

News In Brief

Yoko sends letter worldwide

NEW YORK (AP) — In an open letter published Sunday in newspapers worldwide, Yoko Ono said donations to a fund set up by her husband, John Lennon, had reached \$100,000 since his shooting death Dec. 8. She thanked his fans for their condolences.

The letter, published as a full-page advertisement and titled "In Gratitude," appeared in the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *London Sunday Times* and in newspapers in Germany and Japan.

"I thank you for your feeling of anger for John's death," Ono wrote. "I share your anger. I am angry at myself for not having been able to protect John. I am angry at myself and at all of us for allowing our society to fall apart to this extent.

"The only 'revenge' that would mean anything to us, is to turn the society around in time, to one that is based on love and trust as John felt it could be. The only solace is to show that it could be done, that we could create a world of peace on earth for each other and for our children."

Begin government to dissolve Knesset

JERUSALEM (AP) — Prime Minister Menachem Begin's government, battered by economic and foreign policy problems and the loss of its ruling majority, announced Sunday it would dissolve Israel's Parliament and call elections for July 7, four months ahead of schedule.

The opposition Labor Party immediately proposed elections for May 12 and accused the government of stalling.

Begin's normal term expires Nov. 17. Begin said after a Cabinet meeting that his Likud Party would introduce the necessary legislation Monday to dissolve Israel's Parliament, the Knesset. He said he hoped the bill could be passed by Wednesday.

After the adoption of a dissolution bill, the government continues to function with full powers until a new government is formed, which could take several months after the elections.

A capital party

Washington celebrates inauguration...again and again

WASHINGTON (AP) — With gospel hymns and opera, bluegrass and black-tie ballet, the capital is whooping it up for the inauguration of Ronald Reagan — a celebration made all the sweeter by brightening prospects for the hostages' release.

Reagan, who will become president of the United States at noon Tuesday, contributed to the cautious euphoria Sunday on his way to church by remarking that if Iran gives up the hostages, "I'll sign anything."

The president-elect and his wife, choosing carefully which of the dozens of inaugural events to attend, worshipped at the National Presbyterian Church, attended a luncheon and planned to make an appearance at three black-tie Kennedy Center inaugural concerts — opera, ballet and classical music — in the evening.

Reagan long ago finished writing the inaugural speech that will set the tone of his administration. A senior transition aide said the speech, only 15 minutes long, will "give Americans a sense of what kind of president Ronald Reagan is going to be."

The theme is "begin an era of renewal," the official said. "The tone is upbeat, can-do spirit, tap the American spirit, trust in the people, cut back on government, give more power to the states. Its content is economic urgency: move on inflation, taxes and big government ... it tells the Reagan constituency they have an ally in their work."

Reagan will deliver the speech from the flag-foisted west front of the Capitol, reading from 5-by-8 inch cards. The transition aide said Reagan wrote 80 percent of the speech in longhand on a yellow legal pad during a recent five-hour flight to Los Angeles from Washington.

"This is what he wanted to say," the aide said. "This is the way he wanted to say it."

The Bible Reagan will use to take the oath of office belonged to his mother, Nellie Reagan, and will be open to II Chronicles 7:14.

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal the land."

Vice president-elect George Bush and his wife were the attractions at some inaugural parties Sunday. Bush told one gathering of diplomats that the new administration's top priority will be the economy but "You must not interpret that to mean there will be less on foreign affairs. It's a small world, and things go hand in hand."

Mrs. Bush, who fell and cut her leg at the Texas State Society party Saturday night, wore a bandage as she accompanied her husband to three receptions in less than an hour.

One reception, for 5,000 guests at \$10 a head, had neither Reagan nor Bush as an attraction. Instead, 32 state and territorial governors were featured and Reagan's older daughter, Maureen, was on hand briefly. Former Gov. John B. Connally of Texas was nearly mobbed when he came in.

Television crews were rehearsing Tuesday's big show: at the Capitol, where Reagan will take the oath of office, down the Pennsylvania Avenue parade route, and in front of the White House where Reagan will review the bands, marchers and riders.

City officials talked in terms of 100,000 out-of-town visitors for the hoopla surrounding the inauguration of the nation's 40th president. One special group, 206 of the nation's 272 living holders of the Congressional Medal of Honor accepted invitations to the festivities.

The grandeur of the capital was enhanced by the weather, a brilliant sun and crisp temperatures reflecting the snow patches remaining from a snowfall a week ago. About the same conditions were forecast for Inauguration Day: a bit more clouded, noon temperature about 42, and — to the relief of inauguration planners — no new snow.

At the church, the same one that Dwight D. Eisenhower attended when he was president, the Reagans were greeted by a small band of demonstrators carrying signs extolling the Equal Rights Amendment. Reagan, who opposes adding the amendment to the Constitution, shrugged his shoulders.

Even if they wanted to, Reagan and his wife could not attend all of the functions, public and private.

Washington has become a veritable fair, with something for everybody.

The Reagans stood in sub-freezing weather Saturday at the Lincoln Memorial for the formal opening of the inaugural celebration, which featured 13,000 aerial rockets and a laser light show.

Robert K. Gray and Charles Z. Wick, co-chairmen of the inaugural committee, have said the celebration will be the biggest and most expensive ever.

The \$8 million-plus cost is borne by participants and wealthy contributors. The nine inaugural balls, to which more than 40,000 people have been invited, are expected to gross half the total. Admission prices are \$100 a person, but corporations have been invited to buy 10-person boxes for \$10,000.

Monday's gala at the Capital Center, seating 19,000, has ticket prices of \$50, \$100, \$150. Television advertising time for the two-hour show organized by Frank Sinatra with Johnny Carson as host, is being sold at \$250,000 a minute.

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