



Top Stories

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Senator John Kerry criticized the near silence of the U.S. mass media regarding the so-called "Downing Street Memo", a leaked secret British document that details the minutes of a 2002 meeting between top-level British and American government officials. The memo states that President Bush "was determined" to attack Iraq.

The accuracy of the memo is not being disputed by either government.

Live 8 concert plans announced

In a press conference held at 13:00 UTC today, Sir Bob Geldof, Elton John, and Harvey Goldsmith announced Live 8, a set of simultaneous free concerts to be held in Philadelphia, London, Paris, Rome, and Berlin on July 2, 2005, to raise awareness of Make Poverty History, a campaign to get the richest nations to cancel debt and increase aid to developing countries. The concerts are scheduled to occur just before the G8 Summit in Gleneagles, Scotland, from July 6 to July 8.



Wikipedia Current Events

- Schabir Shaik, a financial advisor to South African Deputy President Jacob Zuma, is found guilty of two counts of corruption and one of fraud in a 165-page judgment broadcast live as it was delivered over three days. The affair is considered to be a blow to Mr Zuma's ambitions to succeed the current president, Thabo Mbeki.
• In Serbia several former soldiers are arrested after the transmission on Serbian TV of video showing them executing six Bosnian men from Srebrenica in July 1995. The video is evidence from the trial of former president Slobodan Milosevic. Hitherto polls have shown that only half the population of Serbia believe that the Srebrenica massacre of 8000 men happened.
• The parliament in Latvia votes to ratify the European Constitution in an overwhelming majority of 71 to 5.
• In China, authorities have arrested Lu Jianhua and Chen Hui of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences for espionage
• In the Philippines, male students organize a naked protest in Manila to demonstrate against too little funding in education
• United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan dismisses senior official Joseph Stephanides for oil for food scandal
• Protests in European cities of Brussels and Helsinki against software patents occur.
• Israel released 398 Palestinian prisoners, the final phase of an Israeli pledge to release 900 prisoners as a goodwill gesture towards Palestinian chairman Mahmoud Abbas.

John Kerry criticizes news media, joins call for inquiry on Downing Street Memo



In a swing through South Coast, Florida, former 2004 presidential candidate Senator John Kerry criticized the near silence of the U.S. mass media regarding the so-called "Downing Street Memo". The Downing Street Memo is a leaked secret British document that details the minutes of a 2002 meeting between top-level British and American government officials. The memo states that George W. Bush "was determined" to attack Iraq long before going to Congress with the matter, and that "the intelligence and facts were being fixed around the policy." The accuracy of the memo is not being disputed by either government. The memo caused an uproar in Great Britain and made a significant impact in the British national elections, but has gotten little attention in American news. Kerry said of the memo:

"When I go back (to Washington) on Monday, I am going to raise the issue. I think it's a stunning, unbelievably simple and understandable statement of the truth and a profoundly important document that raises stunning issues here at home. And it's amazing to me the way it escaped major media discussion. It's not being missed on the Internet, I can tell you that."

He questioned Americans' understanding of the war and the idea that criticism equals disloyalty, saying,

"Do you think that Americans if they really understood it would feel that way

knowing that on Election Day, 77 percent of Americans who voted for Bush believed that weapons of mass destruction had been found and 77 percent believe Saddam did 9/11? Is there a way for this to break through, ever?"

Representative John Conyers has written to the President regarding the memo:

"...a debate has raged in the United States over the last year and one half about whether the obviously flawed intelligence that falsely stated that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction was a mere 'failure' or the result of intentional manipulation to reach foreordained conclusions supporting the case for war. The memo appears to close the case on that issue stating that in the United States the intelligence and facts were being 'fixed' around the decision to go to war."

There is a growing movement on the internet and in Congress for a "Resolution of Inquiry" into issues surrounding the planning and execution of the Iraq war, especially in regard to the Administration's handling of intelligence. John Dean, a key Watergate figure, wrote in a June 2003 column for findlaw.com, that, "To put it bluntly, if Bush has taken Congress and the nation into war based on bogus information, he is cooked... Manipulation or deliberate misuse of national security intelligence data, if proven, could be a 'high crime' under the Constitution's impeachment clause."

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Legislators recently passed a measure that would require the Secretary of Defense to provide a list of such schools. Under a 10-year old law that "the armed

forces cannot be denied access to students".

"Discriminating against ROTC recruitment program", a matter of "national security"

Representative Cliff Sterns (R-FL) is pushing through the House an amendment that would toughen the Solomon amendment, a law which states "Any college that prohibits the U.S. military from establishing or operating an ROTC unit on campus or denies military recruiters access to students is ineligible for federal funding."

Sterns' amendment is part of the Defense Department Authorization Act. William Mitchell College of Law and Vermont Law School (not affiliated with the University of Vermont) have been barred for violating the Solomon amendment.

In the fall the U.S. Supreme Court is lined up to hear a case involving several colleges.

Sterns claims Yale is discriminating against military recruiters, Yale denies this

Rich Jacobs, a representative of Yale, says: "Yale has sought to comply fully with the Solomon amendment as it applies to ROTC and Yale university." Yale's website states: "The defense department's 'don't ask don't tell policy', which prevents openly gays, lesbians, and bisexuals from serving in the military violates the schools non-discrimination policy." The Defense Department has declined to sign the schools non-discriminatory policy.

Yale gives ROTC a room on campus, but does not help arrange interviews.

British Liberal Democrat Patsy Calton, 56, dies of cancer



Patsy Calton from Bramhall, Cheshire, England, a Liberal Democrat MP for the Cheadle constituency died at age 56 from cancer on Sunday May 29. The Liberal

Democrat party leader Charles Kennedy described her as a "spirited and courageous" politician.

She was first elected to the Cheadle constituency by the slim margin of 33 votes in the 2001 election. She was then re-elected just 24 days before her death with a greatly increased majority of 4020, in spite of not campaigning herself due to the illness.

She was a staunch supporter of a ban on smoking in enclosed public spaces. Acting as the party's health spokesman, she supported the Bath Liberal Democrats anti-smoking initiatives in the 2004 spring conference.

She is survived by her husband Clive Calton, who worked as her researcher at the House of Commons, and her son and two daughters.

Greek Soccer 3rd Division, North Group, Pavlos Melas relegated

After its first appearance in the 3rd Division, Pavlos Melas Soccer Club finished in the 14th position and was relegated, despite its 2-1 victory over Doxa Dramas Football Club, with 36 points in 32 games. The team from Salonika, Greece will be a serious contender for the championship in the 4th Division. Former Olympiacos SFC player Alekos Tatsis, almost Anderlecht, Belgium's starlet, was released free by OSFC. Pavlos Melas was planning to sign him, but after the relegation, Tatsis probably won't join the "Greens".

This article contains first-hand journalism by a Wikinews Reporter.

Iran, North Korea, USA blamed in failure of month-long Non-Proliferation Treaty conference



The month-long 2005 Review Conference on the Nuclear Non-

Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was concluded in May this year.

It was generally considered disappointing. The Chilean representative, Mr Labbe, stated that the outcome could only be described as a failure.

The point of view of some state representatives was that the meeting failed because of possible violations of the first pillar of the treaty (non-proliferation), both because of grave challenges to security and to the non-proliferation regime posed by Iran's and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's non-compliance with their non-proliferation and safeguards obligations, and the de facto proliferation of nuclear weapons to non-weapons states under nuclear sharing, in which Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey host nuclear weapons and may, in principle, participate in decisions on using those weapons and participate in the delivery of the weapons to their targets.

However, the Iranian representative, Javad Zarif, countered by stating that the three pillars of the Treaty (non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear technology) were intertwined and needed to be followed without diminishing the significance and effectiveness of any one pillar against the others, in reference to the failure of the nuclear weapons states to progress in disarmament. Article VI of the NPT states that Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

He claimed that the United States had adopted a Nuclear Posture Review, incorporating the breach of the obligations on irreversibility, diminished role of nuclear weapons and lowering the operational status of nuclear weapons by

stressing the essential role of nuclear weapons as an effective tool for achieving security ends and foreign policy objectives; developing new nuclear weapon systems, and constructing new facilities for producing nuclear weapons; resuming efforts to develop and deploy tactical nuclear weapons, despite the commitment to reverse the process and reduce them; and targeting non-nuclear weapon States parties to the Treaty and planning to attack those States.

The Malaysian representative, Rastam Mohd Isa, summarised the point of view of the states in the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), claiming that they had maintained that the three pillars, nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear technology should be approached in a balanced manner and that the Treaty should be fully and non-selectively implemented. He also asserted the indispensable need to preserve the decisions and resolutions of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference, which were positions, on which the NAM had consistently insisted on since the NPT's entry into force in 1970.

The Ukrainian representative, Anatoliy Scherba, judged that the case for non-proliferation rested on the primary objective of the NPT to eliminate all nuclear weapons and, hence, the central importance of article VI and felt that it required from those who did not possess, not to acquire, and for those who possessed, to eliminate.

Six thousand gather to celebrate birthday of Yugoslavian leader Josip Broz Tito



Tito's Birth House

On May 20th in Kumrovec, Croatia, six thousand people gathered to celebrate the birthday of Josip Broz Tito and the 60th year since the victory over fascism. The day was celebrated as "Youth Day" in SFRY by the young crowd. Kumrovec is the birthplace of Tito.

People gathered not only from Croatia, but from Slovenia, Bosnia and even Serbia.

People shouted phrases like "Druže Tito, ljubičice bijela" [Comrade Tito, (you) white flower (ljubičice is a flower in several colours)] and "Od Vardara pa do Triglava" [From Vardara to Triglava]. All were common phrases in songs and public gatherings during Tito's rule.

Foreign observers might have believed they were thrown back several decades several newspapers said. The crowd, upon gathering, started singing "Ljepe nase" [All our beloved] while the Croatian national anthem goes "Ljepa nasa" [Our loved one].

On Wednesday of the next week in Sarajevo, ceremonies were held where hundreds gathered beside the External Fire and later moved and met more observers at Tito's statue at former the barracks of Marshal Tito. Flowers were laid at the foot Tito's statue by FBiH Vice-presidents, Sahbaz Dzihanovic and Desnica Radivojevic, and members of other groups.

Hundreds also visited Tito's grave in Belgrade, at the site former greenhouse known as the House of Flowers. Tito is interred under a large marble slab that marks his grave.

Elan shares plunge as another patient dies

Irish biotech firm Elan has seen its shares plunge this morning after it revealed that a fourth patient taking its new multiple sclerosis drug Tysabri had contracted a fatal brain disease.

Whilst US stockmarkets have not yet

opened for business, Athlone based Élan has suffered a 22% drop on the Irish Stock Exchange and a 21.5% drop on the London Stock Exchange. That means that so far today the firms market value has dropped by over €400mm to €1.9bn. The firm was once valued at over €20bn before the failure of Tysabri and an accounting investigation.

Élan was once one of Ireland's biggest business success stories. Élan still employs over 2,000 people in Ireland and reported revenues of \$464.0 million in 2004.

NASA solar sail passes first major test



NASA has completed a major test of a 20-meter square solar sail, marking a "crucial milestone" in space propulsion technology. It is not the first to test solar sails, as the Japanese have deployed two solar sails in space. The Planetary Society is planning on launching a solar sail possibly by June 21.

Shot into orbit by a converted intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), the Cosmos 1 would be launched from a submerged Russian submarine from within the Barents Sea. The spacecraft, powered by the sail, will have no destination. The purpose is simply to test the propulsion system that uses the pressure from solar light particles to move the ship outward from a starting orbit around the earth at 500 miles.

The propulsion technology is currently

believed to be the most efficient available for interstellar space travel. Theoretically a craft propelled by the pressure of a constant light source, such as a purpose-built laser, could achieve speeds approaching the speed of light. This is due to the efficiencies of the spacecraft not having to carry its own fuel. Approaching the speed of light would, however, require a long period of constant acceleration. This will be impossible for the current test vehicles and any launched in the foreseeable future, as they rely on the light from the Sun, which rapidly becomes weaker with increasing distance.

According to the National Geographic News, "NASA, the European Space Agency, Japan, and Russia all have developed solar sails, but none has yet tried to prove that the sails can propel a spacecraft under controlled flight."

France: Villepin's cabinet announced

Newly named Prime Minister of France Dominique de Villepin has had his cabinet accepted by President of the Republic Jacques Chirac.

Head of the majority Union for a Popular Movement (UMP) party, Nicolas Sarkozy, comes as a second-in-command as Minister of the Interior, with the honorific rank of Minister of State. The Ministry of the Interior is traditionally one of the most important positions in the cabinet, with that of Finances; the Minister of the Interior is in charge, notably, of law enforcement and relationships with local governments. There is some uneasiness in having the head of a party in a position that is partly in charge of electoral redistrictings. Also, this arrangement creates a peculiar situation: it is public knowledge that Villepin and Sarkozy consider each other a dangerous political rival with respect to the 2007 presidential election, and they are widely said to loathe each other.

The cabinet was presented as a "restricted" cabinet. However, as many as 31 ministers, delegate ministers and secretaries of state were named; still, this

is a reduction from the preceding 43. While the cabinet is for a large part copied from the preceding one, some ministers who had provoked controversy and animosity were removed or moved to another less risky position. François Fillon, formerly Minister of National Education, whose plan for reforming public education was lambasted by members of his own party, including president of the National Assembly Jean-Louis Debré, was ruled partly unconstitutional by the Constitutional Council, and provoked widespread student protests and unrest in highschools, is no longer a minister. Dominique Perben, who pushed for controversial law which opponents allege curtail fundamental constitutional freedoms while Minister of Justice, was moved to the less sensitive position of Minister of Transportation and Equipment.

While the Union for French Democracy (UDF) party, led by François Bayrou, formally remains in the ruling coalition along with the UMP, it has decided that, because the new government would probably do more of the same policies, it would not participate in it. The only member of the government from UDF is Gilles de Robien, as in the preceding government.

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Today in History

1889 - The first long-distance electric power transmission line in the United States was constructed between Willamette Falls to downtown Portland, Oregon.

1937 - The Duke of Windsor married Wallis Simpson.

1940 - World War II: The Battle of Dunkirk ended with a German tactical victory.

1944 - Charles de Gaulle became Prime Minister of France.

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