



Top Stories

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Bush administration drastically cuts penalties sought for in tobacco trial from \$130 billion to \$10 billion

Bush appointee Robert McCallum overrode Justice Department lawyers who had been handling the government's tobacco racketeering trial for the past 5 years. McCallum ordered them to reduce the penalties sought at the close of the nine-month trial from \$130 billion to \$10 billion; angering some of the trial lawyers to the point where it is reported they threatened to quit their jobs.

Dell would be 'happy' to sell PCs running Mac OS X

PC manufacturer and Apple Computer competitor Dell, Inc. has stated that it is interested in shipping computers running Apple's Mac OS X. Michael Dell, founder and chairman of Dell Computers, made the comments while talking to David Kirkpatrick of Fortune magazine.

Wikipedia Current Events

- The murder weapon used to kill Leon Trotsky is purported to have surfaced in Mexico.
- A United Nations investigation has concluded that Rafik Hariri, the former Prime Minister of Lebanon, was killed by a truck bomb.
- Controversial Pakistani scientist AQ Khan is said to be stable after suffering a heart-attack.
- In Kyrgyzstan, hundreds of protesters seize a government building in the capital of Bishkek. They support presidential candidate Urmat Baryktadasov, who was denied registration because the government says he is also a citizen of Kazakhstan. Police later seized the building.
- Presidential election begins in Iran. Most pre-voting polls favor Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.
- Cambodian police have arrested a security man who allegedly planned the hostage drama in Siem Reap.
- In Taiwan, supreme court rejects opposition appeal to nullify results of 2004 presidential election. Chen Shui-bian won the election with narrow majority.
- In the United Kingdom, the Ugandan-born bishop of Birmingham Rt Rev Dr John Sentamu is named the new Archbishop of York. He is the first ever black person to be appointed an Archbishop of the Church of England.
- The Vatican announces that it has taken the unusual step of suspending the announced beatification of the Reverend Leon Dehon in order to investigate charges of anti-Semitism.

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"Everyone is asking, 'Why now?' " said an anonymous Justice Department employee afraid of retaliation. "Why would you throw the case down the toilet at the very last hour, after five years?"

Congressional democrats are opposing the slashing of the penalties to the tobacco industry and have asked Attorney General Alberto Gonzales not to enter into a settlement based on "the unreasonably weak demands made by the government."

The New York Times pointed out that McCallum was a Skull and Bones 'brother' of President Bush. Bush has appointed a number of Skull and Bones club members to government positions since he became President, including William Donaldson, who headed up the S.E.C. and was a director of Philip Morris tobacco company at one time. Bush strategist Karl Rove was a Phillip Morris lobbyist before Bush was elected President in 2000.

Five beheaded during violent prison riot in Brazil

Brazil – Five prisoners were beheaded and got their heads exhibited by the rioters during a violent riot in the

"Zwinglio Ferreira" Prison, located in Presidente Venceslau, São Paulo State, Brazil.

This is the most serious riot of prisoners in the 19 year existence of the penitentiary. The rebellion began Tuesday, at 8:30 a.m. and it finished Wednesday at 2:30 p.m. Some heads belonging to the murdered prisoners were put on iron spears so they could be shown from the roof of the prison. Some prisoners played football with one of the heads.

According to Nagashi Furukawa, the secretary of the administration of the prison, the rebellion originated because of prisoners who were contrary to the criminal organization Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC). The supporters of PCC killed their opponents.

British motorists showered with cash on motorway

Drivers on Britain's M3 motorway were stunned to be confronted with a shower of cash on Tuesday evening.

Eleven thousand pounds worth of £20 notes were blown from the rucksack of a passenger on a motorcycle at 7.30pm, while the motorway was busy with traffic.

Just £500 was recovered; the rest is believed to have been blown away in the windy evening. At least four other drivers quickly stopped, causing Hampshire police concern for safety.

The police are now investigating as to why the pair were carrying so much money. Carrying large amounts of money is not illegal, but is highly unusual. The riders said they had been to a car auction, returning empty-handed.

The motorcyclists re-started their journey, but the cycle broke down just two junctions on.

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The new record-breaking deficit represents 6.4% of the US's gross national product, again an increase on last-quarter 2004 - up 0.1%. The deficit on goods increased from \$182.2 billion to \$186.3 billion, as imports of goods increased more than exports, particularly in industrial supplies and materials, capital goods and consumer products. It is believed that China's economic boom is partly to blame, with the country exporting to the US.

Analysts have expressed concern at the findings, with Allan Seychuk, an economist at RBC Capital Markets, saying "This is not the direction markets were hoping to see for the mammoth current account deficit. The US dollar has lost a great deal of ground because markets are uncomfortable with a deficit that has now reached record levels."

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"If Apple decides to open the Mac OS to others, we would be happy to offer it to our customers," Dell wrote in an email to Kirkpatrick. Apple recently announced that it would begin using Intel x86 microprocessors in its computers next year, but has continued to deny reports

that they will allow their OS to be run on non-Apple hardware.

Today in History

1812 - The United States declared war against Great Britain, beginning the War of 1812.

1815 - Napoléon Bonaparte fought and lost his final battle, the Battle of Waterloo.

1858 - Charles Darwin received a manuscript by Alfred Russel Wallace on evolution, which prompted him to publish his theory.

1873 - Woman suffrage activist Susan B. Anthony was fined \$100 for attempting to vote in the 1872 presidential election.

1979 - The SALT II treaty was signed by the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Quote of the Day

"In the end, the love you take is equal to the love you make." ~ Paul McCartney

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