

are more worried about labor unrest than anything else.” A Hongkong analyst said that “at first, we did not understand why China would deliberately provoke the United States. It appears now that horizontal linkages between labor activists around the country are what Beijing is really worried about.”

The extent of the concern was shown by Vice Premier Zou Jiahua’s call on March 10 for a nationwide campaign to protect workers because of the “horrific” increase in industrial accidents last year. On a national teleconference on industrial safety, Zou said that, in an “unprecedented” toll in lives and damage, more than 60,000 people had died in “thousands of incidents” in China between January and October, the *China Daily* reported. The rise in deaths was particularly marked in foreign-funded firms and collectively run mines, he said. Zou called for new laws on industrial safety, and punishment for firms which endanger workers. He said that safety inspections should be carried out regularly, and should target “accident black spots” such as foreign-funded or township enterprises. Zou also said that the press will highlight major accidents which claim many lives or cause severe damage.

Dissidents speaking out

China’s very small but courageous dissident movement is speaking out in a manner not seen since the national demonstrations and protests in spring 1989. Repeated detentions and harassment in the last weeks have driven Wei Jingshen—the leader of the Democracy Wall movement crushed by Deng Xiaoping before Deng launched his “reforms” in 1978—Tiananmen Square leaders Wang Dan and Zhai Weimin, and others from Beijing; yet despite this, several groups have presented petitions to the National People’s Congress. Their demands include not only free speech, but also the protection of the rights of China’s working population, both in the countryside and in industry.

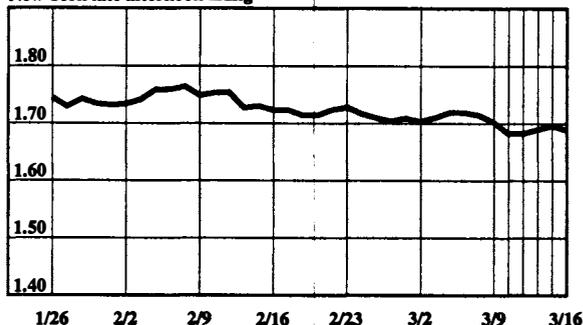
On March 10, seven leading scientists and intellectuals, led by Academy of Sciences historian Xu Liangying, who is one of the translators of Albert Einstein’s works into Chinese, submitted to President Jiang Zemin a petition stating: “We appeal to the authorities to bravely end our country’s history of punishing people for their ideology, speech, and writing, and to release all those imprisoned because of their ideology and speech. We think that only after human rights are respected and all kinds of rights that a citizen should have are secured, will society have true stability.” At the same time, a new Association for Protection of Labor Rights, with 120 signatories nationwide, applied to the Civil Affairs Ministry to set up a nongovernmental group to protect workers, including giving them the right to strike.

Other indications of a gathering of forces against Deng Xiaoping include a report in the *South China Morning Post* of Hongkong that the “leftist” wing of the Chinese CP is preparing to expose Deng Xiaoping’s direct responsibility for the Tiananmen massacre.

Currency Rates

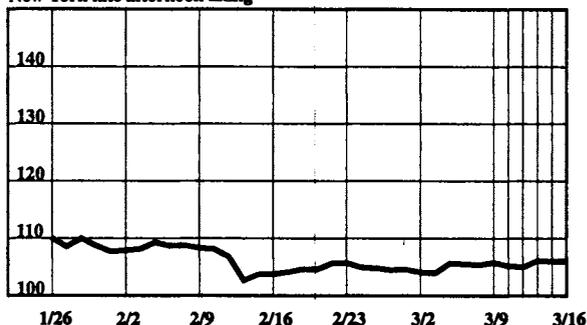
The dollar in deutschemarks

New York late afternoon fixing



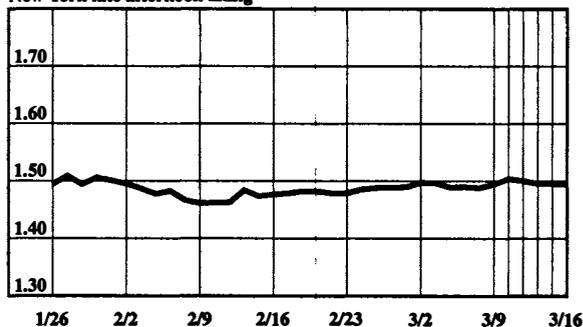
The dollar in yen

New York late afternoon fixing



The British pound in dollars

New York late afternoon fixing



The dollar in Swiss francs

New York late afternoon fixing

