



Top Stories



New Zealand's Mt. Ruapehu erupts

At least two confirmed injuries

ITV postpones broadcast of 2007 British Comedy Awards



ITV has decided to postpone the airing of the 2007 British Comedy Awards while

an investigation about the 2005 voting phone-in-scandal is underway.

Featured story

Interview with U.S. Republican Presidential candidate Tom Tancredo

Wikinews recently spoke with U.S. Congressman Tom Tancredo, a Republican candidate in the 2008 Presidential election.

Wikipedia Current Events

Mount Ruapehu erupts in New Zealand leading to the evacuation of fifty people. (News Limited)

•Sotheby's announces that it will auction an early version of the Magna Carta.

Wikipedia Current Events

•The Parliament of Lebanon adjourns a session to elect a new President of Lebanon until 23 October 2007.

•Approximately 20,000 people led by 2000 Buddhist monks begin another protest in Yangon despite threats by the Burmese junta.

•Hundreds of soldiers and riot police enter Yangon in an attempt to end the demonstrations

•Burma's junta slapped dusk-till-dawn curfews on the country's two largest cities Rangoon and Mandalay.

•The House of Representatives of Japan elects Yasuo Fukuda as the new Prime Minister of Japan.

•The Supreme Court of Indonesia rejects the final appeals of Imam Samudra and Mukhlas, two men sentenced to death for their roles in the 2002 Bali bombings.

•73,000 United Auto Workers union workers go on strike against General Motors, the first general strike against the company in 37 years. Talks between the parties continued.

•Warren Jeffs is found guilty of two counts of rape.

Graffiti vandal banned from top deck of London buses under Anti-Social Behaviour legislation

A persistent graffiti vandal from South East London has been given an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (Asbo) banning him from the top deck of buses in England and

Wales for three years.

Billy Murrell, a 17-year-old from Plumstead, has a history of convictions for criminal damage on public transport, including vandalising a Tube carriage in Brixton station and convictions for damaging buses and other public property using marker pens.

This is Transport for London's (TfL) first Anti-Social Behaviour Order (Asbo) against a graffiti vandal — TfL was granted the power to apply for Asbos by the Home Secretary in September 2006.

The Anti-Social Behaviour Order was issued at Greenwich Magistrates Court on 12 September. It also bans him from carrying any permanent marker pens or any glass cutting equipment on London Underground, railway property or any other transport provider's property.

Metropolitan and Transport police have been made aware of Murrell's Asbo, and have distributed his photo.

In detail, Murrell is prohibited from:

- Entering any depot, siding or other part of London Underground property or railway property or any transport providers property which is not expressly open to the public whether on payment or otherwise throughout England and Wales
- Carrying the following articles, in any area specified (above) or in

any public place, namely any form of unset paint in any form of container, any form of permanent marker pen, any form of shoe dye or permanent ink in any form of container, any form of paint stripper in any form of container, any form of grinding stone, glass cutting equipment, glass etching solution or paste, throughout England and Wales

- Aiding, abetting, counselling or encourage any person who was attempting or committing any form of unlawful damage towards any property not belonging to or under the direct authorised control of the defendant throughout England and Wales
- Travelling on the top deck of the any public transport bus within England and Wales

If without reasonable excuse the defendant does anything which he is prohibited from doing by this Order, he shall be liable to a detention and training order, which has a maximum term of 24 months - 12 months of which is custodial and 12 months in the community

Upon turning 18 he will be liable to imprisonment up to five years

Protests mark Ahmadinejad's visit to Columbia University

The Columbia University campus in New York City erupted today in protest over President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's debate with Columbia President Lee Bollinger. Ahmadinejad's presence on one of the United States' most prestigious universities brought out protesters from many causes to make their opinions known: whether Ahmadinejad should speak or not, the war in Iraq, Israel, George W. Bush, American imperialism', God and morality, all of which created a powder keg of opinions which made the air feel as if at any

moment it would explode into fistcuffs.

Ahmadinejad has been widely criticized for his anti-semitic remarks and as a holocaust denier, as well as Iran's support for terrorism. He also believes that 9/11 was an "inside job", involving Israel's Mossad or American 'intelligence and security services.' 9/11 family members have been loudly critical of Ahmadinejad, since last week when he requested a visit to Ground Zero to lay a wreath -- what has been widely viewed as a photo op.

The New York tabloid press splashed their covers with antagonizing headlines. The Daily News ran the headline "The evil has landed" and The New York Post labeled Ahmadinejad the "Madman Iran Prez". Since New York hosts the headquarters of the United Nations, whose charter requires that all member nations have access to the governing body, delegations of governments identified as enemies of the United States --North Korea, Cuba, Iran-- live and work in the city. At times, their governments come to address the governing body, as the Iranian President did on Monday.

Ahmadinejad's presence tore apart the usually close-knit community of students and academics that inhabit Columbia's enclave in Morningside Heights. "A high-quality academic discussion depends on intellectual honesty," wrote Columbia Law Dean David M. Schizer, "but, unfortunately, Mr. Ahmadinejad has proven himself, time and again, to be uninterested in whether his words are true. Therefore, my personal opinion is that he should not be invited to speak." The Columbia Conservative Alumni Association said "the university is extending

not a courtesy, but continuing a policy of anti-Israeli and anti-American leftist nihilism under the guise of academic freedom."

Richard Bulliet, an Iranian expert at Columbia who was instrumental in arranging the visit, defended the notion that it is imperative to listen to one's enemies. "If there is any likelihood of war between the U.S. and Iran, it is important for Americans to have some access to the direct words of the president of the other country. At least they are getting Ahmadinejad's views directly from him and not a reporter who has an ax to grind."

Sunsara Taylor, a member of the "Revolutionary Communist Party" and a student, had a mixed view. Although in theory Taylor did not have an issue with the Iranian President's presence on campus, she had a problem with "The event without any intervention or debate from the students...is reinforcing a bad dynamic where people feel they need to choose between Islamic Fundamentalism and U.S. Imperialism. I think it's fine for him to speak, but I think it's a responsibility of people in this country not to be bamboozled into going along with a war against a country's people just because that country's leader is a reactionary."

Interview with U.S. Republican Presidential candidate Tom Tancredo

Tom Tancredo has been a member of the United States House of Representatives since 1999, representing the 6th Congressional District of Colorado. He rose to national prominence for his strong stance against illegal immigration and his announcement that he was a Republican candidate in the 2008 Presidential election. Wikinews reporter David Shankbone recently spoke with the Congressman:

WN: Throughout my life my father, a lifelong Republican and an avid listener of Rush Limbaugh, told me that all we needed in this country was a Republican Congress, Republican Senate and a Republican White House to get this country on the right track. Last year he expressed his disappointment to me. So many Republicans, like my father, feel lied to or let down by the party. The rationale for the Iraq War, the sex and bribery scandals, the pork barrel projects, and, as Alan Greenspan recently pointed out, the fiscal irresponsibility. People feel there have been many broken promises. Why should someone vote Republican today?

TT: The best reason I can give: we're not the Democrats. The best thing we have going for us is the Democrats. Maybe that's as far as I can go; I hope that there are candidates out there who will reflect and carry out the values that your father believes in when he votes Republican. To the extent you can ferret those people out from the others, that's who he should vote for. The party was taught a pretty harsh lesson in this last election. I have noticed in the last several months we have done a better job of defending Republican principles as the minority than we ever did in the majority. I feel more in tune with the party now than I have throughout the Bush Presidency. Even before he came in, we were in the majority and we were still spending too much. Hopefully we can say that we were spanked by the American public and that we learned our lessons. There are true believers out there who will stick to their guns, and it's a matter of principle. What's the alternative? Hillary Clinton?

WN: You yourself said you would only serve three terms in Congress, but then broke that promise. What caused you to reverse yourself?

TT: What happened was this: having 'lame duck' stamped on your forehead in Congress when they know you are not going to be around. Then the committee assignments become less meaningful. That was just one of the factors. Far more significant was my becoming the most visible Congressional member on the immigration issue. When I came into Congress I approached Lamar Smith, who was "The Man" on immigration, and said to him, "I've come to help you on this issue." I felt it was one of the most serious we face as a nation. Lamar said, "It's all yours! I've had it with 10 years of busting my head against the wall!" I started doing special orders---that's when you speak to an empty chamber and whoever is watching CSPAN--and I did that night after night and wondered if it was worth it; was anyone paying attention? Then I'd go back to my office to pick up my keys and I'd see all the telephone lines illuminated, and the fax machine would be going, and a pile of e-mails would be handed to me the next day. I realized: people pay attention. I started picking it up, speaking around the country, leading the caucus on it. In time it became apparent there was nobody to hand the baton to; there were supporters, but not one single soul was willing to take it on as their issue. It was the first year of my second term that I sent a letter to every supporter I had. I said I had come to this conclusion that at the end of my third term (which is three years away) I don't know if I will run again or not, but that the decision would not be based upon the term limit pledge,

because immigration issue makes me feel I have a responsibility I can not shirk. I said that if anybody who gave me money based upon my term limits pledge wanted it back, I would do so. I received maybe three requests.

WN: There are an estimated 12 million illegal aliens in the U.S. To round up and deport millions of people would be a major government undertaking, requiring massive federal spending and invasive enforcement. What level of funding would be necessary for U.S. Immigration and Customs to achieve the level of enforcement that you'd like to see?

TT: Only a relatively slight increase because the only thing you have to do, other than building a barrier on the southern border, is go after employers. We need to go aggressively after the employers, and try to identify some of the more high profile employers who are hiring illegal aliens. Go after them with fines, and if they are not only hiring them but also conspiring to bring them in, then they could go to jail. A perp walk would have a chilling effect. If you break that magnet, most illegal aliens would go home voluntarily. An article in the Rocky Mountain News stated there has been an employer crackdown in Colorado, and that they are going home or moving on to other states. If we did it nationally, they will return home, because the jobs are no longer available. It doesn't have to happen over time or instantaneously. The costs to the American public for 12 million illegals are enormous and far more than are paid for by the illegal immigrants themselves in taxes.

WN: How long would full enforcement take for you to succeed?

TN: It would be a couple of years before employers were weaned off illegal immigrants and then a couple more years before you saw a really significant reduction.

WN: Can you explain your remarks about bombing the Islamic holy sites of Mecca and Medina as a deterrent to terrorists operating against the United States.

TT: The question I was answering was "What would you do if Islamic terrorists set off on or more nuclear devices in the United States?" My response was that we would need to come up with a deterrent, and that deterrent may very well be a threat to take out their holy sites if they did something like that in the United States. I still believe it is something we must consider as a possible deterrent because at the present time there are no negative consequences that would accrue to the people who commit a crime such as a nuclear, chemical or biological attack. There are no negative consequences; they may die in the attack but that is not a negative consequence for them. Usually they aren't going to be state actors.

WN: But wouldn't an attack on Mecca and Medina be an attack on a sovereign state?

TT: You are not attacking the state, but the religious ideology itself. Holy sites are not just in Saudi Arabia; there's a number of them. In fact, Iran has one of the holiest cities in Islam. And I never used the word nuclear device; I was talking about taking out a physical structure. The reason I suggested it as a possible deterrent is because it is the only thing that matches the threat itself. The threat is from a religious

ideology. Not just from Islam, but from a nation whose requirements include jihad against infidels, and we are a threat to their culture, which is why they believe we need to be destroyed. We must understand what motivates our opponents in order to develop a successful response. I've received death threats, enormous criticism, and I've been hung in effigy in Pakistan, but nobody has given me an alternative strategy that would be a deterrent to such an event. I guarantee when you read the national intelligence estimates, you would be hard pressed to not walk away from doing something

WN: Aside from becoming President, if you could be granted three wishes, what would they be?

TT: It was the other night that I saw for the third or fourth time Saving Private Ryan and in the last scene Private Ryan asks, "Have I been a good man, have I earned it?" My greatest wish is to be a good father and to have earned everything I have been given in this life. And to be a better Christian.

WN: Farmers rely heavily on seasonal manual labor. Strict enforcement of immigration laws will inevitably reduce the pool of migrant labor and thus increase costs. Do you support tariffs or other government intervention to keep American farm products competitive?

TT: No, I don't, because I challenge the premise of the question. The ability for farmers to obtain workers in the United States is only minimally hampered by the immigration process because there is, in fact, H-2A, the visa that is designed specifically for agricultural workers. We can bring in 10,000,000 if we want to. There are no caps. There are restrictions in terms of pay and

healthcare benefits, and that's what makes hiring illegal aliens more attractive. The costs would increase for certain agricultural interest, but it would be regional. You would also see a very aggressive movement toward the mechanization of farm work. We are seeing it today in a lot of areas. We saw it in the tomato industry with the Bracero Program. That was a program many growers relied heavily upon: workers, primarily from Mexico would come up seasonally, work, and then went back home. It was successful. But liberals ended the program as a bad idea because the immigrants couldn't bring their families. When that happened, tomato growers said they'd go out of business. Lo and behold they developed machinery that can harvest citrus fruit, and now they are genetically engineering trees that have a thicker bark but are more flexible so they can be shaken by these machines. You'll see it more and more.

WN: Do you agree that our forefathers intended birthright citizenship?

TT: No, the Fourteenth Amendment upon which the concept of birthright citizenship is based was a response to the Dred Scott decision.

During the original Senate debate there was an understanding that it wouldn't be provided to people simply because they were born here, but instead to people under our jurisdiction. For instance, nobody assumes a child born to an embassy employee or an ambassador is a citizen of this country. There was an understanding and a reference to "under the jurisdiction" of the United States.

WN: You and Karl Rove engaged, in your words, in a screaming match over immigration, and Rove said that you would never again "darken the doorstep of the White House." Are you still considered persona non grata at the White House?

TT: Yeah, even though he is gone, the President's feelings about my criticism of him have not changed. It wasn't my stand on immigration, it was my criticisms of the President that have made me persona non grata.

WN: Psychologist Robert Hare has discussed in his work the use of doublespeak as a hallmark of psychopaths, and social scientists have pointed out that the use of doublespeak is most prevalent in the fields law and politics. Do these two trends alarm you?

TT [Laughs] Yes and no. Unfortunately doublespeak is all too characteristic of people in my profession.

WN: What is the proper role of Congress in the time of war?

TT: To first declare it, and then to fund it or not.

WN: Politics is dominated by lawyers. What other group of people or professions would you prefer to see dominate the field of politics and why?

TT: I can't think of a particular profession from which I would be more comfortable drawing politicians from.

WN: Do you think lawyers are better for handling legislation and as politicians?

TT: No, they don't offer anything particularly advantageous to the

process. I don't think it should be dominated by one profession. I'll tell you what this profession is, and it doesn't matter what field you come out of. There's something I noticed here. I tell every single freshman I come across that there are very few words of wisdom, having only been here for ten years, that I can pass along to you but there is one thing I can tell you: this place is Chinese water torture on your principles. Every single day there is another drip, and it comes from a call from a colleague asking you to sign on to a bill you wouldn't have signed on to; but it's a friend, and it's not that big a deal. Or a constituent who comes in and asks you to do something and you think it wouldn't be such a big deal; or a special interest group that asks you to vote for something you wouldn't vote for. After time it erodes the toughest of shells if one isn't careful doesn't think about it. Even if you recognize that these small steps lead to a feeling that remaining here is the ultimate goal; that the acquisition of power or the maintenance of power is the ultimate goal, that really does... it doesn't matter if you are a lawyer or not, it does seem to have an impact on people. It's a malady that is very common in Washington, and you have to think about it, you really do, or you will succumb to it. I don't mean to suggest I've been impervious to these pressures, but I've tried my best to avoid it. One reason I am persona non grata at the White House is not just because of immigration, but because I refuse to support him on his trade policy, his education policy, Medicare and prescription drugs initiatives. I remember leaving that debate at 6:30 on a Saturday morning , after having the President call every freshman off the floor of the House to badger them into submission

until there were enough votes to pass it. I remember a woman, a freshman colleague, walking away in tears saying she had never been through anything like that in her life. Here was a Republican Congress increasing government to an extent larger than it had been increased since Medicare had come into existence. Your dad should have been absolutely mortified, because it was against all of our principles. And I know the leadership was torn, but we had the President pressing us: we had to do it, we had to stay in power, the President is asking us to do it. Principles be damned. There were people who caved in that night who I never in a million years thought would.

And the threats! "You like being Committee Chairman?" Yes I do. "Do you want to be Chairman tomorrow?" And that's how it happens. I was called into Tom Delay's office because I was supporting Republican challengers to Republican incumbents. I had a group called Team America that went out and did that. He called me and said to me, "You're jeopardizing your career in this place by doing these things." And I said, "Tom, out of all the things you can threaten with me that is the least effective because I do not look at this place as a career."

WN: You have supported proposed constitutional amendments that would ban abortion and same-sex marriage. You are also a strong supporter of the 2nd Amendment. Why do you believe that the U.S. Constitution should regulate medical procedures and personal relationships, but not gun ownership?

TT: The issue of medical procedures and relationships: I don't really believe the federal

government or any level of government has any business in determining about who I care about, or who anybody cares about, but I do believe they have a legitimate role, and the federal government has a responsibility, because of reciprocity. We are only one federal judge decision away from having gay marriage imposed on all states. That's why there is a need for a Constitutional Amendment. I really believe a family--male, female, rearing children--I believe that is an important structure for the state itself, the way we procreate, which hopefully provides a stable environment for children. That is important to the state, and that's why I think it's legitimate. The reciprocity clause forces us into thinking about a Constitutional Amendment. I believe *Roe v. Wade* should be overturned because I think it's lousy law, and many liberal jurists think it's lousy because it read into the Constitution a right to privacy. I don't see a connection between these things and the 2nd Amendment. Same sex marriage and abortion, perhaps, but I don't see a connection to the 2nd Amendment question. I support the 2nd Amendment because it is one of the most important we have. It's a right we have to protect a lot of our other rights. And in our urban centers...and I don't believe as some Second Amendment radicals believe that every single person has that right. I don't think so! If you have committed a felony, or if you are a danger to yourself or someone else, then you shouldn't be able to obtain a firearm, but law-abiding citizens should because it gives them a sense of security and protection against people who would do you harm. I don't believe urban communities are more dangerous because people are

allowed to own guns, but because dangerous people have guns. I would feel more comfortable if in the District of Columbia I could carry a concealed gun. I have a permit.

WN: You recently spoke out against the Black and Hispanic Congressional caucuses, stating, "It is utterly hypocritical for Congress to extol the virtues of a color-blind society while officially sanctioning caucuses that are based solely on race. If we are serious about achieving the goal of a colorblind society, Congress should lead by example and end these divisive, race-based caucuses." Do you also believe there is no longer a need for the NAACP?

TT: No, I think it's fine, because it's a private organization, and people can belong to whatever private organization they want, and the need will be determined to a great extent by reality. If in fact people feel committed to an organization that they believe represents their interest, and it's a voluntary association, that's fine. All I'm saying is that for Congress to support these things, that run on money that is appropriated--though they fund them in a convoluted way, but it gets there--my point was about leading by example. If people said we don't think it's a good idea, maybe that would have an impact on how people feel about things like the NAACP. I would hope there would be, and I would assume Martin Luther King hoped--that's his quite about a colorblind society--that there will come a time we don't need them. That it's an anachronistic organization. I also don't believe in the creation of districts on race.

WN: You were one of a handful of

Republicans who voted for a bill proposed by Maurice Hinchey and Dana Rohrabacher to stop the Department of Justice from raiding medical marijuana patients and caregivers in states where medical marijuana is legal, citing states' rights concerns. On the other hand, you have suggested state legislators and mayors should be imprisoned for passing laws contrary to federal immigration law, and you support the Federal Marriage Amendment to ban gay marriage nationally. How do you reconcile these seemingly contradictory positions?

TT: We are talking about issues that are legitimately based upon the Constitutional roles of the state and federal government. I believe there is no Constitutional provision that suggests the federal government has a role to play in preventing states, or punishing states, over laws with regards to medical marijuana. I believe absolutely there is a role for the federal government for punishing states or laws when they contravene federal jurisdiction. For instance, protecting states against invasion. Immigration is federal policy, and there's a law actually called "Encouragement": you can't encourage people to come in illegally or stay here illegally. I believe that is constitutionally a federal area.

WN: If you had to support one of the Democratic candidates, which one would it be and why?

TT: Although I couldn't vote for him, if I had to support one for a nominee it would be Obama, and I would do so because first, I believe we could beat him [laughs], but secondly, and less cynically, I think it would be very good to have a black man, a good family man, and a very articulate man, to have

him as a role model for a lot of black children in this country.

Ontario Votes 2007: Interview with Progressive Conservative candidate Jim Chapman, London-Fanshawe

Jim Chapman is running for the Progressive Conservative of Ontario in the Ontario provincial election, in the London-Fanshawe riding. Wikinews' Nick Moreau interviewed him regarding his values, his experience, and his campaign.

Stay tuned for further interviews; every candidate from every party is eligible, and will be contacted. Expect interviews from Liberals, Progressive Conservatives, New Democratic Party members, Ontario Greens, as well as members from the Family Coalition, Freedom, Communist, Libertarian, and Confederation of Regions parties, as well as independents.

Why have you chosen to involve yourself in the political process? Why did you choose to run in this constituency?

I believe Ontario is at a crossroads. We will elect either a Liberal government pledged to continue a high-tax, high-spend policy that has increased taxes by 33% over four years, or a Progressive Conservative government that believes there is generally more to solving a problem than throwing money at it. I was born and raised in London Fanshawe and when the PC Association invited me to stand for nomination, I accepted and was subsequently acclaimed.

What prior political experience do you have? What skills and insight can you bring to office, from other non-political positions you may have held?

As a member of the local news media for fifteen years I have been a keen observer of the political process and have studied and written extensively on provincial politics. I have known both Dalton McGuinty and John Tory personally for years, and have watched and analysed their development as political leaders. I am an effective communicator and a Type A worker, both attributes I believe to be vital to being a successful representative of the people at Queen's Park.

Which of your competitors do you expect to pose the biggest challenge to your candidacy? Why? The biggest challenge to any candidate is voter apathy, brought on by years of broken promises and political baffle-gab.

What makes you the most desirable of all candidates running in the riding?

My record of public service and advocacy for ordinary people is well-known across the city. I do my homework, I know the issues and I have the ability to speak for those who can't, or won't speak for themselves. I am not afraid to speak truth to power, I'm not anybody's yes-man and I get things done... And, I believe the proper job of an M.P.P. is to carry the message of the riding to Queen's Park, not the other way around.

What do you feel are the three most important issues to voters in your riding? Are these the same top three issues that are most important to you? What would you do to address these issues?

The continuing decline in health care delivery is number one on my list, and at the doors. People are also very concerned about job losses in the riding, and the perception that our streets are no

longer safe. These, too, parallel my own priorities.

Improving all of them will require the same first step- we must regain control of public spending, institute strict financial controls on every ministry and require public servants to account for every penny of public money they spend. With a provincial budget that has increased by a third in four years, there is plenty of money flowing through Queen's Park, The challenge is to direct it where it will do the most good for the most people.

Regarding my three priorities, a greatly oversimplified "to do" list would include involving front-line nurses and doctors much more actively in health care delivery reform, reducing red tape to create an environment that attracts more job-producing investment, and bringing the justice system more in line with the wishes of the people by advocating tougher treatment for crimes of violence and tighter bail for potentially dangerous offenders.

What should be the first order of business in the 39th Legislative Assembly?

Financial reform, as outlined above.

Are the property taxes in your riding at a fair level for the amount of services received in the municipality?

No. Provincial downloading and contentious local policies have seen costs rise much faster than service levels.

How can the province lead the way in stimulating job creation?

As above, by creating an environment that is more conducive to attracting job-creating investment. Having the

highest tax rates in Canada and one of the most cumbersome economic bureaucracies is not a combination likely to bring new jobs to Ontario. That must change.

What are your views on the mixed member proportional representation (MMP) referendum? While I understand the concerns with the existing system that led to the referendum, any system that proposes appointing rather than electing members of the legislature does not get my support.

What role, if any, does "new media" play in your campaign, and the campaign of your party? (websites, blogs, Facebook, YouTube videos, etc) Do you view it as beneficial, or a challenge? Utilizing new technologies beneficially is always a challenge, but in this election they have allowed me to reach more people, more directly, through a website, YouTube videos and hundreds of e-mails back and forth with constituents.

Of the decisions made by Ontario's 38th Legislative Assembly, which was the most beneficial to your this electoral district? To the province as a whole? Which was least beneficial, or even harmful, to your this riding? To the province as a whole?

Indexing certain support payment programs to inflation had a positive impact, but still left most recipients far short of what they need to live in dignity. The Health Tax paved the way for a wholesale assault on taxpayer pocketbooks and as such was the least beneficial to Ontarians in general. It also further eroded public confidence in politicians, based as it was on an untruth. The tax was not required because of an "unexpected" deficit, as the

Liberals have claimed. Mr. McGuinty was very well acquainted with the deficit months before the election, and months before the famous "I won't raise your taxes" whopper. In fact, he repeatedly complained about it as a guest on my radio and TV programs. More to the point, the deficit disappeared relatively quickly after an economic upsurge, yet McGuinty not only left the Health Tax in place, he added \$19.5 billion in additional taxes on top of it.

The Health Tax is particularly burdensome for the lower-income residents of London-Fanshawe because the less you earn, the higher the percentage you pay. I have yet to hear an explanation as to how that is supposed to be fair.

Volcano erupts without warning in New Zealand, two injured

Mount Ruapehu a volcano in New Zealand erupted at 8:20 p.m. (local time), without any warning and the government has closed all roads and railways surrounding the volcano including Desert and National Park roads. The eruption lasted for nearly 10 minutes and is at this time, considered to be a "minor eruption" and that so far no state of emergency has been declared.

"At this stage it's not a civil defense emergency," said area councilman, Paul Wheatcroft. Craig Miller, a volcanologist calls the eruption a minor "Level 2 eruption." Level five is considered a major eruption. The eruption also caused a minor magnitude 2.8 earthquake.

At least two people have been injured, believed to be a climber who was climbing the volcano and was hit by falling rock at the time of the eruption. Authorities are

searching for that individual. One other climber was also on the volcano, but it is not known what the extent of his injuries are.

Lodges and resorts near the volcano are currently being evacuated as ash lahars and flowing mud could be seen coming from the volcano on the east and north sides. Authorities have told everyone to stay away from and off the volcano.

So far there have been no reports of damage to homes or businesses.

There are concerns from local authorities that houses and towns may be affected by the eruption.

Canadian soldier killed in southern Afghanistan

On Monday, a 24-year old Calgary Reservist became the 71st Canadian soldier killed in Afghanistan.

Four others were injured in the incident which killed Corporal Nathan Hornburg, who was operating as part of Operation Sadiq Sarbaaz, a joint Afghan-NATO mission designed to "set the conditions for a continuous security presence and the establishment of a new police sub-station in the northern part of (Panjwaii)."

Media reports indicated he died from mortar fire at around 16:30 local time while he was repairing the track on a Canadian Leopard tank near a cluster of villages known as Zangabad. Brigadier-General Guy Laroche stated "The terrain was very rough and (tank treads falling off) is something we see on a regular basis."

One of the soldiers was injured in the mortar attack, while three

others were hurt in a nearby armoured vehicle by a rocket propelled grenade during the ensuing firefight. The injured have not been identified, but a military official says two are part of the Royal 22nd Regiment based in Valcartier, Quebec, and one is from Canadian Forces Base Petawawa near Pembroke, Ontario. The injured were evacuated to a hospital at Kandahar Air Field, where their injuries are described as non-life threatening.

Corporal Hornburg was a member of the King's Own Calgary Regiment, a Reserve armoured unit based in Calgary, Alberta, and was serving with the Lord Strathcona's Horse (Royal Canadians) while in Afghanistan.

Gay World Cup begins in Buenos Aires

Buenos Aires, Argentina – With more than twenty-eight teams from across the world, the 10th Gay World Cup begins in the city of Buenos Aires. These events are held in part to aid in the fight against sexual discrimination.

This year marks the first time the World Gay Cup will be held in a Latin-American city. Twenty-eight teams will participate, and some countries will be represented by more than one team.

Some of the countries that will participate in this championship are Uruguay, Chile, Australia, Iceland, United Kingdom, Mexico, Canada and Argentina, represented by the Dogos, the Amerika team and SAFG. Also, the United States is one of the countries that will be represented by more than one team. A few of the American teams are: Boston Americas, New York Ramblers, Seattle Rain, Florida Storm and Philadelphia Falcons.

The World Cup that began yesterday, is being held in the Parque Sarmiento (Sarmiento Park), located in the Saavedra neighbourhood and has the support of the AFA (Argentine Football Association), the secretary of sports of Buenos Aires, the Ombudswoman of the city and the INADI (National Institute Against the Discrimination). The championship will last until next September 29.

In an interview with Wikinews, the president of the Homosexual Community Argentina (CHA) César Cigliuti expressed that this is an opportunity to show the fight against discrimination, for example in an area like football, where sexual discrimination occurs each day in the fields of the Argentina, Cigliuti said. The final will be played in the Defensores de Belgrano's field.

John Howard announces \$560 million for medical research

Australian Prime Minister John Howard today announced medical research grants totalling \$560 million. The grants are the result of the Australian Government's 2008 National Health and Medical Research grants. According to a government media release, the grants will fund research into heart disease, obesity, cancer, child health, depression and chronic diseases such as diabetes and asthma.

Howard said that the grants were possible because of the good state of the economy. "It's an extraordinary human dividend out of good economic times," he said. "You couldn't do it if you were paying off debt. The fact that we're not paying off debt [means] we've got \$8-9 billion a year in saved interest that we can spend on good things like medical

research."

John Howard sets green energy targets

Australian Prime Minister John Howard has announced a national "Clean Energy Target". The target requires that by 2020, 30,000 gigawatt hours of electricity each year comes from low emissions sources. The plan is an attempt to consolidate the different state-based targets.

"What this initiative will do is gather up all of the different state schemes, many of which are contradictory or at the very least dissimilar," Mr Howard said.

The announcement was criticised by Labor environment spokesman Peter Garrett. "This is just piggybacking on the hard work of state Labor governments," Mr Garrett said. "The Howard Government has an appalling record on renewable energy and cannot be trusted to deliver on this commitment.

The Greens pointed out that the target did not take account of an increase in demand. "Under the Prime Minister's target, greenhouse gas emissions from the electricity sector will blow out to be 44% higher than the present day, because this feeble addition of low emission technology won't be able to keep pace with growth in electricity demand," said Greens Senate candidate Scott Ludlam.

Aid for Australian farmers increased to \$1 billion

The Australian Federal Government today announced an additional \$714 million in aid to farmers affected by the drought. Prime Minister John Howard announced \$430 million on September 17, bringing the total aid to over \$1 billion.

Deputy Prime Minister Mark Vaile has said that the farming sector is important to the Australian economy. "There's about 130,000 farming units across Australia that contribute over \$100 billion into our GDP - up to about 18-20 per cent of our exports in a good year," he said. "We cannot afford as a nation to lose our agricultural industries."

Opposition primary industries spokesman Kerry O'Brien has stated that if elected Labor will honour drought assistance measures put in place by the present government. "But I have given the assurance wherever I have gone that we don't see the midst of a drought as a time to undo settings in relation to Exceptional Circumstances funding, so the horticultural community can be assured they can rely on settings in place for this drought," he said.

Iranian President Ahmadinejad speaks at Columbia University

Invited to participate in a debate at Columbia University during his visit to New York City this week to address the United Nations General Assembly, Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad engaged University president Lee Bollinger on a number of topics, including his country's human rights record, opinions on Israel and the Holocaust and the role of nuclear weapons and terrorism on the global stage. The Iranian president's speech was marked by protests and generated much controversy.

Bollinger opened the debate addressing critics, stating that "To those who believe that this event should never have happened, that it is inappropriate for the university to conduct such an

event, I want to say that I understand your perspective and respect it as reasonable...it is an experiment, as all life is an experiment. This is the right thing to do and indeed, it is required by the existing norms of free speech"

Bollinger then gave his opening address, turning to Ahmadinejad and stating: "Mr. President, you exhibit all the signs of a petty and cruel dictator, and so I ask you, why have women, members of the Bahá'í Faith, homosexuals and so many of our academic colleagues become targets of persecution in your country?"

"Why do you support well-documented terrorist organizations that continue to strike at peace and democracy in the Middle East, destroying lives and the civil society of the region? Frankly, and in all candor Mr. President, I doubt that you will have the intellectual courage to answer these questions, but your avoiding them will in itself be meaningful to us. I do expect you to exhibit the fanatical mind-set that characterizes what you say and do."

After reciting the Bismillah and asking for guidance from God, Ahmadinejad countered that "In Iran, tradition requires that when we invite a person to be a speaker, we actually respect our students and the professors by allowing them to make their own judgement and we don't think it's necessary before the speech is even given to come in with a series of claims..."

Ahadinejad's most pointed arguments, though, were directed at the administration of George W. Bush. "They do not respect the privacy of their own people. They

tap telephone calls ... They create an insecure psychological atmosphere, in order to justify their war-mongering acts in different parts of the world."

The Iranian president attacked what he considered to be errors of American imperialism. "By using precise scientific methods and planning, they begin their onslaught on the domestic cultures of nations, which are the result of thousands of years of interaction, creativity and artistic activity. They try to eliminate these cultures in order to strip people of their identity."

Ahadinejad questioned U.S. nuclear policy. "Making nuclear, chemical and biological bombs and weapons of mass destruction is yet another result of the misuse of science and research by the big powers." He added, "Without the cooperation of certain scientists and scholars, we would not have witnessed production of different nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Are these weapons to protect global security? What can a perpetual nuclear umbrella achieve for the sake of humanity? If nuclear war is waged between nuclear powers, what human catastrophe will take place?"

In a rebuttal to claims that his country oppressed women and homosexuals, Ahmadinejad responded by claiming "It is wrong for some governments, when they disagree with another government, to...spread lies", pointing to the fact that over 50% of Iranian voters are female, and the two female Vice Presidents. When challenged by Bollinger for Iran's treatment of gays he stated that "In Iran we don't have homosexuals like in your country," drawing laughter from the audience. "In Iran we do not have

this phenomenon, I don't know who has told you that we have it."

He framed questioning of the Holocaust as stifled academic debate: "Right now, there are a number of European academics who have been sent to prison because they attempted to write about the Holocaust or research it from a different perspective, questioning certain aspects of it," later adding that "you shouldn't ask me why I'm asking questions, you should ask yourselves why you...want to stop. Do you ever take what is known as absolute in physics? We had principles in mathematics that were granted to be absolute for over 800 years, but new science has...gone forward."

The first question from the audience addressed the controversial issue of the leader's position on Israel. Ahmadinejad did not directly respond to the subject of Israel - stating "We love all nations. We love the Jewish people. There are many Jews living in Iran, with peace and security.", and concluded that it was not a question of Israel's right to exist, but of Palestinian self-determination.

Countering claims that his country supports terrorism, he replied, "We're a cultured nation. We don't need to resort to terrorism. We've been victims of terrorism ourselves. It's regrettable that people who argued they are fighting terrorism — instead of supporting the Iranian nation — are supporting the terrorists and then turn the finger at us."

The final question from the audience asked whether Iran would engage in talks with the United States, to which he replied "If the U.S. government recognizes

the rights of the Iranian people, respects all nations and extends a hand of friendship to all Iranians, they will see that Iranians will be among their best friends."

In closing, Ahmadinejad extended gratitude and thanks to the University, and welcomed both students and faculty to attend Iranian universities and give lectures themselves to the students.

Canadian UAW workers forced to strike

Canadian workers with the Canadian Auto Workers Union have gone on strike due to 70,000 American employees of United Auto Workers Union (UAW) forced to strike against General Motors (GM), just one day ago.

GM Canada's Windsor, Ontario plant, which employs 1,400 people shut down on Monday. On Tuesday Car Plant 1 in Oshawa, Ontario, which employs 3,000, closed at 3:00am ET. Car Plant 2, also in Oshawa, which employs 2,500 workers, could make a speedy close today or tomorrow. Other GM car plants in Ontario are also feared to close during the strike.

If the strike in the U.S. stays, up to 100,000 Canadian UAW workers could be laid off, according to Buzz Hargrove, president of the Canadian Auto Workers Union. Eighty-thousand Canadians work for the auto-parts industry in Canada, and 40,000 could be laid off, Hargrove also says.

According to the BBC, analysts say the strike will only last for two weeks. The UAW last called a national strike on GM 30 years ago.

UK researchers publish new survey on sleep

Findings on a new "sleep survey" seem to be mixed as a sleep analysis of 10,308 government workers over seventeen years was recently made public. The study was conducted by the University of Warwick and the University College London in the United Kingdom.

The participants were aged 35-55. Researchers examined the participants' sleeping habits between the years of 1995 to 1998, and 1992 to 1993, and mortality rates until 2004. It also compared the social lives of the participants to sleeping habits.

The study shows that, if a person cuts their sleep from seven hours to five hours they ultimately risk an increase of death and death from cardiovascular problems. But sleeping more than eight hours doubles the risk of death, and death would be triggered from non-cardiovascular diseases. Sleeping less than five hours per night increases a risk of weight gain, Type 2 diabetes, and other diseases, which could end up in leading to death.

"A third of the population of the UK and over 40 percent in the U.S. regularly sleep less than five hours a night, so it is not a trivial problem," said Francesco Cappuccio, professor of cardiovascular medicine at the University of Warwick. "The current pressures in society to cut out sleep, in order to squeeze in more, may not be a good idea -- particularly if you go below five hours."

"This change, largely the result of sleep curtailment to create more time for leisure and shift-work, has meant that reports of fatigue, tiredness and excessive daytime sleepiness are more common than a few decades ago. Sleep

represents the daily process of physiological restitution and recovery, and lack of sleep has far-reaching effects," he said on the university's website.

"In terms of prevention, our findings indicate that consistently sleeping around seven hours per night is optimal for health," Cappuccio added.

The new findings have been published on medical journal SLEEP's website. It will officially be published in the magazines next issue.

Today in History

- 1580 – The Golden Hind sailed into Plymouth, England, as Francis Drake completed his circumnavigation of the globe.
- 1687 – The Parthenon in Athens was partially destroyed during an armed conflict between the Venetians under Francesco Morosini and Ottoman forces.
- 1907 – Newfoundland and New Zealand became dominions within the British Empire.
- 1957 – West Side Story, a musical based loosely on Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet that was written by Arthur Laurents, Leonard Bernstein and Stephen Sondheim, and produced and directed by Jerome Robbins, made its debut on Broadway.
- 1983 – Lieutenant Colonel Stanislav Petrov of the Soviet Union averted a possible worldwide nuclear war by deliberately certifying what otherwise appeared to be an impending attack by the United States as a false alarm.
- September 26 is Sukkot begins at sunset (Judaism, 2007); European Day of Languages. Dominion Day (New Zealand)

Quote of the Day

We live in a time when the words impossible and unsolvable are no

longer part of the scientific community's vocabulary. Each day we move closer to trials that will not just minimize the symptoms of disease and injury but eliminate them. ~ Christopher Reeve

Word of the Day

zeugma; n

1. The act of using a word, particularly an adjective or verb, to apply to more than one noun when its sense is appropriate to only one or in different ways.

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