possibly looking at some individuals in the U.S. as backers."

A letter released Wednesday by a representative of Dominican Prime Minister Mary Eugenia Charles, however, tied alleged coup leader Michael Eugene Per-

due of Houston to former Prime Minister Patrick John and the head of Dominica's army. John and the army chief were arrested in March on a charge of plotting to topple Charles' moderate government.

The letter, allegedly sent by the Dominican army's deputy commander to an army official, was intercepted by Dominican police March 6, said Lennox Honeychurch, Charles' press secretary.

"Somebody will give you a number to call Mike Perdue in Texas, collect call," the letter said. It mentioned John in the coup attempt, saying, "I have already settled payment."

Political unrest has led to the declaration of a state of emergency and a parliamentary bill to dismantle the army.

The mercenaries were charged with violations of federal neutrality statutes and firearms laws.

FBI spokesman Cliff Anderson said evidence could be given to a federal grand jury as early as Thursday.

Agents posing as seamen accepted \$15,000 to provide a boat for the operation. The mercenaries were arrested as agents said they gathered to embark on the coup attempt.

Hall did not rule out the possibility others were involved in the plot.

The eight other mercenaries were identified as Michael Stanley Norris, 21, Tuscaloosa, Ala.; Wolfgang Walter Droegge, 31, Toronto; Robert William Prichard Jr., 30, Raleigh, N.C.; William Burnett

Waldrop Jr., 33, Braxton, Miss.; Christopher Billy Anderson, 41, Oklahoma City; Joe Daniel Hawkins, 37, Smith County, Miss.; George Taylor Malvaney, 21, Jackson, Miss., and Larry Lloyd Jacklin, 22, Listowell, Ontario, Canada.

was tentative and Sharp said since they try 100 votes passage of an amendment.

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Texas Legislature passes drinking bill

United Press International
AUSTIN — The Texas Senate unanimously approved Wednesday a third attempt at resolving differences between the two houses on a bill raising the minimum drinking age in Texas to 19.

The House followed suit an hour later with a 119-26 vote to accept the conference committee report.

The House and Senate have been negotiating for more than a month concerning a House amendment to the bill presuming beer and liquor retailers to be guilty of knowingly selling to a minor if they sold alcoholic beverages to a person under 19 without checking his or her identification.

The latest proposal by the conference committee deletes that provision, and changes only the minimum legal age from 18 to 19.

"We tried our best to put some enforcement language into the bill, but we were limited to one part of enforcement and that was asking for identification," said Sen. Bill Sarpalus, D-Hereford.

"We tried it twice — once with the House version and once with the Senate version, and it just didn't work."

Sarpalus said a survey of the House shows 106 members will go along with the latest proposal.

"It's been a battle, but I think we've finally won it," he said.

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