

AROUND THE NATION

Lawyer: Sheik not guilty

NEW YORK — The lawyer for Sheik Omar Abdel-Rahman told a jury in closing arguments Friday it would not serve justice to convict the blind Egyptian cleric.

"Omar was a highly public, emotionally charged, financially powerful and an unpopular cause and an unpopular religion here in America," said the lawyer, Lynne Stewart. "He is guilty of no crime... Do justice."

The 37-year-old sheik and nine other Muslims are accused of conspiring to bomb U.S. landmarks, assassinate political and religious figures and plan kidnappings.

Ex-Mississippi lawmaker critical

OXFORD, Miss. — Former U.S. Rep. Jamie Whitten, who served in the House longer than any other person, was in critical condition Friday with heart and kidney failure.

Whitten's son, lawyer Jamie Whitten Jr., said his 16-year-old father has been seriously ill over the past month. He was admitted Monday to Baptist Memorial Hospital-North Mississippi in Oxford.

The elder Whitten retired in 1984 after 53 years in Congress.

Police: Suspect shot as he left

SAN FRANCISCO — An undercover narcotics officer shot an unarmed man in the back of the head from a foot away as the man tried to escape arrest on a bicycle, a prosecutor said Friday.

The slaying touched off two nights of violent clashes between police and angry residents.

Dole answers Madonna's jab

WASHINGTON — Sen. Bob Dole delivered a sharp reply to pop singer Madonna's criticism of his actions on some rap music and the morality of Hollywood.

Appearing Thursday night on the MTV Awards ceremony, Madonna stung out the Senate majority leader in her defense of rap.

"Bob Dole is sorry he couldn't be here tonight to give out the award for best rap video," she said before presenting the award to Dr. Dre for "Keep Their Heads Ringin'."

In a speech Friday at the annual convention of the Christian Coalition, Dole said he has a right to express outrage at some forms of pop culture and suggested many artists have this sin.

School renamed for Milken

LOS ANGELES — The largest non-Orthodox Jewish high school in the country was renamed Milken High this week in exchange for a \$2 million donation from the Milken Family Foundation, as administrators lashed out at protests against giving a religious school a name associated with a convicted felon.

The Milken family's most famous member is former junk bond king Michael Milken, who served 22 months in prison for securities fraud and was ordered by the court to pay \$600 million in fines and restitution.

From wire reports

1/Mexico

Peace talks with rebels go forward

SAN ANDRES LARRAINZAR — Talks aimed at ending an uprising in southern Mexico advanced Friday for the first time in months after Indian rebels agreed to participate in broader talks on national political reform.

Estique Eftren Mayorga Martinez, an Interior Ministry official, called the Zapatista National Liberation Army's acceptance of the government proposal a victory in the effort to end the 20-month-old uprising. But the issue of disarmament remains a potential obstacle. Government officials insist the rebels lay down their arms.

But Rebel military leader Subcomandante Marcos has repeatedly said the group will not disarm until its demands for social and economic reform are met.

2/Martinique

Hurricane Luis cleanup begins

FORT-DE-FRANCE — With bulldozers and power saws, soldiers and police in St. Martin began tidying the mangrove wreckage left by Hurricane Luis as the storm churned south Friday toward Bermuda.

Lansing State Journal NATION & WORLD

3A U.S. has Bosnian burden

Troops, billions of dollars planned to help peacekeeping efforts

From wire reports

WASHINGTON — If U.S. diplomats succeed in negotiating peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina, officials said Friday, it will be a triumph with a potentially enormous price tag. As many as 25,000 U.S. peacekeeping troops, billions of dollars in economic aid and a commitment to arm the new and vulnerable Bosnian state may be needed. A peace agreement is far from complete, but Clinton administration officials are planning an effort

to make it stick — and worrying whether Congress and the public would shoulder the burden. After foreign ministers meeting in Geneva announced progress toward a peace agreement, the White House reaffirmed a long-standing U.S. commitment to provide economic aid for Bosnia that could run as high as \$5 billion over four years. Over the longer run, though, the new U.S. engagement in Bosnia could be a major test of the nation's willingness to bear the costs of playing a leadership role in the

post-Cold War world. "Today's agreement demonstrates that, when the world confronts intractable problems, American leadership is absolutely essential," Secretary of State Warren Christopher said. This first concerted U.S.-led push for peace in Bosnia came as NATO bombing raids on Bosnian Serb targets escalated, leading to diplomatic peace efforts. U.S. Adm. Leighton Smith, commander of NATO's southern forces, threatened more airstrikes if the rebels refuse to pull their heavy weaponry from around Sarajevo. The threat came just before the agreement, but NATO officials said it still stands. An international peace plan,

giving Bosnian Serbs 49 percent of Bosnia, but until now has been refused by the Serbs. Serbia has been talking for months with the United States on recognizing Bosnia-Herzegovina in exchange for lifting of 3-year-old sanctions. By recognizing that Bosnia consists of two entities — the Muslim-Croat federation and Republika Srpska — Friday's agreement lays a framework for difficult negotiations ahead on territorial and constitutional arrangements. The status of Sarajevo is certain to be the toughest territorial issue. The Bosnian government and outside world want the city to remain whole; the Serbs insist on keeping at least a section of the capital.

Main points

- Some key principles agreed to Friday as a basis for peace talks:
■ Bosnia remains an internationally recognized state with its borders intact.
■ Within Bosnia, Bosnian Serbs will control 49 percent of the territory and the Muslim-Croat federation will control 51 percent. The percentages could change subject to mutual agreement.
■ Both regions will be self-governed with own constitutions.
■ Each region will be allowed to form special relations with neighboring Serbia and Croatia, but not secede from Bosnia.
■ Each will hold free elections.
■ Both are obliged to resolve mutual disputes.

Women's groups tackle abortion

Beijing conference delegates ask nations to review punishments

By Edith M. Lederer

BEIJING — When the U.N. women's conference began, many anticipated angry public debate about abortion. Instead, there were quiet talks and an agreement to ask governments to review laws that punish women who have abortions.

If the informal agreement reached Friday behind closed doors is accepted by the conference, it would be a victory for many countries that pushed unsuccessfully for the same plank at last year's U.N. population conference in Cairo.

While defiant activists grab most of the attention, the real work of the Fourth U.N. World Conference on Women is going on in private. Delegates are battling over issues ranging from money to teen sex to lesbian discrimination.

But the Vatican's surprise announcement that it wouldn't fight the abortion battle again and would instead protect what it achieved in Cairo changed the atmosphere in Beijing.

"My gut feeling is the debates are not so shrill," said Patricia Liscuano of the Philippines, chair of the main negotiating committee. Pope John Paul II had strongly opposed the Cairo meeting, saying it would encourage birth control and abortion.

Delegates from 189 countries are working furiously to reach agreement on a platform of action to achieve equality for women as the 21st century approaches. About 20 percent of the 120-page text is still in dispute.

The Vatican and some Catholic and Islamic countries are expected to object to parts of the platform, which will not be legally binding but will act as a guide for governments to make policy.

Conflictions between Chinese police and rights activists outside the Beijing convention center have



One conference ends: Tibetan delegates living in China sing Friday at the Tibetan tent on the last day of the Non-Governmental Organizations Forum on Women in Haidiyou. In Beijing, the U.N. women's conference continued its work.

been a minor distraction to the 5,200 delegates.

Gertrude Mongella, secretary-general of the U.N. conference, told a news conference that participants who run afoul of Chinese police are experiencing what women in many countries face every day.

Mongella said that women watching what happens in Beijing

will be angry if conference participants do not agree on a platform that — at least on paper — promises improvement in their lives.

The chapter on reproductive health has generated some of the most heated objections. Many delegates initially feared governments would back off of the Cairo accord, which calls for women to have access to family

planning.

A small negotiating group agreed Friday to take the Beijing agreement a step further than Cairo, said Rachel Kyte of the International Women's Health Coalition. The agreement — to seek a review of laws that punish women who have abortions — "is very, very important for Latin America in particular," Kyte said.

Ito drops Fuhrman jury plan

Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Under orders from a higher court, O.J. Simpson's judge abandoned a plan to instruct jurors that they could consider Mark Fuhrman's "unavailability" to testify in weighing the former detective's credibility.

The decision means that as of now, Judge Lance Ito will tell jurors nothing about Fuhrman, who has been a primary target of defense attempts to slow Simpson's trial.

Ito issued his ruling shortly after the appeals court ordered him to either change the planned instruction or appear before the higher court Monday to explain his reasoning.

A Simpson defense lawyer said in light of Friday's developments, the team would be considering "every remedy possible" over the weekend.

Loyola University law professor Laurie Levenson said one defense option may be to seek reconsideration of whether Fuhrman had a right to invoke his Fifth Amendment protection when he took the stand Wednesday.

Since Fuhrman was technically a witness under cross-examination — having testified earlier in the trial — the law was unclear as to whether he had already waived his Fifth Amendment rights, she said.

Even before he backed down, the defense said it may have to call more witnesses as a result of the appeals court ruling rather than rest its case Monday.

"We have to decide whether or not to rest without an instruction we viewed as legally correct for the jury to hear," attorney Robert Shapiro told The Associated Press.

District Attorney Gil Garcetti praised the appellate ruling, saying "we obviously believe it's a marvelous and proper decision."

Informant: Weaver offered guns

Agent says no tricks in weapons sale; ATF chief admits mistake

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — An undercover informant insisted Friday that he did not trick Randy Weaver into making an illegal weapons sale and told a Senate panel the white separatist offered to "supply me with shotguns all day long."

But skeptical senators wrung concessions from John Magaw, director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms that the agency mishandled one aspect of the case.

Magaw said it was inexcusable that an ATF agent characterized

Weaver as the U.S. attorney's officer as a suspect in bank robberies. Weaver wasn't a suspect, Magaw said.

Weaver's sale of two sawed-off shotguns to an ATF informant and Weaver's failure to appear for trial were followed by a shootout and 11-day standoff on Ruby Ridge in northern Idaho in 1992 that killed a deputy U.S. marshal and Weaver's wife and 14-year-old son.

Testifying earlier from behind a partition, informant Kenneth Fadelley, his voice distorted electronically to disguise it, said that Weaver abruptly declared one day in October 1989, "I would like to go to work for you."

At the time, Fadelley, posing as an arms trader, was infiltrating groups of right-wing extremists for ATF.

"I was taken aback" because it was the first time gun sales had come up in a series of discussions between the two, said Fadelley.

Fadelley bought two sawed-off shotguns from Weaver later that month — a charge for which Weaver was acquitted at his 1993 trial.

"I am emphatic that I did not at any time coerce, bribe, persuade Mr. Weaver to do any criminal act... No way did I ever encourage him," he said.

Questioning Fadelley's credibility, Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., said the only independent evidence of Weaver discussing additional weapons sales is a tape-recording in which the white separatist mentions such sales as something he might be able to do.

Around the World

World map with numbered locations 1-4 and corresponding news items: 1/Mexico, 2/Martinique, 3/France, 4/Russia.

Antigua reported two deaths, including a man swept out to sea in his car while he was searching for his girlfriend. That raised the official death toll to at least 14 dead on five islands. More fatalities were expected. Thousands of islanders remained stranded without communications three days after Luis, one of the most powerful storms of the century, blasted through the Caribbean.