



World Briefs

Brazilian Senate votes to indict president

BRASILIA, Brazil — The Senate voted Wednesday to indict suspended President Fernando Collor de Mello, paving the way for a trial that could lead to his permanent ouster.

On a 67-3 vote, the Senate approved a report accusing Collor of gross corruption. Eleven senators did not appear for the vote.

The Chamber of Deputies impeached Collor Sept. 29 and suspended him from office for six months after a probe showed he took more than \$6.5 million from an illegal slush fund run by Paulo Cesar Farias, his 1989 campaign treasurer.

The Senate will rule Dec. 22 on whether to remove Collor permanently for the constitutional crime of "lack of decorum" stemming from his alleged links to the kickback scandal.

If 54 of Brazil's 81 senators find Collor guilty, he will be officially removed from the presidency and barred from holding public office for eight years. The vote is expected to pass.

Collor, who took office in 1990 as Brazil's first freely elected leader since 1960, has denied any ties to Farias, who is accused of extorting millions of dollars from businessmen in return for government favors and contracts.

Collor's lawyers have asked the Supreme Court to delay the Dec. 22 vote on grounds that 29 senators are biased against Collor because they took part in the three-month probe.

No date has been set for the Supreme Court's decision.

Israeli legislators opt to lift PLO meeting ban

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's left-center coalition narrowly won approval of a bill to revoke the ban on meetings with the PLO, in spite of a last-minute protest vote by a key party.

Legislators voted 37-36 in favor of the bill's first reading. It must pass two more readings to take effect.

The bill revokes a 1986 amendment to the anti-terror law that bars meetings with members of "terror organizations," a description Israel applies to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Violators of the ban, enacted under the previous right-wing administration, face as many as three years in prison, and several Israelis have served jail time. Palestinians living in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip and annexed east Jerusalem technically also are banned from meeting with PLO officials.

Rabin's government has ignored violations of the law, particularly by Palestinian negotiators to the U.S.-sponsored Middle East peace talks, who take instructions from the PLO. The PLO officially is excluded from the negotiations.

Justice Minister David Libai insisted the government was not softening its opposition to PLO participation.

A change in the law was expected after Rabin took office in July. Rabin decided to hold up the bill until after the U.S. presidential election.

Rabin reportedly feared an earlier repeal would have encouraged the Bush administration to renew its dialogue with the PLO, suspended after a 1990 terror attack on Israel.

Israelis generally consider President-elect Clinton more sympathetic to their concerns than President Bush.

Opposition legislators said revoking the ban would strengthen the PLO and other Palestinian factions.

Polish abortion activists protest ban legislation

WARSAW, Poland — A pro-choice committee announced Wednesday it had gathered 500,000 signatures in favor of holding a referendum to try to prevent a proposed ban on abortion.

The legislation calls for two-year prison terms for doctors who perform abortions and would mean an end to prenatal testing.

Abortion has been available virtually on demand in Poland since 1956 and, according to recent estimates, 500,000 pregnancies have been terminated annually.

Surveys show that more than 80 percent of Poland's predominately Roman Catholic population favor legalized abortion, especially when pregnancy poses a threat to a woman's life or results from rape.

Current law allows only Parliament or the president to call a referendum, and neither is likely to do so on the abortion issue.

Pro-life legislators supported by the church have a narrow majority in Parliament, and President Lech Walesa supports the proposed ban.

However, the presidential Charter of Rights and Freedoms recently submitted to Parliament opens the way for holding a referendum if it is sought by 500,000 people signing petitions.

It is not clear whether Parliament will vote on the abortion bill or the Charter of Rights first. The lower house of Parliament rejected a bill calling for a referendum in July.

—The Associated Press

German violence causes world outrage

By Andrea Jones
Staff Writer

Rising nationalistic furor in Germany has led to rightist attacks against foreigners and Jews, creating an uproar in that country and eliciting words of concern from governments and organizations around the world.

Officials have reported at least 18,000 attacks in Germany this year. Sixteen people have died in those attacks, which have included fire bombings, beatings and stabbings of refugees from economically stricken Eastern Europe.

Chancellor Helmut Kohl has condemned the actions of neo-Nazis and skinheads, and the German government has reacted by banning groups such as the Nationalistic Front and censuring rightist rock bands.

German police also have apprehended suspects in connection with recent fire bombing attacks on refugee shelters and foreigners' homes.

Tilman Seger, second press secretary with the German Mission to the United Nations, said the nation's problems began when a flood of Eastern European refugees entered Germany seeking help under liberal German asylum laws.

"There was an influx of refugees due to the Eastern Bloc falling apart," Seger said. "People came for economic reasons and because of civil wars. Under German laws, anyone who has come for political reasons can ask for asylum in Germany and stay there."

Seger said neo-Nazi ideologies had taken hold largely because of conditions in East Germany, where economic woes still plagued the formerly Communist population.

"In East Germany, there is a big unemployment rate, and people... have nothing to believe in," Seger said. "They need something to believe in, to grasp."

Seger also said that East Germans

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group's cohesiveness by giving Catholics more of the historical background on their religion.

"In general, it's a very positive thing," he said. "Catholics want to hear something that doesn't just shove Jesus in their face without an explanation."

Newman Center students hope to act as a "bridge from the fundamentalist community to the agnostic community, speaking to both and making a connection," Moran said.

Philip Charles-Pierre, a sophomore from Queens Village, N.Y., said that both priests worked well with students, although Leach tended to follow the doctrines from the Vatican more closely. "Father Ron really pumped you up" about faith, he said. "Father Philip makes you think about it, understand it. The end result is the same, but the getting there is different."

were not used to living with foreigners, so the growing numbers of refugees had posed a special problem.

"People got used to living with foreigners... in the Western part," Seger said. "In the Eastern part it was very different. There were very few (foreigners); they lived in ghettos; they did not walk on the streets publicly. Now, there are a lot of foreigners coming in there. They have different customs; they are living in a different way."

"If you're educated in a completely different system like East Germany had, then it's hard to believe that this is going to work just fine," he said.

Buzzy Gordon, media director with B'nai B'rith International, a worldwide Jewish organization, said he sympathized with Germany's troubles but insisted that governmental action be more emphatic.

"We've had meetings with German officials," he said. "They've explained to us that the problem is a lot of pressure on German economics and society by a mass migration of refugees."

"We understand the problem, and we'd like to work with them," Gordon said. "At the same time, we've told them they must act more swiftly to put down acts of violence."

Gordon said he, like Seger, saw a need for educating East Germans about the country's Nazi past.

"There must be a greater emphasis on education," Gordon said. "Especially the Eastern sector didn't have any real education about the Nazi period and Holocaust. Racism is a byproduct, not only of hate, but of ignorance as well. You cannot really separate the two."

Seger said a strengthening of German police forces was needed to end the violence.

"We need a strong police force," Seger said. "The police in East Germany are just starting to build up."

Gordon also called for a "larger presence of police and quicker action."

"There has to be preparedness on the part of all communities, and there has to be a message to all neo-Nazi and

skinhead groups that their actions will be met with swift punishments," Gordon said.

Seger said that he thought that change would have to be gradual but that he was optimistic about future relationships between the people of Germany.

"There has to be a lot of public relations with the people. (This change) takes some time, of course," Seger said. "I strongly feel that it's going to be better in a few years."

Gerhard Weinberg, a UNC history professor, said the recent events were a result of economic troubles in the wake of German reunification.

"What one sees here is a welling up of discontent at a time of very difficult adjustments that grow out of the enormous costs of German reunification," Weinberg said. "The cost turned out to be much bigger... than anyone expected, and the East Germans have made

an even bigger mess than anybody had anticipated.

"Unfortunately, there are always, when things go very badly wrong, some people who want to take advantage of this for political motives that have nothing to do with fixing whatever the problem is," Weinberg said.

Weinberg said some amount of public support and slow reaction on the part of the German government had contributed to the severity of the rightist attacks.

"Although large numbers of the Germans have turned their backs on this kind of hate mongering, there is always a certain amount of resonance to it," Weinberg said. "It's always easier to find some minute group on which to blame the problem," Weinberg said. "The thing is, when (the Germans) got through blaming them in 1945, the whole country was in ruins."

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