

International Intelligence

Colombian court curbs TV sex, violence

A court in Baranquilla, Colombia has banned all television programming showing violence or explicit sex during daytime hours on the country's two major state-owned television channels, UPI reported on March 31.

The court decision was based on a suit filed by a housewife who claimed that her children were being adversely affected by television. The judge ruled that daytime television was endangering the children, and ruled to limit the hours such programming is allowed.

Communications Minister William Jaramillo has said he will appeal the decision, and the executives of the major stations are hysterical. Mauricio Calle, head of the powerful RCN communications conglomerate, shrieked that "the judgment is subjective, because every Colombian has a different view of violence and sex." If the court decision is upheld, he warned, "it is going to be very difficult to do television in Colombia."

Colombian Sen. Gabriel Melo recently completed a survey which showed that in just one weekend, television programs included 142 violent deaths, 21 kidnappings, 12 terrorist attacks, 26 tortures, 114 fights, 232 assaults, 21 car bombings, and 81 shootouts.

A former cocaine cartel hitman who recently surrendered to the government said on a news program that violent movies had been his "best tutors" in methods of crime and killing.

Asian nations demand fairness on human rights

Forty-seven Asian nations, in a declaration prepared at a meeting in Bangkok, Thailand to prepare for the World Conference on Human Rights, recommended that efforts "toward the creation of uniform international human rights norms must go hand in hand with endeavors to work toward a just and fair world economic order."

The declaration, released early in April, urges that "national institutions" play an "important role" in promoting human rights, and that the establishment of such institutions is "best left for the states to decide." The declaration says that the delegates "discourage any attempt to use human rights as a conditionality for extending aid development assistance" and "emphasize the principles of respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity as well as non-interference in the internal affairs of states, and the non-use of human rights as an instrument of political pressure."

Amnesty International denounced the declaration as "a step backward for human rights protection." "The attitude of many Asian governments is deeply disappointing, especially when compared with that of the governments of Latin America, the Caribbean and Africa," the group said.

The goal of the conference was to prepare a common position for the World Conference on Human Rights that will be held in Vienna in June.

Wiesenthal defends Serbian genocide

Simon Wiesenthal, the widely publicized "Nazi-hunter," defended Serbia's genocide against its neighbors, in an interview with the Italian daily *Corriere della Sera* published on April 1.

"We know of the crimes of the Serbs in Bosnia," he said. "But we forget that the first refugees of the war were Serbs; 40,000 were forced to leave Croatia, when on Dec. 22, 1990 this country decided to proclaim that the Serbs were an ethnic minority. This shows that the Croats were the first, before the Serbs, to evince an exaggerated nationalism. . . . The synagogues and Orthodox churches were set on fire, a Jewish cemetery was profaned."

He was asked: "If Serbia is a Bolshevik state, is Croatia to be defined as a fascist state?" Wiesenthal answered: "Exactly. It is enough to read the anti-Semitic writings of President Franjo Tudjman to be convinced of that. Is it not the case that Israel has re-

fused to have diplomatic relations with Croatia? There is no Israeli embassy in Zagreb. It is also the case that Germany, Austria, and the Vatican were the first to recognize the independence of Croatia. . . . I am worried that Croatia will transform itself into a satellite of Germany, as the Serbs today depend again on Russia."

Wiesenthal said that it would be impossible to hold a "Nuremberg" trial for the Balkans, because "from a military point of view, this is a civil war," and because if there are Serbian war criminals, there are also Croatian war criminals, as well as Bosnians who have committed atrocities.

Algeria blames Iran, Sudan for unrest

The Algerian government severed diplomatic ties with Iran and recalled its envoy to Sudan on March 24, saying both countries had interfered in its internal affairs and supported Muslim fundamentalists against the country's military-backed rulers.

The Algerian presidency, in a statement carried by the official news agency APS, said: "Analyzing the international situation and particularly the interference of certain countries in Algeria's internal affairs, as well as their declared support for terrorism, the High Committee of State has decided to break diplomatic relations with Iran and recall our ambassador to Sudan."

State television quoted a Foreign Ministry spokesman: "This decision comes after the multiplication of actions showing the intervention of official Iranian milieu in the internal affairs of Algeria." The aims of this policy "were not only to destabilize Algeria but the whole of the Muslim world and to undermine the image of Islam in the world." The spokesman was quoted as saying that Algeria's ambassador in Khartoum was being recalled "because of the support of this country for terrorist activities."

In response, the Iranian Foreign Ministry termed the decision "irrational," and said it "has been taken on the basis of a false and hasty analysis of the internal situation in Algeria." An official at the Sudanese For-

eign Ministry "expressed Sudan's regret over this Algerian move, coming as it did at a time when Sudan was making constant efforts toward bringing about Arab solidarity and restoring unity and solidarity among Arab states, including Algeria."

British TV seeks to rehabilitate Judas

An Eastertime British television broadcast is seeking to rehabilitate the image of Judas Iscariot, according to a preview of the show published in the London *Times* on April 6. The psychological warfare "comedy" is called "Sorry Judas," and was produced by Howard Jacobson, who attacks the Christianity of St. Paul, upholds gnosticism, and ends up calling for the "canonization" of Judas.

The *Times* writes that Jacobson "is partly seeking to redress old wrongs, but also reviving a venerable 'secret' tradition. In the early centuries of the Church there were Gnostics for whom Judas's betrayal of Christ was a divine mission (since it opened up the path to salvation), and the man himself a hero or a sacrificial victim rather than a villain."

Japan is worried about Russian military presence

The Japanese Foreign Ministry called the Russian military presence in the Pacific "a factor of instability concerning the security of the region," in its annual Foreign Ministry Blue Book, Agence France Presse reported on April 3. The document cited Russia's deployment of sophisticated military equipment in the Asia-Pacific region, and said that Russia's growing weapons exports and its plans for the continued use of naval installations at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam were a cause for concern.

The report also called for scrutiny of China's military modernization program, including its purchases from Russia, and

noted "regional concern" with the Chinese military buildup. This is unusual, because Japan is generally reluctant to comment on Chinese military affairs, because of its brutal 13-year invasion and war against the Republic of China in the 1930s and '40s.

The Blue Book also noted reports that North Korea was building a missile with a 1,000-kilometer range that could strike Japan.

The Foreign Ministry pledged a continued Japanese contribution of troops to U.N. "peacekeeping" operations, but said it would be "necessary for Japan to have a serious debate on what our country should do on the basis of new developments in the international situation after three years."

Heads roll in China's provincial governments

The leadership of almost every province in China has been purged in the last few months, *China Aktuell* documents. Most of the changes have been in the ranks of provincial vice-governors, or chairmen of the provincial People's Congresses, but the governors of Gansu, Guizhou, Hainan, Hubei, Shanxi, Sichuan, and Zhejiang, along with the Communist Party secretaries of Hainan and Hebei provinces, also changed.

These changes were made at approximately the same time that the biggest military purge in Communist Chinese history was taking place. The period also led into the National People's Congress session, which ran for the last half of March and oversaw the ouster of the last of China's "Long Marchers" from office, with the removal of President Yang Shangkun and National People's Congress chairman Wan Li. However, the "Gang of Ancients" still wields power from behind the scenes.

Altogether, over January and February 1993, a full 78 provincial leaders were removed from their posts, and three, including Beijing Mayor Chen Xitong, were promoted to higher national or provincial positions. Almost every province was affected, along with the big municipalities of Beijing and Shanghai.

● **LORD DAVID OWEN**, widely known as "Lord Death," warned European Community foreign ministers April 5 that Washington's suggestion that arms might be allowed through to Bosnia could lead to a dangerous escalation in the "civil war." "My view has always been that the 'fight-it-out strategy' is not the diplomatic solution. It is the counsel of despair," he said.

● **JAPANESE** Foreign Minister Micho Watanabe resigned suddenly, citing health reasons, on April 6. While he has been ill for some time, it is notable that the resignation took place one week before the Group of Seven meeting on aid to Russia. Watanabe has been one of the strongest opponents of Japanese aid to Russia. He was to have co-chaired the G-7 meeting.

● **PERU AND PANAMA** have been readmitted to the Group of Eight Ibero-American nations, also known as the Rio Group. Panama had been expelled during the regime of Gen. Manuel Noriega, and Peru was suspended last year. Venezuela's President Carlos Andrés Pérez, who has led the charge to isolate Peru diplomatically, said that "we must not look to the past."

● **MAKEDONIJA** was admitted to the United Nations on April 8, following more than a year of disputes with Greece over the its name and flag, which Greece claims imply territorial claims on the northern Greek province of Macedonia. The new state will be referred to as "The Former Yugoslav Republic of Makedonija," pending a final settlement in the region.

● **SOCIAL UPHEAVAL** looms in China, according to *Xinhua Digest*, an official magazine in Beijing. "Feelings of dissatisfaction in society are increasing . . . and the possibility of strikes, disturbances, chaos in certain regions, and occurrences which shake the nation are very likely," said the article.