

NZTONIGHT NZ soldiers on German mission PAGE 2	WORLD Anatomy of a terror attack PAGE 8	SPORT Do it like Ed PAGE 11	FILM Advance, Australia fair PAGE 13
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ISSN 1172-4153 | Volume 1 | Issue 17 | 28 November 2008

DEJA VU

 Brian Horrell, 52	 Michael Gyles, 49	 Noel Marsh, 35	 Murray White, 37	 Jeremy Cook, 58
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on the INSIDE

RICKARDS LAW
Sworn in
[Page 3](#)

HOT SUMMER
Niwa forecast
[Page 4](#)

DOLPHIN'S SECRET
A new discovery
[Page 17](#)

French crash evokes Erebus memories

Rescue workers have headed back out to sea off the coast of France this evening carrying an airline CEO's faint and fast-diminishing hopes that crew of an Air New Zealand jetliner may still be alive, clinging to floating wreckage.

The air search was called off late this morning because of darkness and stormy conditions, but units

are back on the job after a dawn resumption.

Intact wreckage of the Air New Zealand A320 Airbus floated after it crashed in the Mediterranean, raising hopes there may yet be survivors.

While searchers gave no hope anyone survived the crash of the aircraft operated by XL Airways, Air New Zealand boss Rob Fyfe was still hoping against hope.

Senior Air New Zealand pilot Captain Brian Horrell, 52, of Auckland, engineer Murray White, 37, of Auckland, and 49 year old Christchurch engineer Michael Gyles are missing, along with another Air New Zealand engineer from Christchurch, 35 year old Noel Marsh and a Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) inspector, Jeremy Cook, 58. Two German

pilots from XL Airways were flying the plane when it crashed off Perpignan, in southeast France.

At least three people have been confirmed dead while the four others are missing.

"I certainly haven't given up hope," Mr Fyfe told his second press conference of the morning.

[Continue reading](#)

EXCLUSIVE

Mumbai terror group's NZ connection

By Ian Wishart

The terrorist organisation implicated in the Mumbai attacks has links to the Pakistani community in New Zealand.

Indian security forces have captured members of the Lashkar-e-Taiba group during the storming of the Taj Hotel this morning.

Earlier this month, *TGIF Edition* broke the story that

two men who'd trained at Lashkar-e-Taiba terror camps had been allowed to slip into New Zealand, and one has been given residency here despite officials being warned of his background. To make matters worse, Immigration NZ "cleared" Jameel ur Rehman despite apparently failing to translate key documents, and before police had completed their own investigation.

The documents reveal the two men had been

asked to help establish funding and support channels for Lashkar-e-Taiba in New Zealand. The men received support from leaders in the NZ Pakistani community, despite other Pakistanis warning of their terror group links.

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off BEAT



A BETTER WORK STORY

SHIELDAIG, Scotland, Nov. 28 (UPI) — An elderly Shieldaig, Scotland, woman said police raided her home after mistaking the tomato plants in her window for marijuana.

Lulu Matheson, 79, and her son Gus, 47, said they were in the cottage. Matheson has lived in for 53 years last week when a group of police cars stopped in front of the home, *The Daily Mail* reported today.

"I got a terrible fright and I couldn't understand what they were doing here because I knew we had nothing more than tomatoes in the window. I don't know what the neighbours must be thinking," the 79-year-old widow said.

Gus Matheson said police insisted on taking samples of the tomato plants to test for cannabis and brought sniffer dogs from a police station two hours away to search the cottage.

"My 26-year-old nephew Stephen — who hardly even smokes a cigarette, never mind cannabis — lives with his girlfriend in a caravan next door and they went over and searched there too, after handcuffing him. It was a terrible carry-on," he said.

Matheson said he has filed a complaint with the police department.

Despite leaving with their tails between their legs, the police didn't even apologize, he said.

Police spokesman Duncan MacLean confirmed the house was searched for drugs and no illegal substances were found.

JUDGE ALLOWS PERFUME SENSITIVITY SUIT

DETROIT, Nov. 28 (UPI) — A federal judge has allowed a Detroit city employee's lawsuit alleging her co-worker's perfume impaired her breathing.

U.S. District Judge Lawrence Zatkoff wrote in his ruling, which was released Wednesday, that city of Detroit planner Susan McBride has produced evidence that her breathing is significantly restricted by the perfume, making her job difficult to perform, *The Detroit News* reported this morning.

Lawyers for the city had attempted to convince the judge to dismiss the lawsuit, which was filed under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

(Zatkoff) recognizes that this is the type of claim that's viable, said Ann Curry Thompson, McBride's attorney. These are types of claims that in many jurisdictions ... are sort of pooh-poohed and are not taken seriously.

Grant Ha, a lawyer representing the city, said in a June court filing seeking the dismissal of the suit that there is no medical diagnosis of the alleged condition and the plaintiff is not disabled because she is not substantially impaired in a major life activity.

MARS BAR ADDICTION BLAMED FOR ATTACKS

CALLINGTON, England, Nov. 28 (UPI) — A Callington, England, man who admitted to attacking his girlfriend twice in 10 days told the court his violence was caused by an addiction to Mars bars.

Marco Fella, 38, admitted to hitting his 34-year-old girlfriend in the face with a piece of rope and biting her finger a few days later when she refused to wear thong underwear instead of her big pants, *The Daily Mail* reported this morning.

Martin Pearce, Fella's defense attorney, said his client eats 10 Mars bars a day because of an addiction to sugar and he becomes aggressive when his sugar levels are low. Pearce said Fella has started an anger management course.

"My client's temper snapped because he felt his partner was not making enough effort in the relationship but he is now deeply sorry for his actions," Pearce said.

Fella's sentencing on two common assault charges was adjourned for probation reports after he admitted to the attacks.

Kiwis remain under siege in hotel

WELLINGTON, NOV 28 — Two New Zealanders remain trapped in a Mumbai hotel while terrorists continue to cause chaos in parts of the city.

About 40 people were reportedly rescued from the Oberoi Trident hotel while commandos battled terrorists, but New Zealanders Vinka and David Clemmett remained holed up in their room, Stuff.co.nz reported.

Peter Clemmett, David's brother, said he last spoke with the couple at about 1.30pm New Zealand time today.

"There's apparently a lot of rifle fire going on outside but they managed to get some sleep last night.

"David said 'it's amazing, you just get used to rifle fire after a while'.

"They are in good spirits but apparently they're

down to two bottles of Red Bull and a packet of mixed nuts."

A spokeswoman at the hotel told NZPA all the phonelines connected to the rooms were down.

She said the Clemmetts were staying in a new wing of the hotel and was unsure about how guests there were faring.

Militants stormed a series of high-profile targets late on Wednesday in India's financial capital, including a landmark restaurant, the main train station and a charitable hospital for women and children.

They killed more than 125 people and seized scores of hostages, targeting specifically Britons and Americans.

Prime Minister John Key said today diplomats were in Mumbai assessing the situation.

He said one New Zealander caught up in a second hotel targeted by terrorists — the Taj Hotel — was now safe, and confirmed that the Clemmetts were in "good shape at this point".

Mr Key said MFAT had advised there had been 156 enquiries from New Zealanders thought to be in Mumbai.

Of those, 113 had been confirmed as safe and well. Enquiries were still being asked about the 43, though not all of those were necessarily in Mumbai.

Mr Key said New Zealand "joined with others in the world in expressing our abhorrence at these terrorist acts.

"As a good friend of India it is important at a time like this that we rally around to provide support."

— NZPA



An A320 with a nosewheel fault lands in the US. Of 3,000 planes in service, only 17 have crashed

Airbus A320 a safe and reliable aircraft, says aviation expert

AUCKLAND, NOV 28 — The Airbus A320 aircraft is one of the world's safest and most reliable passenger jets, an aviation expert says.

The Air New Zealand aircraft which crashed into the Mediterranean early today was less than four years old.

The aircraft flew for a year with Freedom Air, an Air New Zealand subsidiary, before it was leased to a German aviation company, XL Airways, two years ago.

Two XL Aviation pilots were at the controls of the aircraft when it crashed. A senior Air New Zealand

captain from Auckland, two airline engineers from Christchurch and an engineer from Auckland, and a Civil Aviation Authority inspector were also on board.

The aircraft had been in the air for two hours on an acceptance flight before it was handed back to Air New Zealand later this week when it crashed.

It was in Air New Zealand livery

Air New Zealand said today it had access to the German company's maintenance records and it had no worries about any aspects of the aircraft's performance in the last few years. It carried about

150 passengers, six wide with a central aisle. Civil Aviation Authority spokesman Bill Sommer said the A320 was "one of the most reliable and safest" aircraft in the world.

"We have a very good safety record for airline operations here in New Zealand," he said.

"If you look at the figures, the broad Oceania area is rated as the safest place for large jet aircraft, and it has for many years."

Air New Zealand had 13 Airbus A320 aircraft in its fleet, said chief executive Rob Fyfe.

— NZPA

NZ troops on urban warfare training in Germany

HOHENFELS, GERMANY, NOV. 28 — New Zealand elite troops are undergoing urban warfare training using live ammunition at a military base in Germany.

The secret was let slip, ironically, by the Canadian National Defence Force in a news release about its own participation.

"A unit of Canadian soldiers is at a multinational training facility conducting exercises to prepare for evolving risks in an urban combat zone.

"The 2nd Battalion, Royal Canadian Regiment is at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Germany as part of the Cooperative Spirit 2008 training initiative along with troops from the United States, Britain, Australia and New Zealand," the Canadian National Defense Force reported.

The monthlong urban combat training initiative

is part of an effort to test the allied countries' communication interoperability and whether they can work together effectively. Officials say the exercises include shoot-house scenarios and other live-fire training in an urban combat environment.

"ABCA (America, Britain, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) countries have experience in many different areas; a lot of useful knowledge that Canada can use," Cpl. Scott Preepser said in a statement.



"We are getting some very high-speed training. The instructors have been very helpful."

— UPI



Wayne Drought / NZPA

Rickards officially on the case

AUCKLAND, NOV 28 – Former top policeman Clint Rickards was admitted to the bar today, in a ceremony watched by dozens of his extended whanau.

During the ceremony at Auckland High Court, Justice David Baragwanath welcomed Mr Rickards to practise as a barrister and solicitor.

He told the court that Mr Rickards was planning to work with disadvantaged people on treaty matters and employment issues. He explained the reason everyone was sitting in court today was to mark the public importance of the event, and to maintain public confidence on how legal services are provided.

“It is the fundamental obligation of lawyers to uphold the rule of law and facilitate the administration of justice in New Zealand.

“The job of barrister is not always a comfortable one. It may be necessary to stand up for your client when your client is not a popular person. Every person in our society is entitled to representation by a barrister who is independent.

“Barristers should act in accordance with all judicial duties. Personal comfort and convenience comes second. The client always comes first,” Justice Baragwanath said.

Those admitted to the bar enjoyed great privilege and were subject to great responsibility, he said.

Speaking about the work which Mr Rickards planned to do with disadvantaged people, Justice Baragwanath said he hoped he would help transform the lives of many people.

“We are experiencing a time where the international economic downturn is having a knock-on effect on members of the community, with particular concern for the most vulnerable.

“Those who lack education, example and support can spiral downwards with a sense of hopelessness, which can so often lead to a life of crime,” Justice Baragwanath said.

Addressing Mr Rickards, Justice Baragwanath said he would face many challenges ahead of him, and wished him every success.

The court heard that one of Mr Rickards' children is a lawyer, and another will soon be joining him in the legal profession.

Mr Rickards left his job as assistant commissioner in November last year, ending an internal police disciplinary action against him.

In 2006, he and two former police officers Bob Schollum and Brad Shipton were acquitted of historic charges of raping Rotorua woman Louise Nicholas during the 1980s.

– NZPA

Power unplugs Clark EFA Quango

WELLINGTON, NOV 28 – The previous government's expert panel on electoral administration has been closed down by the new Justice Minister Simon Power.

The panel was set up two months ago as part of the agreement between Labour and the Greens over the passage of the Electoral Finance Act.

The panel was to have reviewed the administration of the electoral system under the Electoral Finance Act and whether or not political parties should be state funded.

The terms of reference included convening a Citizens' Forum of 70 people to consider the findings of the panel, Mr Power said. The cost of the panel and the forums had been budgeted at \$4.57 million.

The EFA had been passed without broad based support across Parliament and the panel set up without consultation, he said.

“So we are disbanding the panel and will start this whole process afresh.

“The next phase in the Government's plan is to repeal the EFA as an interim measure, as promised during the election campaign.”

National wanted to return to the “spirit of bipar-

tisanship” on electoral reform, which had been the norm until recently, he said.

“The Government has been sufficiently encouraged by statements made by the Leader of the Opposition since the election which suggest there is now a willingness to participate in a constructive approach toward the reform of electoral administration,” Mr Power said.

“Following the repeal of the EFA, we will start work on a new law that will seek as broad a range of parliamentary and public support as possible, to provide an enduring framework for the administration of elections.”

The three members appointed to the panel were Associate Professor Andrew Geddis of Otago University, Dr Jean Drage of Canterbury University/Victoria University, and Professor Stephen Levine of Victoria University.

Mr Power said he had written to the panellists advising them of the decision to disestablish the committee and thanking them for their willingness to contribute their expertise.

– NZPA



Antigovernment protesters continue occupation of Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi airport today after Thai Prime Minister Somchai Wongsawat declared states of emergency at Suvarnabhumi and Don Muang airports. (Kyodo)

Key holds no fears for NZ tourists

WELLINGTON, NOV 28 – New Zealanders have been advised to take care in Thailand by Prime Minister John Key as he continues to prepare to visit the troubled country.

Mr Key said diplomats were keeping a close on the situation, but there was no indication that foreign tourists are being targeted by protesters who have blocked the main airports in protest against the government.

“But obviously given the uncertainty, and the uncertain security situation, New Zealanders in Thailand need to be careful and keep themselves informed and keep in touch with their families and friends,” Mr Key said.

Mr Key said the East Asian Summit was still scheduled to take place in the northern Thailand city of Chiang Mai on December 15.

A close eye was being kept on the situation, but at this stage there was no indication the meeting was being called off and Mr Key still planned to

travel to take part in the signing of a trade deal with Asean nations.

Mr Key's comments came as the Thai government backed away from its threat to forcibly remove protesters occupying Bangkok's two airports in their campaign to oust the prime minister, saying police would avoid violence and attempt to negotiate.

Thousands of tourists have been left stranded since anti-government protesters occupied the main international Suvarnabhumi airport on Tuesday and the smaller Don Muang airport on Wednesday. Both airports are now shut down and the capital completely cut off to air traffic.

The new soft line, and the government's failure to send in security forces so far, has raised doubts about whether Somchai has the support of security forces and the army, a powerful institution that has traditionally played a key role in the country's politics.

– NZPA



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Summer warmer than normal for most, Niwa say

WELLINGTON, NOV 28 – After a miserable winter, New Zealanders can look forward to a warmer than average summer, experts say.

The Niwa National Climate Centre has predicted that much of summer will be warmer and drier than average throughout the country.

Only the West Coast of the South Island and inland Otago would have slightly lower or “average” temperatures.

Rainfall levels would remain “near normal” for all except the west and east coasts of the South Island, which could expect slightly more and less rain respectively.

The South Island could also expect stronger than normal northwesterly winds.

Soil conditions were already drier than normal in many eastern regions and would need to be monitored, Niwa said.

– NZPA



Parliamentary ‘bomber’ fails in appeal

WELLINGTON, NOV 28 – The West Coast’s self-styled “Oliver Cromwell” has failed in a bid to appeal his conviction for threatening to blow up Parliament with a truck bomb and set off another bomb to kill survivors.

Robert Frank Terry, aged 54, of Reefton, was convicted in February of misusing a telephone and sentenced to 60 hours of community service. Terry – who has previously compared himself in a separate court hearing to the English civil war leader Oliver Cromwell who expelled his own Parliament in 1653 – has a long history of battles in and out of court.

In 1996, he was sentenced to 12 months’ jail for assaulting a neighbour over a creek bed boundary dispute.

And in 1998 he was sentenced to nine months’ jail for threatening to kill the local council’s general manager, when it was alleged he threatened to explode a bomb at the Westport council building.

He lost his battle over that conviction in the Appeal

Court in 2004. In 2005, he was convicted of threatening to behead Cabinet Minister Phil Goff and to deliver the head of a child to Parliament. He was placed on a \$1000, one-year good behaviour bond.

Today, the Appeal Court rejected his application for leave to appeal the February conviction in the district court at Westport. He phoned the private secretary to Cabinet Minister Damien O’Connor, threatening to send truck bombs to Parliament – one to blow up the building, the second to get the survivors when they came out.

The court said Terry contested a number of technical points and advanced four grounds for appeal which had previously been dismissed in the Appeal Court.

None of the matters referred to by Terry raised a question of law important enough to be submitted to the court, the judges said.

– NZPA



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NZ dollar little changed in quiet trade

WELLINGTON, NOV 28 – The New Zealand dollar was little changed during its domestic session after a quiet night affected by the US Thanksgiving Holiday.

By 8am, the NZ dollar was buying US55.41c against the greenback from US55.06c at 5pm yesterday, but it retreated slightly to US55.17c by 5pm today. Residential construction sunk further into the mire in October, with the number of new dwelling units authorised the lowest in 16 years.

That added to the bleak picture painted by the National Bank Business Outlook survey yesterday.

But the New Zealand sharemarket has managed five days of gains, and ANZ National Bank said

today that it had historically high liquidity levels.

The focus next week will be on the Reserve Bank’s Monetary Policy Statement on Thursday, with a manufacturers’ lobby group today calling for a 200-basis point cut in the Official Cash Rate, which is currently 6.5 percent.

The NZ dollar has support around US54.60c and resistance at US55.60c.

The NZ dollar rose to 0.4277 euros from 0.4266, and to 52.55 yen from 52.40.

Against the Australian dollar, the kiwi was down to A83.98c from A84.95c. The trade weighted index was unchanged 55.70.

– NZPA

Editorial

A day remembered in history

I remember where I was when I first heard Air New Zealand's flight to Erebus was missing. I was walking through the doorway between the dining room and the kitchen as a 15 year old in 1979, when my ears caught a news flash on TV1 advising that the flight was overdue. When they added the plane had not been heard from in several hours, the implication was obvious.

I knew my great aunt was on that flight to Antarctica, as was a well-loved neighbour of my grandmother's, who'd always spared an apple from the tree for us kids when we visited of a summer.

I remember the sinking feeling, and the realisation that their lives had ended, somewhere out there in the darkness, when the announcer calmly intoned the aircraft must have run out of fuel half an hour ago.

None of us expected to relive moments like that

quite so viscerally this morning when we awoke to breaking radio news that an Air New Zealand jetliner had crashed. Not today, surely.

Yet here we are.

There are some strange things that happen with Airbus aircraft. Their high tech, "fly by wire" nature gives them extra sophistication, but they can be a dangerous master when they decide to fly themselves.

By all accounts, this Airbus 320 simply dropped its nose and plunged into the drink whilst making its final approach to land.

Investigators will no doubt get to the bottom of it once they retrieve the cockpit voice recorder and black box flight data. Naturally, Airbus will have a dog in the ring given the aircraft's relative youth and the fact it had just been serviced there. XL Airways of Germany, which had been running the plane and

whose pilots were at the helm, also has a serious interest in figuring out what went wrong.

Air New Zealand, waiting to take the plane back and essentially passengers on the flight, wants to know because it runs 9 other Airbus 320s, and it wants explanations it can tell its grieving family.

The fact that Air New Zealand has lost two large jets on the same day, 29 years apart, is eerie. As is the coincidence that sucked Sir Edmund Hillary's widow into its vortex today. Lady Hillary had just finished unveiling the Hillary Shield at Twickenham today when the Airbus crashed. Lady Hillary's first husband, Peter Mulgrew, was on the Erebus flight in 1979. Ed Hillary was supposed to have taken the flight, but had to cancel.

November 28th was already etched into the minds of a generation. Now it's etched in stone.

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Comment

Walker's World: Don't count on China

By Martin Walker

WASHINGTON – As panic gripped the world markets again last week after U.S. Treasury Secretary Henry Hank Paulson decided to sit on his remaining US\$350 billion war chest and not buy any toxic mortgage assets, the only sign of relief came from China.

The Beijing government's decision to pump \$586 billion into new infrastructure investment appeared like manna from Keynesian heaven, a promise that China would continue to buy oil and steel and cement and keep world markets ticking along.

It will be a tall order. For all its headlong economic growth over the last three decades, China's GDP is just \$3 trillion, about one-fifth the size of the U.S. or European economies. A country with only 5 percent of global GDP will have trouble hauling the rest of the planet out of recession. And there are three alarming reasons to question just how far and how long China will be able to bear this burden.

The first came from the official Xinhua news agency, which reported last week that the country's leading bio-environment security team had reported, after a three-year survey, that more than a third of China's land is suffering serious erosion that is putting its crops and water supply at risk. At the current rate of loss of arable land, harvests in China's northeastern breadbasket were expected to fall 40 percent in 50 years. Soil erosion since 2000 has cost China \$29 billion.

China has a more dire situation than India, Japan, the United States, Australia and many other countries suffering from soil erosion, Xinhua reported, adding that the country was losing close to 5 billion tons of topsoil each year.

That may not be an immediate problem, but the crisis in trade credit is urgent. The lifeblood of the global economy, the international trade system, is drying up. It is becoming increasingly expensive and difficult to obtain letters of credit or the other forms of credit that finance the world's annual \$13.6 trillion in trade.

Banks in China are reluctant to lend Chinese firms the money to import Western goods and raw materials, for fear that the importer might go bust. So in the absence of a guaranteed letter of credit, the exporters cannot get Western banks to finance the shipment.

"There's all kinds of stuff stacked up on docks right now that can't be shipped because people can't get letters of credit," Bill Gary, president of Commodity Information Systems in Oklahoma City, reported last month. "The problem is not demand, and it's not supply because we have plenty of supply. It's finding anyone who can come up with the credit to buy."

This is hurting emerging markets like Brazil, China and India particularly hard, says Pascal Lamy, head of the World Trade Organization, who says, "Trade finance is being offered at 300 basis points above the London Interbank Offered Rate, and even at this high price, it has been difficult for developing countries to obtain." Lamy has organized crisis meetings of banks

with the WTO and International Monetary Fund to find ways to keep trade finance moving.

Banks' refusal to offer letters of credit has resulted in very few fresh cargoes reaching the market, which is adding to the (ship-)owners' woes, says a report from Denmark's Maersk shipping group.

One of the main trade financing banks, HSBC, reports that the cost of guaranteeing a letter of credit has doubled, which helps explain the crisis in the shipping industry that has seen the charter cost of a 170,000-ton Capesize bulk carrier collapse from US\$233,988 in June to less than US\$5,000 this month, a fall of 98 percent.

"It's like standing on a beach watching a tsunami, knowing that it's coming," said Scott Steven-

BANKS IN CHINA ARE RELUCTANT TO LEND CHINESE FIRMS THE MONEY TO IMPORT WESTERN GOODS AND RAW MATERIALS, FOR FEAR THAT THE IMPORTER MIGHT GO BUST. SO IN THE ABSENCE OF A GUARANTEED LETTER OF CREDIT, THE EXPORTERS CANNOT GET WESTERN BANKS TO FINANCE THE SHIPMENT

son, manager of the International Finance Corp's Global Trade Finance Program. (IFC is the private finance arm of the World Bank.)

World trade until this year had been growing at 7 percent to 10 percent annually but is now slowing sharply and may even be negative next year as the global recession spreads. One result has been the closure this year of 65,000 factories in China, mostly owned by Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea. More than half of China's toy factories have shut.

And China has further troubles. Last week the official Beijing media reported that some 2,000 people rioted in Longnan, in northwest China's Gansu prov-

ince, over a government plan to redevelop the city center in a way that threatened to make many people homeless. They burned cars, attacked a local Communist Party office, injuring 60 officials, and fought police with rocks and bottles, axes and iron bars.

Minxin Pei of the Carnegie Endowment in Washington, a leading U.S.-based analyst of China's bumpy path to modernization, estimates that riots in China are running at an average of 10 per day. China's official press has reported on dozens of demonstrations in recent weeks, including a two-day strike by disgruntled taxi drivers in the southwestern Chinese city of Chongqing and the torching of a police car in the recession-hit boomtown of Shenzhen. In June, 30,000 people demonstrated in the southwestern province of

Guizhou, setting fire to cars and the local Communist Party building following rumours that officials had tried to cover up the death of a teenage girl.

"I don't think we're even close to seeing the real impact of the global financial crisis on Chinese society. I'd be surprised if the government wasn't very concerned about the increasing level of social unrest all over China," comments Joshua Rosenzweig, a Hong Kong manager of research at the Dui Hua Foundation, a human rights group.

If the world is counting on China to haul it out of recession, it may be relying on a weak reed.

— UPI

Letters

Smarter thinking needed

The solar water-heating system I've invented includes, like most such systems, top-up heating from the electric mains. After a decade of service, this suddenly failed to draw any electricity when I switched it on at the end of an overcast day.

In traditional Kiwi do-it-yourself spirit, I bought a new element. In order to install it, I first drained the 180 litre of water from the hot-water cylinder. Then, upon opening the element/thermostat doorlet, I immediately saw one connection (actually a pair of wires twisted together) in mid-air next to one thermostat terminal.

Being the person who installed that thermostat, I have now learned from this experience to test wire-clamping by tugging, before assuming electrical connection is permanently made. The merit of proper trades training, usually in apprenticeships, I hereby humbly acknowledge.

What I will not respect is degradation of trade training standards for ideological motives. Modern civilisation increasingly needs competent technicians – and I don't mean people sitting at computers. We need more, and better, technicians competently handling wires, plastics, wood, metal ... Otherwise, more bits will fall off aeroplanes, more aeroplanes will crash, yachts suddenly take on six ton of water, & so forth. But, just when this need for technical training has been rising, educational standards have been degraded these past couple of decades for no better reason than "The lightly-proffered laurel, The easy ungrudged praise" of which Kipling warned a century ago. There is a novel caring, sensitive Noo Eege attitude 'all must pass – failure would cruel self-esteem'. This approach to education is fatal for safety in a society dependent upon complex technology some of which is dangerous.

A recent motive in this dangerous degradation of standards is racism. When Peter Sharples launched a decade ago his 'kura kaupapa Maori' within his marae at Glen Eden, he stated on Radio NZ that every child who finished this high-school conducted entirely in the Maori language would be fit for tertiary education. Not even Henry Cooper entertained such delusions when he'd organised by far the most university-oriented high-school in New Zealand. Now Sharples has got \$600,000 toward his next power-play, a 'Maori university' beyond public control. He tells us belligerently on TV that "anyone against this concept is either racist or stupid".

Before he gets any further with his tertiary ambitions, where is the objective assessment of Sharples' secondary-school effort? How has it worked out, after a decade? Did every graduate turn out suitable for tertiary study? What proportion of those starting finished? How many failed? How many passed which exams?

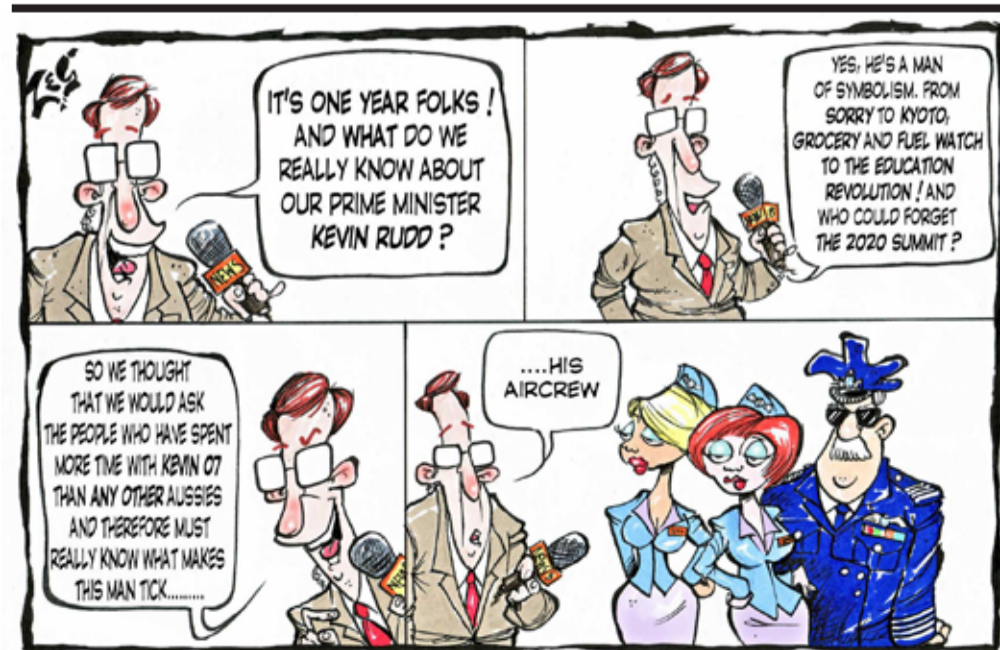
Sharples used the word 'validated' over & over in asserting his right to set up a racist tertiary institution. It would be outside the NZ government's control, he insisted; it would be 'validated' by racially-selected elders of his choice.

Is it a coincidence that one of the most similar racists has been given control of 'Maori TV' and managed to appoint a CEO with a fake tertiary qualification (since gaoled for fraud)? Those who are primarily motivated by racism evidently care little for educational standards. The Minister of Education has promised no more public funds will be given for Sharples' tertiary effort, but the same Mr Mallard said in the same breath on TV that he thought the idea was really good.

We need both universities and trade training polytechs. Both have been lately packed with unemployed youth, to keep down the unemployment figures. This misuse of educational institutions should cease. The polytech qualifications NZCS & NZCE used to be valid, indeed welcomed, around the world; let us try to recover these high standards.

Robert Mann, Auckland

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“BETWEEN NOW AND 2025 THE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE WHO MANAGE TO HAUL THEMSELVES OUT OF POVERTY INTO THE RANKS OF THE MIDDLE CLASS WILL SWELL FROM 440 MILLION OR LESS THAN 8 PERCENT OF THE WORLD’S POPULATION, TO MORE THAN 1.2 BILLION OR 16 PERCENT OF THE GLOBAL POPULATION. NEVER BEFORE HAS THE WORLD SEEN SUCH NUMBERS, AND MOST OF THE NEW ENTRANTS WILL COME FROM INDIA AND CHINA

To hell in a rickshaw

The future awaiting today’s kids

By Peter Curson

On November 21st the US National Intelligence Council released a report entitled *Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World*. This report, one of a series produced by the Council every four years, speculates about what the global landscape might look like in the year 2025. The Report, which is more than a little pessimistic with its “what-if” approach, covers a wide range of strategic issues including the great powers rivalry, terrorism, nuclear weapons, energy and natural resources, world demographics and global pandemics. For the Western World, particularly the EU and to some extent the USA, it presents a gloomy prognosis. Demographic ageing and population decline allied to internal bickering and euro-scepticism will see the EU become a “hobbled giant” by 2025, preserving some economic power but denuded of any genuine international power. The financial pressures stemming from maintaining public services and welfare systems for an ageing population will further provide a severe test for the EU’s social welfare system and financial viability. In addition, it seems likely that Europe will become more heavily dependent on Russia for its energy requirements with all the uncertainties that this would entail. Add this to problems stemming from increasing nationalism and issues relating to the inclusion and exclusion of immigrants, particularly those of Moslem background, and you have an environment laden with acute challenges.

For the US there is an equally gloomy picture. While the USA will continue to remain an important actor on the international stage it will lose much of its political and economic clout and see its role usurped by countries like China and India. In 2025 according to the *Report*, we are looking at a recast world system with the most powerful players being China, India, Brazil and Russia. We are also looking at a major transfer of global wealth and power from The West to The East, primarily engendered by rising oil and commodity prices plus government policies and cheap labour costs, which have seen a major transfer of the world’s manufacturing and service industries to Asia. China, the *Report* argues, will have the greatest global impact over the next 20 years and by 2025 will be the world’s leading military power, the greatest importer of raw materials, and most probably the world’s second-largest economy. It will also be the world’s worst polluter, which in the context of climate change raises many concerns. Under *Global Trends* the *Report* identifies a number of critical developments which will transform the world. One of the most significant will be the increase in the *global middle class*. Between now and 2025 the numbers of people who manage to haul themselves out of poverty into the ranks of the middle class will swell from 440 million or less

than 8 percent of the world’s population, to more than 1.2 billion or 16 percent of the global population. Never before has the world seen such numbers, and most of the new entrants will come from India and China. Not only are more people managing to escape from poverty, and not only is wealth moving from West to East, but also much more of it is being concentrated in the state’s hands. State capitalism is displacing the old Western model of liberal laissez faire capitalism. In the section devoted to ‘The Demographics of Discord’ the *Report* identifies a number of major demographic trends which will dominate the next 20 or so years. These include the fact that Asia, Africa and Latin America will virtually account for the entire world’s population increase over the next 20 years, while many developed countries will age significantly with in some cases declining populations. A pensioner boom is also within sight and will have wide-ranging social and economic repercussions. Increasing population movement is also likely to loom large as the net migration of people from rural to urban areas and from poorer to richer countries accelerates. This will result in increasing urbanisation and by 2025, 57 percent of the world’s population will live in urban areas compared with about 50 percent today. Finally, two countries, India and China will dominate the world’s population stakes with more than 1.4 billion people each.

The *Report* also warns that terrorism and conflict will remain central concerns and that the lack of employment opportunities and legitimate avenues for political expression in many parts of the world, are likely to further radicalise youth groups and lead to a proliferation of unrest and conflict. Pessimism prevails when the *Report* considers the Middle East and much is made of the fact that if Iran pursues a nuclear strategy, new and all-encompassing security challenges will engulf the region. Conflict may also arise over access to natural resources. The number of countries without access to stable water supplies will rise from 21 (600 million people) to 36 (1.4 billion people) by 2025. Cooperation between countries for access to water is likely to become more difficult and may in some circumstances lead to conflict. The demand for food is also set to increase as a result of increasing populations, growing affluence and the increasing adoption of a Western diet. Central Asia may also become the arena of increasing competition between Russia and China over access to energy sources, while Sub-Saharan Africa will continue to maintain its reputation for demographic stress, economic disruption, civil conflict and political instability. Climate change will also have its impact producing warmer temperatures, more heatwaves, severe climate events and greater rainfall variability. But its effects will vary regionally and some countries like Russia and Canada may

well benefit with climate change opening up vast remote areas rich in natural resources.

Finally, the emergence of a new, virulent, and highly contagious human infectious disease remains on the cards and could initiate a global pandemic, cross-border tensions and widespread human fear and panic.

So what sort of future are we looking at? The US Report suggests a transformed world, with some significant changes, shocks and dislocations, although the timing is uncertain. From the US point of view the decline of The West and the emergence of an Indo-Chinese Century is probably the most disturbing trend but other countries such as Brazil, Indo-

nesia, Turkey and Iran may well play important regional roles providing they can successfully merge political and economic growth. What might be the West’s response to these changing geo-political circumstances? Will the US, for example, lie down and gracefully pass the baton to India and China? Is there a worse case scenario whereby the incumbent comes into conflict with the challengers? Hopefully not, and we can only hope that these changing circumstances lead to greater understanding and cooperation.

Peter Curson is Professor in Population & Security, at the Centre for International Security Studies, Faculty of Economics & Business, the University of Sydney. He is also a *TGIF Edition* subscriber

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OLYMPUS



TODAY THE GAZA STRIP REMAINS AN AREA OF TROUBLE FOR THE PALESTINIANS WHO LIVE IN IT, FOR THE ISRAELIS WHO UNTIL RECENTLY OCCUPIED IT AND ALSO FOR THE EGYPTIANS WHO BORDER IT

Understandably, security remains Israel's primary preoccupation. However, if the history of the last 60 years has taught us anything, it should be that the continued occupation has not made Israel any safer.

History should serve as a guideline of past mistakes so that similar errors of judgment may be omitted in the future. Example: the refusal by Israel and the United States to negotiate directly with the Palestine Liberation Organization on the grounds that it was a terrorist organization. Did this mean there was no dialogue between the United States and the PLO? Of course not. Only it was held through third parties (for a long while, Algeria), during which time was wasted and the conflict was allowed to escalate.

Similarly, history should remind Hamas that so long as Israel continues to feel threatened, chances of a negotiated settlement will remain unattainable.

"Israel wants to be certain that any territory which is returned is not then turned into a base for forces bent on destroying the State of Israel," said an Arab ambassador speaking to this reporter off the record. "And so far, nothing has been done to alleviate those fears," he added.

History, it is often said, repeats itself, and Gaza is a good example of history repeating itself. Both Israel and Hamas are committing the same mistakes as in the past. Israel believes strong-arm tactics will work, when the past clearly has proven otherwise. Put a people in a ghetto-like situation and begin to tighten your hold on it, and the reaction, typically, will be to fight even more.

And if Hamas believes there can be a military solution to this dilemma, and that shelling Israel with its Qassam rockets will improve the lives of its people, it is equally wrong.

Claude Salhani is editor of the *Middle East Times*.

— UPI

The Gaza quandary

By Claude Salhani

WASHINGTON — The Gaza Strip has always been a difficult place to govern. According to the Bible, when Moses came out of Egypt to go to the Promised Land, he took the long way home. Meaning he avoided Gaza.

The Israelis would have benefited from history had they done the same and bypassed Gaza when they went into Egypt in June 1967. Since the Strip was first occupied during the Six-Day War, Gaza, far more so than the West Bank, turned out to be a thorn in Israel's side. Largely due to the tough economic conditions under which Gazans live, the Strip harboured more hard-liners than the West Bank and represented more of a headache to Israel's security forces than the Palestinians living in, say, Hebron, Nablus or Ramallah.

And before the Israeli occupation Gaza was already a problem for Egypt. In fact, when Israel suggested the Strip be returned to Egypt, the Egyptians politely declined the offer.

"Gaza is more of a problem than a gift," said the legendary Moshe Dayan, who was Israel's minister of defence during the '67 war.

Gaza's geography counts for one of the reasons why Israel failed to pacify the long, coastal plain, where poverty, frustration and radicalism play a major role. Gaza has little to no agriculture and no resources, other than thousands of unemployed angry young people.

Today the Gaza Strip remains an area of trouble for the Palestinians who live in it, for the Israelis who until recently occupied it and also for the Egyptians who border it.

For the Egyptians, Gazans represent a turbulent neighbour right on their doorstep with a potential pool of recruitable elements that can be turned very easily into troublemakers and infiltrated into Egypt. Not to mention the fact that Gazans demonstrated to the Egyptians their ability to cross the border into Egypt at any time of their choosing, regardless of how tall or wide or electrified a fence might be.

For the Israelis, Gaza remains a source from where terrorist attacks against Israel are launched, as are Qassam rockets on Israeli towns and villages neighbouring the Strip.

Now factor in some 1.5 million Palestinian refugees, chronic unemployment, severe overcrowding, religious zealots who believe that killing in the name of God is acceptable and will give them a free pass into heaven; add to that weapons of various calibre, including homemade rockets. Complicate the situation further by installing a blockade turning the Strip into a de facto giant open-air prison where lack of food, clean water and electricity — with all that encompasses — are reaching catastrophic proportions, according to Karen AbuZayd, commissioner-general for the United Nations' Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

AbuZayd warned that a humanitarian catastrophe loomed if Israel continued to prevent aid from reaching Gaza.

Christians abandon Iraqi city

By Hisham Mohammed Ali

The Institute for War & Peace Reporting

SULAIMANIYAH, IRAQ — Iraq is finding that it can't even pay Christians to return to the troubled city of Mosul.

The government is offering displaced Christian families up to US\$1,300 if they return to their homes. The government has also boosted the number of security forces in the city by 35,000 and pledged to make additional resources available if members of the Christian community come back.

But for many of the 2,000 families — about half the city's Christian population — who fled Mosul after the killing of two Christian women last month, it's simply not enough. They fear that they will become the next targets of Muslim extremists in the area.

Safa Nathir Kamu, a 42-year-old engineer who fled to Erbil province, about 70 kms east of Mosul, said neither money nor talk of security would prompt him to return.

"We would like to go back home," Kamu said. "We need security, but unfortunately security in Mosul is nothing more than pictures on TV. The U.S. military has blamed al-Qa'ida sympathizers for targeting Christians in Mosul, the capital of Nineveh province and a stronghold of the Sunni insurgency.

Of course, Christians, most of whom are either Assyrians, Chaldeans or Catholics, aren't the only ones who have suffered from violence in recent

years. But they have been particular targets. Many had long since fled to Iraqi Kurdistan, Syria and rural sections of the Nineveh plains.

Following the latest attacks, Mosul deputy governor Khasro Goran promised that "tough security procedures (were) in place."

But the steps have done little to ease the fears of Mosul's Christian community.

"Government procedures are not good enough," said Qriyaqus Mansur Gorgis, the chief of Bet Nahrain, an Assyrian party in Mosul. "It's true that there is a heavy security presence in the city, but Christians are still targeted. So what's the use of (added security)?" The latest round of attacks aimed at Christians has also reopened the long-standing debate between Christians and Kurds over whether Iraq's minorities should have autonomous administrative areas of their own.

While some Christians have fled to Kurdish-controlled areas in the north and see the Kurds as protectors, Qasim Amin of Kurdish Human Rights Watch said that many of the internally displaced actually blame the Kurdish authorities for their plight.

Kurdish parties hold substantial political power in Nineveh province and have been accused of discriminating against other minority groups, a charge Kurdish leaders in Mosul hotly deny.

"There is some sort of political stupidity in believing that the Kurds are behind displacing Christians," said Khasraw Goran, Mosul's deputy governor and a member of the Kurdistan Democratic Party.



U.S. military has blamed al-Qa'ida sympathizers for targeting Christians in Mosul, the capital of Nineveh province and a stronghold of the Sunni insurgency

"Even if an earthquake rocks Mosul, chauvinists in the city would accuse Kurds of being behind it." But some Christians, along with minority groups, believe that the creation of an autonomous administrative region in Nineveh is the only way they can be assured of political power and protection from future attacks.

Minority groups voiced alarm earlier this month when the Iraqi parliament voted to guarantee six of the 400 provincial council seats to small religious

and ethnic minority groups — a number they felt was too small.

"Autonomy is the sole way out of these crises," said Romeo Hakari, the leader of an Assyrian political party in Mosul.

Hisham Mohammed Ali is a reporter in Iraq who writes for The Institute for War & Peace Reporting, a nonprofit organization that trains journalists in areas of conflict. Readers may write to the author at the Institute for War & Peace Reporting, 48 Grays Inn Road, London WC1X 8LT, U.K.; Web site: www.iwpr.net.

Anatomy of a terror attack

NEW DELHI – Indian forces late today continued flushing out gunmen from a posh hotel in Mumbai, the financial hub where scores remained trapped 36 hours after India's most brazen terrorist attack ever, with a death toll of at least 125.

Among the terrorists' targets were five-star hotels the Taj and the Oberoi Trident, plus Mumbai's busiest railway station, hospitals, police headquarters in south Mumbai, a Jewish centre and a restaurant popular with foreigners.

Police in Mumbai, capital of Maharashtra state, said the death toll in the attacks had mounted to 125 by Thursday night, with more of the wounded succumbing to injuries, along with the recovery of more bodies from hotels. More than 320 people including 22 foreigners were wounded.

Eight foreigners were among those killed but were not yet identified.

Governments and companies confirmed that an Italian, a German, a Japanese, an Australian and a Briton were among the victims. Fourteen police including four senior officers were also slain in clashes with the terrorists.

Earlier today, senior security personnel announced that only two terrorists remained to be captured or killed in the Oberoi Trident Hotel, while a wounded terrorist was holed up in the Taj.

The siege at the Taj Hotel was nearly over after an unspecified number of militants were killed and all people evacuated from the iconic hotel.

In a related development, three terrorists – including a Pakistani national belonging to Pakistan-based militant group Lashkar-e-Toiba – were captured at the Taj Hotel, the PTI news agency reported.

Commandos were preparing an assault on the Oberoi Trident, where up to 35 people including foreigners could have been kept captive by two terrorists, the NDTV network reported.

NSG Director General JK Dutt told reporters that the Taj Hotel will be declared fully cleared of the terrorist threat after a wounded gunman, who was still at large in the premises, was tracked down.

Gunshots and grenade blasts could be heard at the Taj and Trident this morning as smoke billowed from fresh fires set off when commandos engaged with the terrorists to bring the hostages to safety.

The encounter between the troops and terrorists intensified in the Trident when nearly 50 rounds of gunfire were exchanged. Through the evening, 40 of the 200 people trapped inside the hotel were rescued.

This morning, seven hostages were released from the Nariman House, headquarters of the ultra-orthodox Jewish community Chabad Lubavitch, where terrorists had taken some Israeli nationals hostage, NDTV reported.

Television images showed seven hostages walking out of the Nariman

House, but it was unclear whether they were freed or escaped.

They were whisked away for questioning by security forces, and there was no word on their nationalities. Commandos had circled the complex, indicating that some militants could be holed up inside the building.

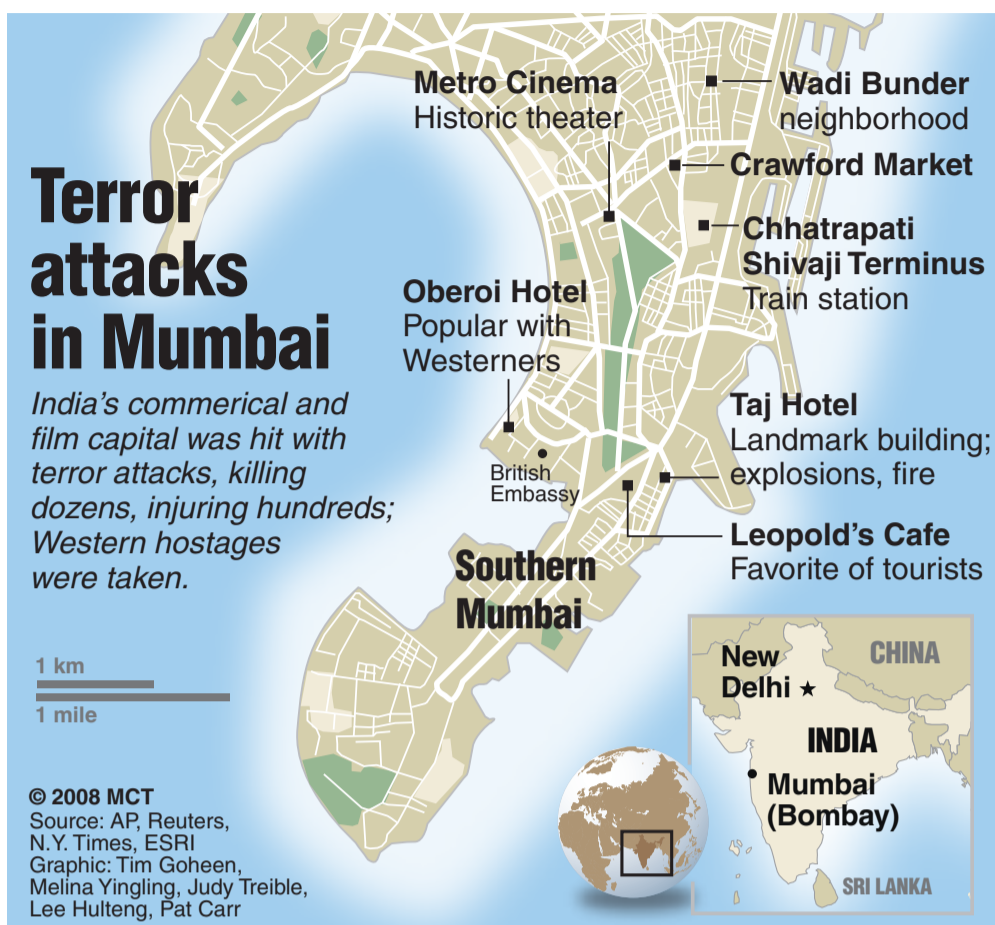
The Israeli embassy earlier Thursday said that 10 to 15 Israelis had been taken hostage, some of them in the Trident Hotel, while 25 others were unaccounted for.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Vilasrao Deshmukh said that operations could continue overnight Thursday and into Friday morning if necessary. He maintained that there were no hostage-like situations in the hotels, where guests had locked themselves in their rooms for safety.

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, in a televised address to the nation, said that the attacks were well-planned and well-orchestrated and were intended to create panic by choosing high-profile targets and indiscriminately killing foreigners.

He said the terrorists likely had foreign links, and it was evident that the group responsible for the attacks was based outside India.

A little-known organization called the Deccan Mujahideen claimed responsibility in e-mails sent to local news agencies.



Police said 20 to 22 terrorists had come in a mother vessel to a nearby dock, where they transferred to inflatable high-speed boats that took them right up to the famous Gateway of India monument, located on the edge of the Arabian Sea directly across from their targets.

At least seven of the attackers were killed, while some suspects were arrested and at least 10 were at large, news reports said.

The highest profile target was the 105-year old Taj hotel, popular with the influential and wealthy locals and visitors alike.

A group of terrorists stormed into the hotel around 9:30 pm Wednesday, firing indiscriminately. Several people were killed, including 15 staff members, who made heroic efforts to ensure the safety of guests, the hotel management said.

Gunmen also attacked the Trident hotel, where they are believed to have taken hostages. In both hotels the gunmen spread out, making operations against them difficult, NDTV reported.

Maharashtra Police Chief AN Roy said the operation was time-consuming due to considerations of the security of guests at the Trident.

At the Taj, security forces carried out a room to room search. At least six bodies and several hostages emerged from the hotel and were carried away by ambulances during the day.

South Mumbai looked deserted Thursday with most offices closed. Markets and theatres were shut, as were schools, colleges and the stock markets.

The government has advised people to stay away from markets and theatres as some terrorists could still be at large, IANS news agency reported. Hotels have been advised not to take new guests.

Indian Premier Singh visited wounded victims Thursday night in local hospitals and later took stock of the security situation in Mumbai with senior ministers.

The financial hub, with an estimated population of 19 million, has been the target of terrorists in the past. More than 180 people were killed in serial bombings on Mumbai's busy suburban rail network on July 11, 2006.

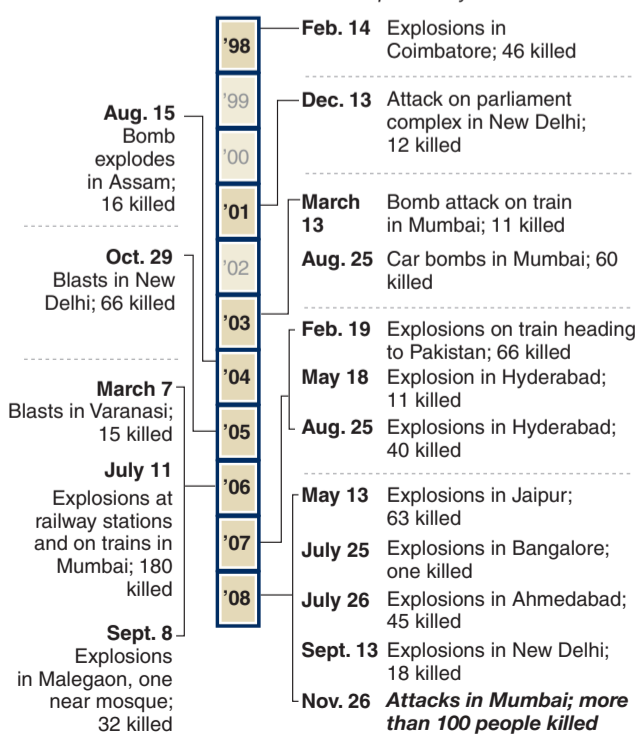
On August 25, 2003, two car bombs killed 60 people, and another bomb attack on a commuter train in March 2003 left 11 people dead.

India is among the countries worst-affected by terrorism. More than 600 people have died in India as a result of terrorism since 2003.

Wednesday's attacks were unprecedented in both scale and precision, police officials said. Junior Home Minister Sriprakash Jaiswal described the situation as a "wartime emergency."

Terror in India

Number of attacks have increased in the past five years:



GUNSHOTS AND GRENADE BLASTS COULD BE HEARD AT THE TAJ AND TRIDENT THIS MORNING AS SMOKE BILLOWED FROM FRESH FIRES SET OFF WHEN COMMANDOS ENGAGED WITH THE TERRORISTS TO BRING THE HOSTAGES TO SAFETY

Fate of Israelis unknown

TEL AVIV – No Israelis have been freed from the Jewish centre in Mumbai where an unknown number of hostages and about three terrorists are believed to be holed up, Israel's consul general to Mumbai said this evening.

Orna Sagiv said a group of people freed earlier appeared to have been local Indians evacuated from a home in the same compound, not the Israelis held hostage in the Jewish centre in Nariman House.

Overall, about 30 Israelis were still unaccounted for, she told Israel Radio, although she stressed they likely included some backpackers who might have already left Mumbai and, therefore, could not be reached.

An unknown number of them were believed to be in the Jewish centre and most likely also in the Oberoi Trident hotel, she said. No Israelis were in

the Taj hotel.

The two luxury hotels and the Jewish centre were hit in coordinated attacks across India's largest city that began Wednesday night. The attackers also opened indiscriminate fire and lobbed grenades at Mumbai's busiest railway station, hospitals, police headquarters and a restaurant popular with foreigners.

Police said 125 were killed and more than 320 people, including 22 foreigners, were wounded.

Sagiv said the rescue operation at Nariman House started early Friday. Live television footage showed Indian commandos dropping from a helicopter onto the roof of the five-story building, a centre of the ultra-Orthodox Chabad movement, which has facilities across the globe where Jewish travellers tend to meet.

The fate of the rabbi and his wife who run the centre remained unknown. Israel Radio reported the commandos were proceeding slowly because the couple might still be alive although there were fears they have been killed.

Sagiv said the couple's toddler son, who was rescued from the building by his nanny, was doing well, adding his Israeli grandparents had landed in Mumbai to care for him.

"As far as we know, he is just fine," the consul general told the radio station. "He slept. He ate. Of course, he's asking about his parents."

She said the nanny had managed to escape by running outside the building from the ground floor "when she saw an opportunity"

– DPA



A kiwi soldier on patrol at Bamyan. NZPA/NZ DEFENCE

Kiwi troops want combat action

BAMYAN, AFGHANISTAN – Nowhere else in the eastern military command sector in Afghanistan do foreign troops patrol in baseball caps instead of helmets.

While the eastern epithet is more administrative than physical – the mountainous Bamyan province is about as central as you can get in the country – and despite the occasional roadside bomb, it's a pocket of relative peace in a country mired in conflict.

"Bamyan is still the most stable and secure province in Afghanistan," said Colonel Richard Hall, commander of the 140-soldier Provincial reconstruction Team (PRT) from New Zealand that is deployed here. "This allows us to get on with our job instead of worrying overtly about the security situation."

While Coalition forces and Taliban insurgents battle it out in neighbouring provinces, the absence of hostilities here stems from Bamyan's almost exclusive population by Hazaras, a race descended from the conquering army of Mongol emperor Genghis Khan.

As well as being physically distinctive from the Pashtuns, who form the bulk of the insurgents' ranks, the Hazaras are Shiite rather than Sunni Moslem. And their brutal persecution by the Taliban during the radical militia's rule of Afghanistan from 1994-2001 means that today they guard their territory with ruthless efficiency.

"We're lucky that the Hazara people are even more anti-Taliban than we are – our main force protection is the Hazaras," said PRT operations officer Major Hamish Gibbons.

There are still dangers, though. At least three bombs exploded in the province this year, one of which lightly injured a New Zealand soldier. In 2007, two 107-mm rockets were fired at, but missed, Kiwi Base, the New Zealanders' fortified camp in the provincial capital, serving as a reminder that the Taliban are still out there.

"It would be naïve of us to assume we weren't being watched," Colonel Hall said.

But prevention of any major infiltration is something on which the locals pride themselves.

"Everyone knows everyone here, if anyone comes, people will say 'this is a new guy,'" said driver Jawad, who lives in the town of Bamyan, 240 kilometres north-west of Kabul.

Home to some 20,000 people, it is best known around the world for the heinous destruction by Taliban in 2001 of the giant Buddha figures carved into its sandstone cliff face.

“WHILE COALITION FORCES AND TALIBAN INSURGENTS BATTLE IT OUT IN NEIGHBOURING PROVINCES, THE ABSENCE OF HOSTILITIES HERE STEMS FROM BAMYAN'S ALMOST EXCLUSIVE POPULATION BY HAZARAS, A RACE DESCENDED FROM THE CONQUERING ARMY OF MONGOL EMPEROR GENGHIS KHAN

All that remains of the sixth century effigies are some preserved stacks of dynamited debris and the huge sandstone alcoves that once housed them, the largest having stood 53 metres tall.

The Buddhas themselves may be gone but the lure of their former location is still strong.

The New Zealanders are used to hosting a steady pro-

cession of curious visitors, from NATO top brass to US First Lady Laura Bush in June, who to the alarm of her bodyguards received a spear-waving welcoming dance at close quarters by Maori soldiers in the contingent.

Yet while the site is less than 2 kilometres from the base and clearly visible, most of the troops will not go there during their six-month tour.

"The only time we get to see them this close is if we are escorting people," said a soldier during a recent security inspection of the alcoves for a visit by a senior officer of the 40-country International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan.

But showing VIPs round local historical sites is a courteous aside to the main job of building schools, clinics, roads, wells and flood protection barriers for the Hazaras.

There are 55 projects underway or in preparation that are worth more than 30 million US dollars, according to Major Mike Pettersen, who implements much of the PRT work.

Of New Zealand's total armed forces of approximately 4,500 personnel, 660 are currently deployed in 16 peacekeeping operations and training missions around the world, primarily in East Timor and the Solomon Islands.

But with so much combat occurring in Afghanistan, Bamyan contingent members are especially rueful that they don't get to engage the enemy.

"We haven't done any major fighting since Vietnam, people would just like to know that we can still do it," said Corporal Shane Hutson of the 1st Battalion, Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment.

But the officers try to keep the soldiers' eye on the ball, stressing the need to continually assist local governance, development and security as the bedrock of Bamyan's peace.

"I look at it as a three-legged stool," said Pettersen. "Take one away and the stool falls over."

– DPA

World's oldest woman dies at 115

SHELBYVILLE, IND., NOV. 27 – Edna Scott Parker, who is said to be the oldest living person in the world, has died at age 115 in Indiana, her family said.

Parker died yesterday at Heritage House Convalescent Center in Shelbyville, Ind., where she lived for more than a decade, the Shelbyville News reported today.

"Her family was called to the nursing home Tuesday morning after nursing home personnel determined that Edna wasn't feeling well," said Charlene Parker, wife of Parker's grandson, Donald Parker.

She was responsive Tuesday evening before falling asleep.

"We had lots of prayers with grandma; the nursing home let us come and go as we needed to. Grandma was very comfortable," Charlene Parker said, adding the family was grateful for Edna's peaceful death.

"She has always been with us," Charlene Parker said, "and I guess that we somehow thought she would live forever."

Edna Parker was born on April 20, 1893. Her death makes Maria de Jesus of Portugal the oldest living person in the world, the newspaper said.

– UPI

Russia gives nukes to rogue Venezuela



CARACAS, VENEZUELA, NOV. 28 – The presidents of Russia and Venezuela have signed bilateral agreements, including construction of a nuclear power plant in the South American country.

The BBC reported the two leaders signed the nuclear power agreement Thursday night.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Igor Sechin said President Dmitry Medvedev, the first Russian head of state to visit Caracas in 150 years, and Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez signed a 25-year plan to cooperate with oil, gas and power generation, RIA Novosti reported today.

"Cooperation in the oil sector covers the entire chain from development and transportation to the construction of pipelines, equipment supplies and refining," said Sechin, who added the plan has an option for a five-year extension.

Medvedev said he and Chavez also decided to sign an agreement to set up a joint bank to help finance projects in Russia and Venezuela. The Russian president said his country's third-largest bank, Gazprombank, would be involved in setting up the joint bank.

Medvedev said the two countries are also planning closer defence ties.

– UPI

German spies caught in Kosovo

BERLIN – Germany's clandestine foreign-intelligence service BND confirmed today that three men arrested in Kosovo are its agents, and Berlin parliamentary officials demanded their release.

BND chief Ernst Uhlrau testified in secret to the parliamentary oversight committee on the secret services in Berlin.

A Kosovo judge earlier in the day accepted there was no evidence the trio had thrown a bomb at a European Union office in Pristina on November 14, but declined to free them.

Thomas Oppermann, the Berlin committee chairman, said the trio belong to the BND and had been detained in "inhumane conditions" for the past nine days by the ethnic Albanian authorities.

He said the reasons they were "taken prisoner" remained a "mystery."

"There is no evidence whatever that the three Germans were involved in an attack," he said.

The Pristina District Court decided on Thursday to hand over the case to an international judge, presiding judge Anton Nokaj told reporters.

"We will meet tomorrow morning with the inter-

national judge Vinont Bolello and decide how to proceed ... We think that the best thing is to hand over the case to an international judge," Nokaj said.

Earlier on Thursday, an unknown Albanian group calling itself the "Army of the Republic of Kosovo – ARK" claimed responsibility for the bombing attack and threatened terrorist attacks against the Serb minority in Kosovo.

The bombing attack happened weeks before a law enforcing EU mission (Eulex) was to become active in Kosovo.

Kosovo Albanians oppose the new plan which the UN agreed with Belgrade on Eulex, in which Eulex would be "status neutral" and would remain under UN command in northern Kosovo where Serbs are in the majority.

Albanians fear the move would be a step toward a partition of Kosovo.

Kosovo declared independence from Belgrade in February and was recognized by United States and most EU nations.

– DPA



Nuke WMD programmes alleged in Syria, Iran



According to US intelligence estimates, Iran stopped military nuclear projects in 2004, but stands ready to resume them

VIENNA – International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) chief Mohamed ElBaradei today called on Syria to allow further inspections of the country's alleged nuclear programme.

In his statement before the IAEA board of governors, ElBaradei also urged Iran to clarify open questions on past studies that were possibly related to the development of nuclear weapons.

The US representative at the IAEA, Gregory Schulte, said scenarios in which Iran would use its uranium enrichment technology for nuclear weapons, rather than for nuclear energy, was plausible, given the country's lack of cooperation with the Vienna-based agency.

Last week, Syria's top nuclear official Ibrahim Othman indicated further visits to the alleged reactor site at al-Kibar, which was bombed by Israel last year, were unlikely, and that other sites could not be shown to IAEA inspectors as they were military installations.

Asking for "maximum transparency" from Syria, ElBaradei said his agency was capable of developing modalities to protect military secrets, while letting his inspectors carry out their work.

But the IAEA chief also said it was "regrettable, and indeed baffling" that his agency had not been able to buy any commercial satellite images of al-Kibar taken after the attack in September 2007,

but before the site was landscaped by Syria soon afterwards.

A diplomat said that while one member state had provided low-resolution imagery, the pictures taken by private companies would have shown more details. One or more governments might have bought up images taken by companies in eight countries, the diplomat suggested.

IAEA inspectors first visited al-Kibar in June, after having received intelligence information from the US indicating Syria was in the process of secretly building a reactor, possibly with North Korean help.

ElBaradei reiterated this morning that "while it cannot be excluded that the building in question was intended for non-nuclear use, the features of the building ... are similar to what may be found in connection with a reactor site."

Syria has stated that al-Kibar was a conventional military site and that uranium particles found there by IAEA inspectors must have originated from munitions used by the Israeli air force to destroy the installation.

The head of the IAEA also called on Israel to provide information in order to verify Syria's claim.

Regarding Iran, ElBaradei said the country's leaders should clarify to what extent the documents on alleged nuclear weapons work which the IAEA received from member states were correct.

The IAEA has not been able to make progress on this issue since March.

Iran has stated that the allegations were based

on forged documents, and that some of the research projects on missiles and high explosives were not related to nuclear applications.

US ambassador Schulte said that as Iran had a history of lack of cooperation with the IAEA, member states should be worried that country might either one day kick out agency inspectors and use its enrichment facility to make fuel for a bomb, or that it might do the same at a secret facility.

According to US intelligence estimates, Iran stopped military nuclear projects in 2004, but stands ready to resume them.

Iran's defiance of Security Council resolutions calling for a suspension of enrichment had led to a deficit of confidence that "is now so deep that it is difficult to fathom," Schulte said.

In a joint statement, Britain, France and Germany said Iran's nuclear programme had made only "negative and dangerous progress," because its continuation "continues and intensifies a threat to the stability of a troubled region."

Together with the US, Russia and China, the three European countries have offered to talk with Iran about improving business and political ties if the country halts enrichment.

Iran's ambassador Ali Asghar Soltanieh told reporters that his government was open to such negotiations, albeit without preconditions.

But he also said his country "shall never give up its inalienable right for research and peaceful uses of nuclear energy."

– DPA

Radicalisation studied

AMSTERDAM – Policy makers of several Dutch, British and German cities began a two-day conference today to discuss the subject of radicalization among Muslims, a spokesman for the city of Amsterdam said.

The participants were due to talk about the origin of radicalization among young Muslims and the various approaches to tackling the problem.

The roles of local authorities, schools, youth workers and local communities in the lives of young Muslims were part of the conference agenda.

Local policy makers from the four major Dutch cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and



Utrecht took part.

Representatives of the German city of Essen and Birmingham in England were also present.

The meeting, an initiative supported by the European Commission, was to assist local policy makers to recognize radicalization in its early stages and deal with subsequent problems.

The participants of the six European cities are due to formulate a so-called "solution matrix" that can help other European cities tackle similar problems.

The matrix is to be presented at the end of the conference on Friday.

– DPA

Internet baby taken into state care

AMSTERDAM – A Belgian baby bought by a Dutch couple via the internet will be placed in Dutch state custody because the sale violates international adoption laws, a Dutch court decided today.

The court in Zwolle in the eastern Netherlands ruled in favour of the Dutch child protection service overnight NZ time.

The child protection service had requested the court on Thursday to transfer the baby from the care of the Dutch couple to the authorities.

The Dutch couple, both aged 26, bought the child over the internet in July for an alleged sum of "between 5,000 and 10,000 euros" from Belgian parents, aged 22 and 24.

The biological parents had said they could not carry the financial burden of what was their second child.

The Dutch couple brought the baby boy to the Netherlands one day after his birth in Gent, Belgium.

The case was brought to light by Dutch current

affairs programme Network.

The child, now aged four months, has since been living with his adoptive parents in the village of Sibeulo in the eastern Netherlands.

"We are currently speaking with the couple," Martin Dirksen, director of the local youth care agency said after today's court hearing.

"They want to comply with the court orders." The Dutch child protection service said it was better for the child to be taken away from the couple and placed in foster care.

"A child should have absolute clarity about his background. This is of fundamental importance," child protection service director Marie-Louise van Kleef said.

The court gave the child protection service six weeks to prepare a proposal for a long-term solution, following which the court will decide about the child's future.

– DPA

Do it like Ed, All Blacks told

By Chris Barclay of NZPA

LONDON – All Blacks centre Conrad Smith, a lawyer, turned to history teaching at the New Zealand hotel here tonight ahead of their season-ending rugby test against England at Twickenham.

Smith was tasked with reminding his teammates of the significance of the Hillary Shield, the new trophy they will play for on Saturday (0330 Sunday NZT).

The elaborate silver shield has been crafted to commemorate the achievements of the legendary conqueror of Mt Everest, New Zealander Sir Edmund Hillary.

Smith was instructed to remind his teammates that Sir Ed, who passed away in January aged 88, was much more than the face on one side of the \$5 note.

Though victory will secure New Zealand's third Grand Slam in the UK and Ireland since the 'Originals' made the first attempt in 1905, becoming the inaugural holders of the shield is of paramount importance to the All Blacks as they contemplate the end of a 15-test schedule.

"The shield is the thing for us," insisted All Blacks assistant coach Wayne Smith. "This is the prize."

Sir Ed was part of a British expedition to Nepal when he scaled the world's highest peak 55 years ago, but the team have been left in no doubt he was first and foremost an iconic New Zealander.

Wayne Smith was comfortable the team had already had a good depth of knowledge.

"Subliminally we've got some Sir Ed memorabilia around and the boys have been reading about him," he said.

"There's a good knowledge about him."

Captain Richie McCaw got his hands on the shield temporarily today at a photo call with Lady June Hillary and England captain Steve Borthwick at Twickenham.

Lady Hillary will present the shield to the winning captain.



Wayne Smith said the team were desperate to take it home – and that tantalising prospect had translated to an impressive final training session today ahead of tomorrow's light captain's run.

He thought the awarding of the new trophy to mark rugby rivalry between New Zealand and England had been well-timed, coinciding with the end of a long sea-

son where motivation might be on the wane.

"I think the timing's good, it is helpful. I know it's inspired me and I'm sure a lot of the boys are too," he said.

"You can't guarantee anything but you want to go out there and honour him, that's what everyone is trying to do."

**LADY HILLARY WILL
PRESENT THE SHIELD
TO THE WINNING CAPTAIN**



Muliaina made a seamless return to the team after Isaia Toeava deputised at fullback for the tests against the Wallabies and Scotland

Muliaina nears end of difficult tour

LONDON, NOV 28 – While the battle-weary All Blacks are looking forward to the end of long season come full-time at Twickenham, fullback Mils Muliaina has more reason than most to yearn for home.

The All Blacks most experienced back is anxious to head home to Auckland where his baby son Max is soon to undergo surgery to close a hole in his heart.

Muliaina was a late arrival on the All Blacks' Grand Slam tour, having been given parental leave to be present when his wife Hayley gave birth to Max as the team were flying to Hong Kong.

The 67-cap veteran originally intended to play the offshore Bledisloe Cup test on November 1, but once Max's condition was diagnosed Muliaina was given extra time at home before joining the team

for the Irish test in Dublin.

Muliaina made a seamless return to the team after Isaia Toeava deputised at fullback for the tests against the Wallabies and Scotland. Although his play against Ireland and Wales was of a typically high standard, Muliaina admitted he had been torn by not being at home.

"It wasn't until the night before the Irish test that I thought I had made the wrong decision," said Muliaina as the All Blacks prepare for their test with England at Twickenham on Saturday (0330 Sunday NZT).

"It was always going to be really hard and my wife has been very supportive."

He has been in daily contact with his wife, who watched his performance against Ireland at Croke

Park in Auckland Hospital, where Max was having a check-up.

The boy is expected to have his operation shortly after Muliaina's return to Auckland.

Muliaina, who was also a central figure in the All Blacks' last successful Grand Slam campaign in 2005, said the support of team-mates also helped him through moments of uncertainty.

"Every day the boys are asking me, 'How is he?' 'How are things at home?' 'Can we help?'" Muliaina said.

"One of the real strengths of the All Blacks is we really care about each other. The coaches have been very supportive, too."

– NZPA

Terrorist attacks leave Fleming out of work



WELLINGTON – Former New Zealand cricket captain Stephen Fleming is temporarily without a job after the inaugural Champions League Twenty20 series was postponed following a number of foreigner-targeted terrorist attacks in Mumbai.

Fleming is player-coach of the Chennai Super Kings and was due to leave for India on Sunday.

But Champions League chairman Lalit Modi said yesterday that the tournament, scheduled to begin in Mumbai on December 3, was now likely to be held in India early next year.

Modi said the tournament was postponed due to the logistical problems associated with finding a third venue after Mumbai was ruled.

The governing council will meet in the middle of December to finalise fresh dates for the tournament, which will be held in India, he said.

"We are confident we can hold the tournament early next year," Modi told the Cricinfo website. "India will remain the venue, as there was never a problem with hosting it here."

"All the teams agreed that they wanted to come for the tournament. But we had a problem with finding a third venue after Mumbai. There was no way we could have shifted the venue to Bangalore or Chennai, considering the state of the wickets and the grounds would not have accommodated all the matches."

More than 125 people have been killed in co-ordinated attacks by Islamic militants in Mumbai.

– NZPA

NZers poised to crack Australian ironman series

WELLINGTON, NOV 28 NZPA – A record field of eight New Zealand surf lifesavers will attempt to crack the sport's richest series when they line up at the Australian ironman trials this weekend.

The group will join nearly 100 other surf athletes at Sydney's Wanda Beach to try to grab the 21 remaining spots on the \$A200,000 (\$NZ241,800) five-round Kelloggs series at Kurrawa, Coolool and Coogee, starting in January.

New Zealand ironman champion Dan Moodie, now based with the Northcliffe club in Queensland, is one of four New Zealand men in the field, along with Gisborne-based brothers Mike and Daniel Janes (Midway), and East End's Daniel Nelson.

All four raced in the prestigious Coolangatta Gold recently, with Mike Janes the best of the New Zealanders, finishing the gruelling long-distance ironman race 11th, three places ahead of Moodie.

Muriwai's Jess Parr, fresh from her 12th at the

Coolangatta Gold, leads a strong women's team this weekend, with Aimee Berridge, Madison Boon and Rachel Clarke also lining up.

Orewa's Clarke performed well in the first two rounds of the rich Ocean Assault series in Queensland last week, finishing second in the under-19 ski, fifth in the under-19 surf race and third in the under-19 ironman.

Surf Life Saving New Zealand sport manager Mark Weatherall is confident of a strong showing from the Kiwi contingent.

"Our younger athletes seem to have lost that fear of lining up against their Australian rivals and we showed that at the world championships this year," Weatherall said.

"If they can transfer that confidence to their racing this weekend, their exposure and marketability will go through the roof during the series."

– NZPA



Anti-doping tests mooted all year round

BERLIN – Suspected doping cases are being investigated in cycling and cross-country skiing, an anti-doping forum was told today.

The International Cycling Union (UCI) fears more doping cases as blood profiles of cyclists are evaluated, its president, Pat McQuaid, said.

Meanwhile the international ski federation FIS is examining five suspicious blood profiles by cross-country skiers, Swedish doping specialist Bengt Saltin said.

He said it was hoped to release the results of the evaluation within the next four weeks.

McQuaid said a few of the profiles in biological passports introduced by the UCI this year show "irregularities" which could point to the use of banned substances or methods.

The UCI's lawyers were looking at the cases, he said.

The biological passports record and chart blood and urine levels are seen as an effective new weapon in the fight against doping. Around 800 cyclists are already in possession of the passport.

FIS introduced the passports after the 2002 winter Games in Salt Lake City.



The biological passports record and chart blood and urine levels are seen as an effective new weapon in the fight against doping

McQuaid also criticized German public broadcasters ARD and ZDF for their decision to end live broadcasting of the Tour de France in the light of continuing doping revelations.

He said the decision "sends the wrong message" and was "not fair or helpful to the organizers and German cycling."

The Berlin anti-doping forum heard Saltin call

for a radical rethink on doping controls, including more training controls.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is "stupid" to think that 1,000 more tests at the Beijing Games over the 2004 Athens Games was a success, he said.

"If these controls had been between seasons we would have had 1,000 positive tests," Saltin said.

It was naive and a waste of resources to test dur-

ing the competition phase when "only amphetamines or diuretics at the most are being taken to cover up (doping)."

Track and field athletes "have to be controlled in the winter, the skiers in summer training," he added.

Saltin criticized the international athletic federation IAAF and the world anti-doping agency WADA for "insufficient and ineffective" control methods in the fight against doping.

The way forward was to use the combination of biological passports and "intelligent training controls," he said.

Meanwhile, disgraced Austrian cyclist Bernhard Kohl claimed in his hearing with the Austrian anti-doping agency on Monday that "half of the peloton" in cycling is using CERA, the third generation of the blood booster EPO, according to a report by the internet site cyclingnews.com.

Kohl, who finished third at this summer's Tour de France, was banned for two years by the Austrian anti-doping agency after being one of several cyclists from the Tour tested positive for CERA.

– DPA

UEFA Cup starting to shape up

HAMBURG – A late strike from Filippo Inzaghi was enough to salvage a 2-2 draw for AC Milan away to Portsmouth in the UEFA Cup early today and book the Serie A side's place in the tournament's knockout stages.

CSKA Moscow also progressed thanks to a 2-1 win over Lech Poznan while Tottenham Hotspur, Manchester and Standard Liege moved a step closer with victories.

Milan found themselves behind when Younes Kaboul headed home a Glen Johnson cross and looked to be heading for certain defeat when Kanu made it 2-0 for Pompey.

However substitute Ronaldinho reduced the deficit with a stunning free-kick and Inzaghi, who had already hit the post three times in the game, finally got the goal he deserved to make it 2-2 and book Milan's place in the last 32.

The draw sees Milan remain top of Group E with seven points, one clear of VfL Wolfsburg, who beat SC Braga 3-2 thanks to two late goals from Zvezdan Misimovic, one a penalty.

Manchester City eased to a 2-0 victory over German side Schalke - even without injured stars Robinho, Elano and Martin Petrov.

The English Premier League side proved too strong for Schalke at the Veltins Arena with Benjani putting Mark Hughes' side in front on 32 minutes and Stephen Ireland sealing the win after 66 minutes with a clinical finish.

"We lost our belief after going a goal down," said Schalke coach Fred Ruttan. "We were up against a very strong opponent and weren't able to turn the game around."

The victory moves City on to six points in Group A, two clear of Schalke. Paris St Germain and Racing Santander drew 2-2 in the other group game.

CSKA Moscow booked their place in the knockout stages with a 2-1 victory over Poznan in a Group H encounter.

Alan Dzagoev latched on to a pass from Vagner Love to open the scoring for the Russians and Yuri Zhirkov doubled the home side's lead at the Luzhnik Stadium with a left-footed volley just before the break.

Semir Pilic pulled on back for Poznan from a free-kick after 66 minutes.

The victory was CSKA's third win in succession in the group and moves them on to nine points from three matches, five clear of Nancy.

In the other group match, Deportivo La Coruna got their first points of the campaign with a 3-0 victory against Feyenoord Rotterdam.

Alberto Lopo netted from close range on the half-hour mark while an own goal by Kevin Hofland shortly after the restart followed by an Andres Guardado strike completed a miserable night for the Dutch.

Jamie O'Hara scored the only goal of the game as Tottenham Hotspur beat Dutch side NEC Nijmegen 1-0 in Group D. Spartak Moscow prevailed against Dinamo Zagreb by the same scoreline thanks to a goal from Ivan Saenko 15 minutes from time.

The victory moves Spurs to the top of the group, level on six points with Udinese and three clear of Dinamo and Spartak.

Metallist Kharkiv shocked Galatasaray 1-0 in

Group B, with Edmar snatching all three points with a winner nine minutes from time.

Olympiakos demolished Benfica 5-1 in the other group game. The Greeks never looked back after Luciano Galletti put them in front in the first minutes and Christos Patsatzoglou doubled their lead on 17. Two further goals from Santo and one from Fernando Belluschi completed the rout. David Luiz scored for Benfica.

In Group F, SV Hamburg missed the chance of booking an early place in the knockout phase after going down 1-0 at home to Ajax Amsterdam, who secured the points with a goal from substitute Leonardo 13 minutes from time.

"We knew we needed three points to progress but it didn't work out," said coach Martin Jol.

Trouble from Dutch fans had marred the build-up to the game with 40 Ajax fans taken into custody the previous night and 800 police on duty for the game. In the other match, Zilina and Slavia Prague got their first points of the campaign as the two sides played out a scoreless draw.

Markus Babel's first match in charge of VfB Stuttgart ended in a draw as his side drew 1-1 with Sampdoria in Group C while Standard Liege over-



came Partizan Belgrade 1-0 to sit top on six points after two games.

In Group G, Valencia took revenge for two defeats in last year's Champions League at the hands of Rosenborg Trondheim by handing out a 4-0 thumping to the Norwegian side this time around.

Juan Mata gave the visitors the lead in the first half while late goals from Pablo Hernandez and substitutes Ruben Baraja and Joaquin sealed the easy win. Belgium's Club Brugge and St Etienne drew 1-1 in the other match in Group G, a result that sees the French side also qualify for the knockout phase.

– DPA

TV & Film



Hugh Jackman brings epic sexiness to *Australia*

By David Hiltbrand
The Philadelphia Inquirer

Australia, the audacious epic from visionary director Baz Luhrmann, is being hailed as the Pacific *Gone With the Wind*.

The movie's scintillating star, Hugh Jackman, endorses that comparison, but he also sees a number of other intentional echoes in "Australia."

"I can see shades of *Out of Africa*," the 40-year-old actor says on the phone. "Some of *From Here to Eternity*, some from *The Wizard of Oz*. It's a swash-buckling adventure with romance at the centre of it, and Baz draws on all those sources but still manages to do something unique with it."

Set in the days leading up to World War II, it's the story of a stiff English noblewoman (Nicole Kidman) who travels to Australia to save her dusty Australian cattle station, recruiting a rugged and reluctant stockman (Jackman) to help.

When we first meet this trail boss, glaring from under the rim of his cowboy hat, it's impossible not to think of Clint Eastwood in his Spaghetti Western phase.

"Baz was overt in referencing that," Jackman says. "It's classic Sergio Leone, with nods and winks all over the place."

Another early scene, in which Jackman's Drover gives himself a shirtless camp shower in front of a flustered Kidman, is such a blatant swipe from the Bogart-Hepburn scene in *The African Queen* that a concerned Jackman sought out the director.

"It's so obviously patterned on that style, I said to Baz, 'I'm worried people are going to be laughing in the wrong way,'" the actor recalls. "He said, 'If we're bold, really bold, trust me, they're going to get it.'"

Maybe. Maybe not. With Jackman's jacked-up physique on display it's doubtful anyone in the audience will be pondering cinematic precedents.

For the ladies, it's the money shot that more than confirms the Aussie's designation last week as *People's Sexiest Man Alive*.

You don't get a build like that just walking the dog. Jackman hits the gym for an hour each morning before reporting to work, and maintains a dietary regimen of eating every three hours from early in the day.

"It keeps your metabolism going, and that really helped during this production," he says. "We had really long days, physical days, really hot days."

Shooting *Australia* took eight months, but the hard work began long before the cameras started rolling.

"We did a full month of rehearsals and prestaging," Jackman says. "We workshoped for three months before that. The horse riding and other elements I spent a full 10 months on before that."

There was one detail he was disappointed didn't make it into the film. "In the script, Drover drives a car while rolling a cigarette with one hand. I said, 'That's a really cool thing. I've never seen that before.'"

"So for months, I was practicing hand-rolling cigarettes all day long, even when I was watching TV, until I got it down," he says. "It got cut eventually."

Jackman has known his costar Kidman "for 15 years, ever since I met my wife," actress Deborah-Lee Furness. "My wife and Nicole shared a house in Hollywood when Nicole first came over (to the United States) until she moved in with Tom (Cruise). They were good mates.

"I knew her more as my wife's friend," he says. "It wasn't until this movie that we forged an independent relationship."

As always for Jackman, going on location in Queensland was a family affair. "My wife and I, when we got married, we decided not to be apart for more than two weeks," he says.

For their son Oscar, living in the Outback was

an 8-year-old's fantasy camp. He'd wake up in the morning and head right out to the animal pens. After being tutored with the east's aborigine children, he'd spend the afternoon exploring the region's spectacular terrain.

"He cried his eyes out when we had to go back to the city," his father says.

Jackman, a Sydney native, has shown remarkable versatility in his career, from action (*Swordfish*) to romance (*Kate & Leopold*) to superhero fare (*X-Men*).

But his first love is the stage. He won a Tony Award in 2004 for his tour de force portrait of Peter Allen in the Broadway musical *The Boy From Oz*.

"If you asked me my top 10 moments as an actor," he says, "probably all of them would be on stage. The immediacy of it, the high-wire nature of it. As an actor, there's more of an element of you driving the ship. You kind of control the show. All of those things make stage acting incredibly vital to me."

Jackman can talk about his craft all day, but he really comes alive when the topic turns to his children, Oscar and Ava, 3.

"Every night we have what we call Make Time," he



says. "Neither of my kids likes getting in the bath. They can sense the end (of the day) is coming. So we invented this concept about two years ago. All right, now we're going to have the most fun time of the day."

"We throw pillows. I swing them around. We play hide and seek for a half hour," he explains. "By the time we're finished, they're totally exhausted and crawl into the bath. If you came over to our house at about 6:30 in the evening, you'd hear me say (shouting like a boxing-ring announcer): 'Are you ready for Make Time?'"

The sexiest man alive? Most days you can find him in the romper room.

Watch trailer



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NEW CD RELEASES

Guns N' Roses

➔ Chinese Democracy
➔ Black Frog/Geffen

★★★★☆



Democracy hasn't come to China, but two President Bushes, two terms for Clinton and the Obama election all came and went in the 17 years since Guns N' Roses released "Use Your Illusion" I and

II, its last collection of original material.

Singer and songwriter Axl Rose, the band's sole remaining original member, and a cast of characters so voluminous it takes five pages in the CD's liner notes to credit, spent 14 years recording "Chinese Democracy" in 14 studios from Los Angeles to London. The cost, millions.

Too much of the 71-minute, 14-track album is overthought and, its worst offense, it's sonically thin and poorly mixed. Unlike recent top-shelf hard rock albums from Metallica, AC/DC and Nickelback, "Chinese Democracy" has no bottom end. We knew we'd miss Slash, but who figured that GNR's departed rhythm section would be missed even more?

But some of "Chinese Democracy"—two gorgeous, Elton John-inspired tracks, "Street of Dreams" and "This I Love," plus "There Was a Time," another massive epic, which features six guitarists, a Mellotron, a choir, Rose's barbed-wire squeal and an orchestral arrangement it took five men to handle—is, at the very least, lower-case great. This is music on par with the best from the sprawling "Use Your Illusion."

Then there's "Madagascar," another windswept tune in the "November Rain" vein. "Madagascar" employs sampled elements from two Martin Luther King Jr. speeches plus movie soundbites from "Cool Hand Luke," "Braveheart," "Seven," "Casualties of War" and "Mississippi Burning." All of this interweaves with more orchestra, French horns and guitars.

This is where some longtime fans might start to bail. Those hoping for the leaner, sleazier hard rock muse of GNR's 1987 landmark "Appetite for Destruction," get less attention from an indulgent Rose this time.

But Rose issues his critics a challenge up front: "(I)t would take a lot more hate than you/To end the fascination" and then closes more than an hour later with the confessional "Prostitute." "Seems like forever and a day/If my intentions are misunderstood/Please be kind/I've done all I should."

Tom Jones

➔ 24 Hours
➔ S-Curve

★★★★☆



Tom Jones, 68, uses the occasion of his first American release in 14 years to cowrite, for the first time, a number of songs that comment on his colourful past with honesty and surprising candour, as in

"The Road," a melancholy confessional sung to his wife.

"24 Hours," with production by Future Cut, the U.K. team behind the overrated Lily Allen, also shows new retro acts Amy Winehouse, Duffy and Mark Ronson that the originator of their borrowed sound is back and he's in good, powerful voice to upstage the lot of them.

But not all of "24 Hours" is worthy of hype. "Sugar Daddy," co-written by U2's Bono and The Edge after a night of drinking, is a cringeworthy hangover as it parodies the very sex bomb image Jones has spent a good deal of the respectable "24 Hours" trying to live down.

—Howard Cohen

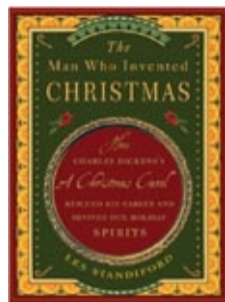
Books

The Man Who Invented Christmas: An artful look at Dickens

The Man Who Invented Christmas: How Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* Rescued His Career and Revived Our Holiday Spirits

➔ By Les Standiford

➔ Crown, US\$13.57 via Amazon



One of the many famous anecdotes arising from the life of Charles Dickens, the most important English novelist in the 19th century, came when the poet Theodore Watts-Duncan reported that a young cockney street vendor, having just heard of the author's

passing, exclaimed, "Dickens dead? Then will Father Christmas die too?"

Christmas has so long been entrenched as the top holiday in the Western calendar that it seems preposterous to date, as Les Standiford does in *The Man Who Invented Christmas*, our now-common Yuletide traditions to the publication of a single book.

That book, of course, is *A Christmas Carol*. Standiford, a mystery writer-turned-popular historian, brings fresh insight to the familiar story, among other things linking the revival of Christmas to the restorations of Dickens' own fortunes. With an eye for telling detail and a gift for synthesizing a broad range of sources into a tight and highly readable narrative, he packs an amazing amount of information into a relatively brief volume.

Among its other virtues, *The Man Who Invented Christmas* presents a biography of Dickens' life, from his time as an impoverished child labourer to his later youth as a newspaper reporter to his stunning early literary success with *The Old Curiosity Shop*.

At the same time, Standiford provides a history of Christmas, which had been suppressed in America as well as England by Puritan and other authorities who saw it as an excuse for peasant drunkenness, revelry and sexual license.

To be sure, Christmas may have been poised for a revival in any case. The first commercial Christmas cards went on sale in 1843, the same year Dickens published his book. *The Night Before Christmas*, with the first presentation of St. Nicholas as Santa Claus, had come out two decades earlier. Prince Philip, Queen Victoria's consort, helped popularize the Christmas tree, a tradition he brought from his native Germany.

But Standiford makes the case that "A Christmas Carol" deserves most of the credit for rehabilitating Christmas. By having Scrooge, after his redemption, buy a turkey for Bob Cratchit's family, he even displaced the traditional Christmas goose and helped make turkey-farming a major business.

Standiford provides insight into the oppressions of England's industrial age; publishing and literary culture; and Dickens' complicated feelings toward the United States. Along the way he discovers forgotten details: Dickens was on the verge of bankruptcy when he wrote "A Christmas Carol"; he divorced his wife after 23 years of marriage and took up with a much younger actress (he was modern!); and he produced five more Christmas novels, none of which is read today.

David Copperfield, *Great Expectations* and Dickens' other more "serious" novels sometimes overshadow *A Christmas Carol*. Standiford argues for its literary merit—for the cadences, wry humour, the fantasy grounded in reality. Modern audiences who know the story only from its many TV and movie dramatizations, he writes, sadly miss these elements.

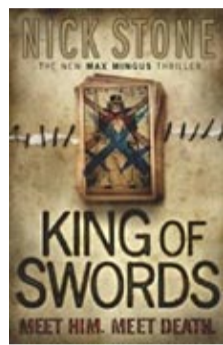
—By Chauncey Mabe

King of Swords captures essence of '80s Miami

The King of Swords

➔ By Nick Stone

➔ Harper, US\$17.15 via Amazon



The Miami of the early 1980s has become an almost mythical place, an era steeped in the lore of *Miami Vice* and *Scarface* and seen as the epicentre for drugs and the glamour of a new South Beach.

Nick Stone captures the real 1980s Miami with his gritty, brutal and

expertly plotted *The King of Swords*. Stone offers an authentic vision of South Florida along with plenty of hard-boiled action.

While a few scenes of bizarre South Florida behaviour crop up, Stone uses these not for comic effect but to emphasize a society on the cusp of change. *The King of Swords* works equally as a police procedural, a thriller and a look at multi-dimensional characters.

Stone's second novel is a prequel to the superb *Mr. Clarinet*, released in the United States last year after it had debuted in England.

In *Mr. Clarinet*, Stone introduced Max Mingus, whose search for the son of a wealthy white Haitian family led him to his old nemesis—Solomon Boukman, a drug baron with a far-reaching influence.

The King of Swords shows where it all began for Max, a detective sergeant who is on the elite Miami Task Force. It is late 1980, wrapping up one of Miami's most tumultuous years that included the Mariel Boatlift and the riots following the trial of the cops involved in the Arthur McDuffie beating. An influx of cocaine has given Miami an "off-the-chart-and-still rising homicide epidemic."

Max and his partner Det. Joe Liston are called to the scene of a bizarre death in a primate park in Miami. But this isn't just one of those only-in-Florida crimes that then newspaper reporter Edna Buchanan covered. The victim's entire family also has been killed and the King of Swords tarot card is found in the man's body.

As 1980 folds into 1981, Max and Joe uncover a link to Solomon Boukman, a ruthless drug lord whose voodoo practices that include human sacrifice have become legendary. Many fear Solomon, but very few people have actually seen his face—an ambiguous silhouette in the feeble light."

While the two cops battle crime on the streets, they also are up against rampant police corruption. Not knowing who they can trust, they start their own undercover investigation.

Max is the archetypical conflicted, haunted character who thrives in the mystery genre. But there are few heroes in *The King of Swords*. Stone expertly shows how each character can be a study in incongruity: "...at ease with his diametric contradictions—a dirty cop with morals, a turncoat with principles, a redneck with black friends ... an opportunist of the purest kind."

Stone especially shapes Max with a haunted conscience that is not always in tune with his actions. Max's penchant for violence—and its consequences—lets Stone wade through a moral backwater and gives an extra punch to *The King of Swords*.

The author also shows the racial and cultural tension that pervaded Miami during the early 1980s. Max, who is white, and Joe, who is black, have a solid friendship that negates any racial undertones; yet, at the same time, each has his doubts about the other while maintaining absolute trust in his partner. Solomon is a masterpiece of a villain, a shadowy figure without conscience or care whose reputation began with "the power of myth." He can make anyone believe in the power of voodoo.

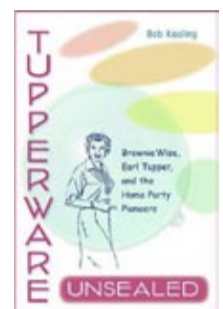
—By Oline H. Cogdill

Bowled over by Tupperware

Tupperware Unsealed: Brownie Wise, Earl Tupper and the Home Party Pioneers

➔ By Bob Kealing

➔ University Press of Florida, US\$18.48 via Amazon



Bob Kealing, an Emmy Award-winning Orlando, Fla., TV journalist, tells the story in *Tupperware Unsealed: Brownie Wise, Earl Tupper and the Home Party Pioneers*.

Kealing tells how Tupper, a New England farm boy turned plastics manufacturer, figured out how to

transform polyethylene slag into handy containers in hues like Avocado, Harvest Gold and Chickadee Yellow. Mostly, though, his book pays tribute to Wise, the marketing genius who moved door-to-door sales inside American homes and turned sales pitches into parties.

Born and reared in rural Georgia, Wise found herself in the Detroit area in the late 1930s with a bad marriage and an infant son. She took night courses and worked as secretary, discovering her true calling when she began selling on the side for Stanley Home Products, a pioneer of the home-party concept.

Wise switched to Tupperware, and after moving with her mother and son to South Florida in 1950, created a thriving home-sales network here. Her success convinced Tupper to pull his products from retail outlets and rely exclusively on home sales—and to make Wise vice president.

She knew how to motivate her troops. Long before Oprah Winfrey and Mary Kay, Wise gave Ford Fairlane 500s to her sales managers and rewarded top regional managers with pink Cadillacs. (Two of the recipients fainted at that last news, Kealing writes.)

By 1954, the company had grown from a handful of distributors, mostly in the Detroit area, to 54 distributors and 9,000 dealers nationwide and earnings of \$25 million, Kealing writes.

In an era when female business executives were a rarity, Wise was a sensation. In April 1954, she became the first woman to grace the cover of *Business Week* magazine, which called her "the Prophet of Plastic" and described her sales-training sessions as a cross between a circus and a revival meeting.

The fruits of her labors included a 20-acre estate near Kissimmee and an undeveloped island on an area lake where she planned to build a new spread.

By late 1957, however, things had soured between the sales maven and the owner-inventor. That year's jubilee had turned into a fiasco when some attendees were stranded on Wise's island by a storm and others were injured when two boatloads of guests collided.

Tupper also began questioning Wise's expenses, Kealing writes, including hundreds of copies of an inspirational book she had penned. He may already have decided to sell the business, Kealing suggests, and worried that potential buyers would be put off by the amount of control Wise wielded.

Tupper fired her in 1958, evicted her from the estate, which was in the company name, and, according to Kealing, "erased her from the company's history."

Soon after, he sold Tupperware for \$16 million, divorced his wife, renounced his U.S. citizenship and moved to a private island off Central America. He died in 1983 at the age of 76. Wise tried her hand at the home-party cosmetics business without success. She lived out her days quietly in Kissimmee, dying in 1992 at 79.

By 2005, according to Kealing, Tupperware Brands had a worldwide sales force of more than 2 million and sales of US\$1.3 billion.

—By Sue Mullin

U.S. sees drop in new cancer cases

By Judith Graham
Chicago Tribune

CHICAGO — The U.S. has passed an important milestone in the fight against cancer, marking for the first time simultaneous declines in new cancer cases and cancer death rates for both men and women.

Between 1999 and 2006, cancer incidence — the rate at which new illnesses are diagnosed — dropped 0.8 percent annually, a small but statistically significant reduction, according to a report published online Wednesday in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*.

Experts at leading cancer organizations heralded the development while noting that new data need to be interpreted with caution. In particular, they observe that fewer men and women are being screened for prostate and breast cancer and that can result in fewer tumours being identified.

Although it's not clear yet what role screening may have played, "the drop in incidence seen in this year's Annual Report is something we've been waiting to see for a long time," said Dr. Otis Brawley, chief medical officer of the American Cancer Society, in a statement.

Cancer death rates continued to fall, as they have since 1993, but the rate of the decline was accelerated, approaching nearly 2 percent a year between 2002 and 2005.

"What we're seeing is clear evidence that cancer prevention is working," said Dr. Therese Bevers, medical director of clinical cancer prevention at M.D. Anderson Cancer Centre in Houston.

The falloff in newly diagnosed cancer cases cuts across both sexes and four major races and ethnicities — whites, blacks, Asian/Pacific islands and Hispanics — according to the new report by scientists at the American Cancer Society, the National Cancer Institute and

the U.S. Centres for Disease Control and Prevention.

The downward trend, which spans several years and has been teased out through careful statistical analysis, underscores some clear victories. Notably, as more men and women have given up smoking, newly diagnosed lung cancer cases have skidded to their lowest level in more than 30 years for both sexes.

Also, as more adults 50 and older were screened for colon cancer, annual disease rates fell 2.8 percent for men and 2.2 percent for women between 1998 and 2005, the latest year for which data are available. By then, half of all adults 50 and older were getting stool samples, sigmoidoscopies and colonoscopies, up from 27 percent in 1987.

Less clear is the story surrounding prostate cancer, the No. 1 cancer diagnosis for men, which plunged 4.4 percent annually between 2001 and 2005 after incident rates rose 2.1 percent in each of the previous six years.



Findings spark debate about breast tumours

VERMONT — U.S. and Norwegian researchers say they hope their findings prompt a debate on whether breast cancer tumours ever go away on their own without treatment.

In their article published Wednesday in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*, researchers said one type of cancer — a rare childhood tumour — found through screening sometimes spontaneously disappears and they want to learn whether the same phenomenon could happen with breast cancers found in mammograms, USA Today reported.

The authors admit their study doesn't provide a definitive answer. Their quest for an answer could be impossible since it's unethical for physicians to leave breast cancers untreated, an editorial accompanying the article said.

Researchers compared the number of breast can-

cers found in more than 100,000 Norwegian women screened every two years with an approximately equal number who received one mammogram after six years.

The two strategies should have found about the same number of cancers, authors hypothesized. Yet doctors actually found 22 percent more breast cancers among the women who got more frequent mammograms.

The finding raises the possibility that mammograms found cancers that eventually went away and never needed to be treated, said co-author Dr. H. Gilbert Welch of the VA Outcomes Group in White River Junction, Vt. Other experts disputed the study's findings and note that mammograms and early detection have been proven to save lives.

— UPI

Bacteria move between species, study finds

BWINDI, UGANDA — Mountain gorillas in Uganda are at increased risk of getting gastrointestinal bacteria from humans, researchers found.

The study, published in *Conservation Biology*, examined the exchange of digestive-track bacteria between humans, mountain gorillas and domesticated animals living in overlapping habitats.

The findings indicated the presence of identical, clinically resistant bacteria, in gorillas, implying that antibiotic-resistant bacteria or resistance-conferring genetic elements transfer from humans to gorillas, the researchers said. Gorilla populations subject to research and tourism are particularly



vulnerable, they noted.

Mountain gorillas were at a higher risk of a bacteria exchange whether antibiotic consumptions were managed well or carelessly, researchers said, indicating preventing direct contact between people and the gorillas may not be enough to eliminate the possibility of an exchange.

In the article, researchers encouraged hand-washing before and after entering forests, discouraged human defecation in the forest and recommended mandatory wearing of aerosol-limiting face masks for people entering ape habitats.

— UPI

Living with children

By John K. Rosemond

Welcome to Parenting 101, a two-part introduction to the fundamentals of effective child rearing. Upon passing this course, which will conclude with next week's column, you will have acquired what it takes to raise children who are mannerly, self-disciplined, and do their best in school. As you will see, the fundamentals in question do not include various clever means of manipulating reward and punishment. If to this point, parenting has not been a relatively simple, easy-going affair, your problem is your attitude, your point of view, in which case, you signed up for the right course!

1. If you are married with children, put your marriage first. Your relationship with your spouse should be considerably more active than your relationship with your children. You should pay more attention to your spouse, talk more to your spouse, do more for your spouse, and spend more time with your spouse than you pay, talk, do, and spend with your kids. There is, after all, nothing that more effectively secures a child's sense of well-being than knowing his parents are taking care of their relationship.

2. If you are single with children, have lots of interests outside of your interest in your children. Have hobbies, friends, activities, and a job that takes your attention away from your kids. In so doing, you will become interesting to them. They will have greater respect for you, and they will pay you more attention. Whether married or single, be the center of your children's universe as opposed to letting them be the center of yours.

3. By the time your children are 3 years old, you should build a boundary between yourself and them, one that limits their access to you. Let them know that you are not at their beck and call, that you have a life beyond being their mother or father, and insist that they respect your privacy.

4. Say "No" more than you say "Yes." Actually, the propor-



tion should be at least five to one. The only children who can't take "No" for an answer have parents who do not say it often enough and cannot say it with conviction.

5. Put the horse of leadership in front of the cart of relationship. The secret to effective discipline is not manipulating consequences cleverly; rather it is assuming a posture of loving leadership in their lives. Leadership is a simple matter of acting like you **(a)** know what you're doing, **(b)** know where you're going, **(c)** know what you want, and **(d)** know you are going to get it. That translates to a calm, confident, casual parenting style.

Okay, class is dismissed, but remember to show up next week for the conclusion of this important course!

Family psychologist John Rosemond answers parents' questions on his Web site at www.rosemond.com.

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30 PLUS is a scientifically-formulated, natural supplement for women of all ages. A large percentage of women can experience hormonal fluctuations that dramatically effect their every day lives and relationships with friends and family. This can result in issues with:

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- Lack of energy
- Stress
- Emotional outbursts
- Weepiness
- Nervous tension
- Oestrogen Dominance
- Disturbed sleep

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Video games get 'responsible'

By Randy A. Salas
Star Tribune (Minneapolis)

MINNEAPOLIS — Battles in the video-game world don't always take place on the screen. Gamemakers often have found themselves duking it out with the National Institute on Media and the Family over violence in games, their marketing practices and game ratings. But something unusual has been happening lately: The one-time adversaries are actually working together.

The proof is in the Minneapolis-based institute's annual **MediaWise Video Game Report Card**, which was released Wednesday for the 13th year. In the past, the report has criticized video-gamemakers and given grades — often low — on how their products affect children. But this year, the grades are up and the tone is conciliatory. One reason?

"Nearly all of our policy recommendations from past report cards have been implemented," the report says.

David Walsh, who founded the National Institute on Media and the Family, said there has definitely been a shift in the nonprofit organization's relationship with gamemakers.

"For us to be fair with the report card, we need to acknowledge the fact that the industry has really made significant changes and reforms," Walsh said last week. "While there's still a ways to go, we are starting to see our role now as focusing more and more on parents — because we've been critiquing the industry for not doing enough to help parents, and they've basically responded to everything that we've asked."

Some examples of the changes the industry has made in response to the institute's concerns, according to Walsh:

- The three major home consoles — Xbox 360, PlayStation 3 and Wii — all have parenting controls.
- Marketing practices that once targeted young players with adult-oriented games have been cleaned up. "They now have probably the best adver-



tising code of conduct among any of the entertainment industries," Walsh said.

- The ratings on video games, which were inconsistent and not universally applied, are more accurate.

- Retailers now have 80 percent compliance for verifying the age of buyers before selling games rated Mature, for players 17 and older. "That's not perfect, but it's a heck of a lot better than the zero it was just five years ago," Walsh said.

- The Entertainment Software Ratings Board, an industry-backed group that administers video-game ratings, is doing a better job of educating parents after years of being a prime target of the institute. "Their accelerated parent and retailer education programs are state of the art," he said.

In fact, the ESRB recently augmented its ratings by adding paragraph summaries that detail why a game has received a particular rating. By visiting the **ESRB's Web site**, parents can quickly get a feel for the game's content. For instance, the summary for the popular mature-rated shooter "Resistance 2" explains, "Aliens and humans get blown up, torn apart, shot, impaled and killed in gushes of red blood and body parts. During cut scenes, team members are killed

by aliens, and in one instance, executed by another character. Characters use strong profanity (e.g., "f-ck" and "sh-t") during game play and cut scenes."

As more evidence of the new environment, Walsh's comments were even included in the ESRB's news release about its new game summaries.

"There's a good deal of common ground that the ESRB shares with the National Institute on Media and the Family in terms of wanting parents to be involved in and informed about the media their children consume," ESRB president Patricia Vance explained last week. "Dr. Walsh agrees that rating summaries are a powerful tool to allow parents to be even more informed about video game content, and we're very proud to have had his support in our announcement."

Things aren't perfect, Walsh said. Research shows that many kids still play mature-rated games, he added, but the responsibility lies with parents — the only group to receive an "incomplete" grade on the institute's report card. That's why it also advises parents on which new games to embrace and which ones to avoid (see sidebar).

"What we're doing now is partnering with the

industry to work on our now mutually agreed-upon goal, which is educating parents and giving them the tools," Walsh said. "That does not mean that we will abandon our role as the conscience of the industry, but it also doesn't make sense to be a naysayer just for the sake of being a naysayer."

BEST AND WORST GAMES

Here is the National Institute on Media and the Family's 2008 Game Buying Guide for parents looking for kids' gifts. Read more at www.mediawise.org.

Recommended E-rated games (everyone):

- ▶ Samba de Amigo
- ▶ NBA Live 09
- ▶ Nancy Drew: The Haunting of Castle Malloy
- ▶ FIFA Soccer 09
- ▶ High School Musical 3: Senior Year DANCE!
- ▶ LittleBigPlanet
- ▶ All Star Cheer Squad
- ▶ Hasbro Family Game Night
- ▶ NCAA Basketball 09

Not all player-generated content is appropriate. Parents should monitor and be aware of the levels their children are accessing on the Playstation Network.

Recommended T-rated games (teens):

- ▶ Rock Revolution
- ▶ Spiderman: Web of Shadows
- ▶ Guitar Hero World Tour
- ▶ Rock Band 2
- ▶ Shaun White Snowboarding

Games to avoid:

- ▶ Silent Hill: Homecoming
- ▶ Blitz: The League II
- ▶ Dead Space
- ▶ Legendary
- ▶ Far Cry 2
- ▶ Resistance 2
- ▶ Gears of War 2
- ▶ Left 4 Dead

Face-to-face crucial in a digital world

By Marcia Heroux Pounds
Florida Sun Sentinel

FORT LAUDERDALE, FLA. — Scott Garvis and Robert Kelly are in the business of effective communication. They work well together, but disagree over the use of a BlackBerry.

As president of Dale Carnegie Training of South Florida, Garvis can't do without his BlackBerry to communicate with his 25 team members, including Kelly.

"It keeps you attached to people you're working with," Garvis says.

Kelly, who runs the Miami region, prefers face-to-face communication. "People need to see you, know you, understand you," he says.

Author Susan RoAne says we've become so attached to our gizmos that we've forgotten how to have conversations that lead to personal relationships. In her new book *Face to Face*, RoAne says it's time to reclaim the personal touch in this digital world.

"We've forgotten how to behave," she says. RoAne observed a woman who walked into a funeral wearing her Bluetooth, for example.

In her book, she relays the story of a man hopping for a big promotion who sneaked a peak at his buzzing cell phone during the interview. He didn't get the job.

When a worker meets with another to discuss a project or meets with a client, "it's not my space or your space, it's about our space," she says.

So when Garvis is scrolling his BlackBerry while in conversation with Kelly, "I stop talking," Kelly says. "He says, 'Go ahead,' but I say, 'No, I'm going to wait until you're done.'"

"I could work on that a little bit," Garvis admits.

When sitting down for a meeting with someone, RoAne suggests laying down some rules, such as "let's make this a BlackBerry-free 15 minutes."

"People are appreciating how important interpersonal relations are. They've never been not important," RoAne says. "If we lose the face-to-face, we lose the bottom line foundation for what we call relationships."

Fostering interpersonal collaboration is behind the design of Office Depot's new global headquarters in Boca Raton, Fla. The office has 56 "huddle" areas and meeting rooms to encourage workers to sit down and chat.

"We all carry around communications devices — BlackBerrys, cell phones and Wi-Fi — but in fact, in the course of development of these innovations, we've lost something, and that's person-to-person interaction," says David Fannin, project manager for Office Depot's new headquarters.

RoAne says some workers use e-mail to avoid conversation. One worker told her she chose to e-mail because she "didn't like to talk to people."

But relying solely on e-mail can delay communication: When this people-shy worker sent an important e-mail, she didn't find out until a month later that the person had never gotten her message.

Even technology gurus take time to meet face-to-face with peers, RoAne says. Lunch 2.0, a meetup for lunch and chat, has become the place to show up in Silicon Valley and at similar groups around the world.

Garvis of Dale Carnegie is clinging to his BlackBerry for efficiency, but says that building relationships has to come first.

"I still call people every day and spend time on a personal level. The trust is built," he says.



Dolphin's tail a tale of speed

TROY, N.Y. — U.S. researchers have finally solved the conundrum of how dolphins swim so fast when their muscles shouldn't support that feat — tail strength.

A dolphin's tail creates about six times more force than an Olympic swimmer, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute researchers said in a release. At peak performance dolphins produce between 300 and 400 pounds of force, compared with human swimmers' peak of about 60 to 70 pounds of force, said Timothy Wei, professor and acting dean of the Troy, N.Y., institution's School of Engineering.

For more than 70 years, scientists were perplexed by dolphins swimming at a clip more than 20 mph while their muscles weren't strong enough to support that kind of speed. The conundrum came to be known as Gray's Paradox after British zoologist

James Gray who first noted the mystery.

"Sir James was certainly on to something, and it took nearly 75 years for technology to bring us to the point where we could get at the heart of his paradox," said Wei, professor and acting dean of Rensselaer's School of Engineering, who led the project. The short answer is that dolphins are simply much stronger than Gray or many other people ever imagined.

Wei created water-flow diagnostic technology by modifying and combining force measurement tools with a video-based flow measurement technique.

Wei said the team could investigate flow dynamics and force generation of other marine animals, which could offer insight into how species evolved because of their swimming proficiency.

— UPI



Scotland by rail

By Patti Nickell

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND – History tells us that Queen Victoria became so enamoured of the beauty of Scotland while travelling across the country by train that she decided she must have a castle here. Hence, Balmoral was added to the list of royal residences. Sadly, I wasn't in the market for a Scottish castle, but I was about to follow in Victoria's footsteps by taking a rail journey through the country. Since I would be travelling aboard the elegant Royal Scotsman, it was a safe bet that I would enjoy the same standard of service and luxury that Victoria did.

If the boarding process was any indication of what was to come, I'd say even a queen would be impressed. On an overcast October afternoon at Edinburgh's Waverley Station, my fellow guests and I were ushered aboard the train by Sue, our gracious hostess, to the accompaniment of a kilted bagpiper. Once settled in the observation car, we were invited to nibble on smoked salmon canapés and handed a glass of chilled Perrier-Jouet.

"Wow, I could get used to this," I mumbled to myself, twirling my champagne flute.

I decided that I could get even more used to it when I was escorted to my compartment, which, while not large, was lavishly furnished with burgundy tapestry drapes, built-in beds with glen plaid coverlets, and black-and-white etchings of Scottish scenes. I was to discover, however, during the next four days, that the best pieces of art were the Scottish scenes framed by the four corners of my window. The constantly changing vistas – alternately bathed in golden sunshine or shrouded in mountain mist – took in sheep-studded hillocks, bonny braes (that's Gaelic for riverbanks), tranquil lochs, fields blanketed with the last of the summer heather, and the occasional pile of forbidding gray stones fashioned into fortresses meant to repel the oft-invading English.

Along with my fellow sojourners, a cosmopolitan lot, I would be travelling up the eastern coast of Scotland, from Edinburgh to the Highlands and back, while visions of William Wallace, Robert the Bruce, Bonnie Prince Charlie, Sir Walter Scott and (OK, I admit it) Sean Connery danced in my head.

There are some places that, due to geography, history, literature or a combination of all three, develop a mythology all their own. Scotland is such a place. Geographically, it is a country of shady glens, shimmering lochs and stark hills. Historically, it has given us the tragic saga of Mary, Queen of Scots; the warring Campbell and MacDonald clans; the

whitewashed exploits of Rob Roy (my illusions were dashed when I discovered that he was a glorified cattle thief); and the romantic but doomed cause of the Jacobites, personified by Charles Stuart, Bonnie Prince Charlie. Scotland also is the backdrop for Shakespeare's most dramatic play and has showcased the patriotic fervour of Walter Scott's novels and the romance of Robert Burns' poetry.

On the Royal Scotsman's four-night Classic Tour, I got a taste of all the above. But first, I got a taste of something else for which Scotland is pretty famous.

For our first evening's entertainment, we were invited to a traditional Scottish ceilidh, a sort of Gaelic barn dance. Only our festivities weren't in a barn but at Strathisla, the oldest operating distillery in the Highlands, known to discriminating whiskey drinkers around the globe as the producer of Chivas Regal. And even though local musicians had arranged to play all the traditional tunes, there was more drinking than dancing by our jolly band of wayfarers. Not surprising when you learn that the region, known as Speyside, has the ideal environment for producing the smooth, rounded malt whiskeys that make up the Chivas blend.

If Scotland is celebrated for its whiskeys, it is equally known for its castles, and two of its most beautiful and historic were on our itinerary. Eilean Donan, situated on a rocky promontory at the meeting point of three sea lochs, has been called the most photographed castle in the world and is the perfect embodiment of medieval splendour. Except that it isn't.

A fortified structure of some sort has existed here for 800 years – possibly as protection from Viking raids – but the current castle, rising from the ruins of its predecessor, was rebuilt in the early 20th century by the MacRae clan. Still, a tour of the courtyard, billeting room and magnificent banquet hall will have you feeling as if you had stumbled back to the 17th century, and if you stick around until sunset to watch the castle illuminated in soft light, you'll know there can't be a more magical spot in all of Britain.

A castle of a different sort is Ballindalloch, known as "the pearl of the north" and one of the few privately owned castles to have been lived in continuously by the original family. In the case of Ballindalloch, the family is the Macpherson-Grants, and the current owners, Clare Macpherson-Grant and her husband, Oliver Russell, take Royal Scotsman guests on a private tour of their home.

Located in the cleft of the Spey Valley, the castle, with its turrets and gabled roof, looms over majestic parklands and spectacular gardens. Among the

interior features are a circular stone staircase winding up to a watch tower dating to 1602; a series of elegant rooms whose decor ranges from antique Chinese porcelain to a cut-glass chandelier whose design of intertwined English roses and Scottish thistle might have been intended to celebrate the 1707 union of the two countries, and a letter from Rob Roy MacGregor, the infamous outlaw, demanding protection money from the then laird (as I mentioned earlier, illusions die hard; the next thing I'll find out is that he didn't really look like Liam Neeson).

Scone Palace, while not strictly a castle, is nevertheless one of the most hallowed spots in Scotland. The traditional coronation site for Scottish kings, it has seen both Macbeth and his enemy Malcolm rule here in the 11th century; Robert the Bruce crowned here in 1306, with the blood of his chief rival still on his hands; and Charles II, the last king to be crowned here in 1651, in defiance of Oliver Cromwell.

Though no longer home to the Stone of Scone, called the Stone of Destiny (the English returned it to Scotland in 1996, and it is now in Edinburgh Castle), Scone Palace, ancestral home of the Earls of Mansfield, is a veritable repository of the nation's history, and a treasure trove of antiques and decorative arts. Royal Scotsman guests have the opportunity to roam the palace and grounds at their leisure (and they should just hope that the irrepressible Alastair is their host for the tour).

Other excursions saw us visiting Dalmore Distillery on the banks of the Cromarty Firth, which has distilled Scotch whiskey since 1839, and spending a morning at Rothiemurchus Estate, where options included fly-fishing, clay pigeon shooting and a drive around the estate to view the prize-winning Highland cattle.

But it is often not the sites – spectacular though they are – that guests on the train remember the longest, but their fellow passengers. The intimacy of the Royal Scotsman encourages long conversations in the lounge over a "wee dram," and table-hopping during lunch and dinner. In so doing, friendships are forged. On our last night, as we joined hands and voices in the singing of Loch Lomond and Auld Lang Syne, I couldn't help but notice there were more than a few tears among the laughter.

IF YOU GO

For those who revel in the romance of train travel, this is the ultimate experience. The train holds just 36 passengers, which gives one the feeling of being in a travelling house party. You travel during the day, with various stops for included excursions, and the train is stabled each night. The 2009 schedule is from April 27 (already sold out) to Oct. 27, and has a number of itineraries. Two-night trips begin at US\$3,610; three nights at \$5,250; and the four-night classic at \$6,620. Longer trips (five and seven nights) range from \$7,970 to \$10,680. All prices are per person based on double occupancy, and include accommodations, all meals, alcoholic beverages, entertainment, planned excursions and applicable taxes. The Royal Scotsman is owned by Orient-Express. To book, go to www.royalscotsman.com.

If you want to stay on after your train trip in Edinburgh or London, here are some suggestions.

► **Edinburgh.** The Balmoral Hotel, 1 Princes Street, is a five-star property on the Royal Mile next to Waverley Station. It generally is considered Edinburgh's most luxurious hotel. It has 188 stylish rooms, many of which have views of the Castle and Old Town. www.thebalmorahotel.com.

► **London.** The Red Carnation Collection of Boutique Hotels has come to be recognized as among the city's finest places to stay. The collection has hotels across the capital, but two of the most charming are The Milestone, across from the entrance to Kensington Gardens, and Montagu on the Gardens, in Bloomsbury.

► **The Milestone, 1 Kensington Court**, was voted the top hotel of 2007 by Conde Nast Traveler readers, and it's not surprising when you consider that each room has a different theme, from the elegant Royal Ascot to the slightly naughty Mistinguett, in honour of the French cabaret performer. The Milestone is within walking distance of Royal Albert Hall and Victoria & Albert Museum.

► **Montagu on the Gardens, 15 Montagu Street**, has been fashioned from nine Georgian terraced townhouses overlooking a beautiful garden. In addition to being just around the corner from the British Museum, it is an easy walk from Covent Garden. The hotel's Blue Door Bistro serves delicious modern British cuisine. To book rooms at either hotel, go to www.redcarnation.com.



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The chief's funeral

Acclaimed science fiction writer Jules Verne didn't just write *Around the World in 80 Days*, he also wrote an epic about New Zealand and Australia called *In Search of the Castaways*, published in 1867. If you missed the previous instalment of this serial, you can download it [here](#).

Punishment fell on all indiscriminately. Lady Helena and Mary Grant were grateful to Heaven for the boon.

The captives were not taken back to Ware-Atoua. They were destined to attend the obsequies of the chief and the bloody rites that accompanied them. A guard of natives conducted them to the foot of an immense kauri, and then stood on guard without taking their eyes off the prisoners.

The three prescribed days had elapsed since the death of Kara-Tete, and the soul of the dead warrior had finally departed; so the ceremonies commenced.

The body was laid on a small mound in the central enclosure. It was clothed in a rich dress, and wrapped in a magnificent flax mat. His head, adorned with feathers, was encircled with a crown of green leaves. His face, arms, and chest had been rubbed with oil, and did not show any sign of decay.

The parents and friends arrived at the foot of the mound, and at a

Horrible yells followed; a hundred arms threatened the terror-stricken captives. But no one moved, for the funeral ceremonies were not yet over.

The wife of Kara-Tete had joined her husband. The two bodies lay stretched side by side. But in the future life, even the presence of his faithful companion was not enough. Who would attend on them in the realm of Noui-Atoua, if their slaves did not follow them into the other world.

Six unfortunate fellows were brought to the mound. They were attendants whom the pitiless usages of war had reduced to slavery. During the chief's lifetime they had borne the severest privations, and been subjected to all kinds of ill-usage; they had been scantily fed, and incessantly occupied like beasts of burden, and now, according to Maori ideas, they were to resume to all eternity this life of bondage.

These poor creatures appeared quite resigned to their destiny. They were not taken by surprise. Their unbound hands showed that they

belong to the tribe; they were a sort of small change thrown among the mourners, and the moment the sacrifice was over, the whole crowd, chiefs, warriors, old men, women, children, without distinction of age, or sex, fell upon the senseless remains with brutal appetite. Faster than a rapid pen could describe it, the bodies, still reeking, were dismembered, divided, cut up, not into morsels, but into crumbs. Of the two hundred Maoris present everyone obtained a share. They fought, they struggled, they quarrelled over the smallest fragment. The drops of hot blood splashed over these festive monsters, and the whole of this detestable crew grovelled under a rain of blood. It was like the delirious fury of tigers fighting over their prey, or like a circus where the wild beasts devour the deer. This scene ended, a score of fires were lit at various points of the "pah"; the smell of charred flesh polluted the air; and but for the fearful tumult of the festival, but for the cries that emanated from these flesh-sated throats, the captives might have heard the bones crunching under the teeth of the cannibals.

Glenarvan and his companions, breathless with horror, tried to conceal this fearful scene from the eyes of the two poor ladies. They understood then what fate awaited them next day at dawn, and also with what cruel torture this death would be preceded. They were dumb with horror.

The funeral dances commenced. Strong liquors distilled from the "piper excelsum" animated the intoxication of the natives. They had nothing human left. It seemed possible that the tapu might be forgotten, and they might rush upon the prisoners, who were already terrified at their delirious gestures.

But Kai-Koumou had kept his own senses amidst the general delirium. He allowed an hour for this orgy of blood to attain its maximum and then cease, and the final scene of the obsequies was performed with the accustomed ceremonial.

The corpses of Kara-Tete and his wife were raised, the limbs were bent, and laid against the stomach according to the Maori usage; then came the funeral, not the final interment, but a burial until the moment when the earth had destroyed the flesh and nothing remained but the skeleton.

The place of "urupa," or the tomb, had been chosen outside the fortress, about two miles off at the top of a low hill called Maunganamu, situated on the right bank of the lake, and to this spot the body was to be taken. Two palanquins of a very primitive kind, hand-barrows, in fact, were brought to the foot of the mound, and the corpses doubled up so that they were sitting rather than lying, and their garments kept in place by a band of hanes, were placed on them. Four warriors took up the litters on their shoulders, and the whole tribe, repeating their funeral chant, followed in procession to the place of sepulture.

The captives, still strictly guarded, saw the funeral cortege leave the inner enclosure of the "pah"; then the chants and cries grew fainter. For about half an hour the funeral procession remained out of sight,

in the hollow valley, and then came in sight again winding up the mountain side; the distance gave a fantastic effect to the undulating movement of this long serpentine column.

The tribe stopped at an elevation of about 800 feet, on the summit of Maunganamu, where the burial place of Kara-Tete had been prepared. An ordinary Maori would have had nothing but a hole and a heap of earth. But a powerful and formidable chief destined to speedy deification, was honoured with a tomb worthy of his exploits.

The urupa had been fenced round, and posts, surmounted with faces painted in red ochre, stood near the grave where the bodies were to lie. The relatives had not forgotten that the "Wairua," the spirit of the dead, lives on mortal food, as the body did in this life. Therefore, food was deposited in the enclosure as well as the arms and clothing of the deceased. Nothing was omitted for comfort. The husband and wife were laid side by side, then covered with earth and grass, after another series of laments.

Then the procession wound slowly down the mountain, and henceforth none dare ascend the slope of Maunganamu on pain of death, for it was tapu, like Tongariro, where lie the ashes of a chief killed by an earthquake in 1846.



Mt Maunganamu, near Taupo

certain moment, as if the leader of an orchestra were leading a funeral chant, there arose a great wail of tears, sighs, and sobs. They lamented the deceased with a plaintive rhythm and doleful cadence. The kinsmen beat their heads; the kinswomen tore their faces with their nails and lavished more blood than tears. But these demonstrations were not sufficient to propitiate the soul of the deceased, whose wrath might strike the survivors of his tribe; and his warriors, as they could not recall him to life, were anxious that he should have nothing to wish for in the other world. The wife of Kara-Tete was not to be parted from him; indeed, she would have refused to survive him. It was a custom, as well as a duty, and Maori history has no lack of such sacrifices.

This woman came on the scene; she was still young. Her dishevelled hair flowed over her shoulders. Her sobs and cries filled the air. Incoherent words, regrets, sobs, broken phrases in which she extolled the virtues of the dead, alternated with her moans, and in a crowning paroxysm of sorrow, she threw herself at the foot of the mound and beat her head on the earth.

The Kai-Koumou drew near; suddenly the wretched victim rose; but a violent blow from a "mere," a kind of club brandished by the chief, struck her to the ground; she fell senseless.

met their fate without resistance.

Their death was speedy and not aggravated by tedious suffering; torture was reserved for the authors of the murder, who, only twenty paces off, averted their eyes from the horrible scene which was to grow yet more horrible.

Six blows of the mere, delivered by the hands of six powerful warriors, felled the victims in the midst of a sea of blood.

This was the signal for a fearful scene of cannibalism. The bodies of slaves are not protected by tapu like those of their masters. They

“THE PLACE OF “URUPA,” OR THE TOMB, HAD BEEN CHOSEN OUTSIDE THE FORTRESS, ABOUT TWO MILES OFF AT THE TOP OF A LOW HILL CALLED MAUNGANAMU, SITUATED ON THE RIGHT BANK OF THE LAKE, AND TO THIS SPOT THE BODY WAS TO BE TAKEN

FROM FRONT PAGE

"I'm hopeful there still may be survivors, the early indications are that the plane and the debris were floating on the water."

The aircraft – leased by XL but about to be returned to the Air New Zealand fleet – had flown two hours up and was returning to Perpignan, he said.

Crisis support teams were now in touch with the families of those on board, Mr Fyfe said.

"There's a lot of emotion. It is a difficult time as we await information."

The specialist assistance teams were based on those used by other airlines, "they've all gone through quite extensive training on how to support the families".

The shock that hit Air New Zealand was replicated at CAA in Wellington, when staff learned Jeremy Cook, who joined CAA in 2005, had been on the aircraft.

CAA was supporting his wife, family and friends, acting director Graeme Harris said.

Mr Cook was respected and liked by all in the aviation industry, he said.

"An aviation enthusiast, he has had a long career dedicated to enhancing aviation safety standards, and this accident has affected all within the CAA and the aviation industry," Mr Harris said.

He had worked with Air Niugini in Papua New Guinea, Ansett New Zealand, and with the Christchurch Engine Centre.

Nothing was known of any distress calls or communications with air traffic controllers before the aircraft crashed.

Air New Zealand staff gathered at its headquarters in Auckland where many were in tears.

One family member of the crew would travel to France with Mr Fyfe tonight.

The aircraft, freshly painted in Air New Zealand livery, could be seen from the surface, sitting on the seabed with its tail clearly visible.

At first light, specialist divers began searching inside the aircraft for signs of the missing men and clues about the cause of the crash.

Five French Navy ships and two helicopters had searched for survivors. However, as darkness fell and the wind speed increased to about 30 knots, the helicopters returned to their base, leaving the ships to search throughout the night.

"I've spoken with the Prime Minister John Key who has offered us the full support of the Government and any of the resources we want to draw on over the next few days as we try to establish exactly what has happened," Mr Fyfe told journalists.

Air New Zealand had no indication of any communication to air traffic control prior to the crash.

A French reporter told Radio New Zealand the plane "suddenly fell down into the sea".

There were many witnesses, and emergency services were quickly at the scene.

The aircraft was believed to be 45m deep in the sea and divers would try and recover the black box tonight.

Some wreckage was floating on the surface, but the pieces were "very difficult to find because of the big waves and the dark".

A surveillance plane, two rescue helicopters and five ships have been scouring the seas around the crash site about 3km from the shore.

About 20 specialist frogmen were taking part in the operation.

The aircraft was owned by Air New Zealand and had been on lease to XL Airways for the past two years.

It was to be flown to Frankfurt, where it was due to be handed back for a ferry flight back to New Zealand.

The CAA certification engineer was on the trip as part of the process by which aircraft are handed over from the European operator.

The aircraft, wearing Air New Zealand livery, took off from Perpignan about 3.30am (New Zealand time).

Capt Horrell was sitting in the jump seat behind the German pilots, Mr Fyfe said.

The aircraft had been in the air for about two hours and had undergone a series of manoeuvres as part of the assessment of its condition and performance.

It was on its final approach to Perpignan when it crashed.

"The witness reports seem to suggest the aircraft was



Rescue workers recover one of the bodies from the deck of a coastguard vessel.



Lights out to sea mark the spot where the Air New Zealand jet went down.



relatively low in the sky on a normal airfield approach configuration at the time the incident occurred."

Nothing in the aircraft's maintenance history while it was at XL Airways had raised concerns, he said.

The crash came 29 years to the day that an Air New Zealand DC10 crashed into Mt Erebus, killing all 257 passengers and crew.

Mr Fyfe said today was already a very poignant one for Air New Zealand because of the Erebus trag-

edy and the anniversary added a new dimension to today's tragedy.

The Airbus was due back in New Zealand this week.

Six French aviation accident investigators and two from Germany were being sent to help an inquiry with experts from the French civil aviation authority (DGAC) and Airbus.

A Transport Accident Investigation Authority investigator was understood to be headed for France.

Airbus said it delivered the jet in July 2005 and it

had carried out 2800 flights with about 7000 hours of use since then. The constructor gave no details of the accident.

There are about 3700 A320 jets in service with almost 3000 more to be delivered. Air New Zealand owns two Airbus aircraft, and leases 10. They seat about 150 passengers.

— NZPA, with extra reporting from TGIF Edition, UPI & DPA / Photo: MAXPHOTOS

[Back to the front page](#)