



Pepsi signs Madonna, Coke signed Michael as Cola Wars heat up

NEW YORK -- What used to be called the cola wars may become the battle of the pop jingles. Pepsi-Cola Co. announced Wednesday that it has signed sexy singer Madonna to pitch its product to combat ads by rival Coca-Cola that feature pop dynamo George Michael.

Industry watchers said Pepsi's move could chart virgin waters by debuting a song in a television commercial.

Pepsi, firing the latest volley in a quickly escalating marketing war with Coca-Cola, also said it will sponsor a world tour by the actress-singer later this year after Madonna releases her first album in three years, "Like A Prayer" in March.

The Madonna announcement comes on the heels of industry leader Coke's new ad campaign aimed at pushing sales of Diet Coke past Pepsi, currently second in the market behind Coke Classic. That effort marks the first time a

major diet soda has squared off directly against a leading sugared competitor, signaling a new intensity in the years-old cola wars.

Coke earlier this month signed George Michael, the sexy pop-soul singer whose album "Faith" produced six hit singles, for a series of Diet Coke commercials, on top of a campaign already featuring hockey star Wayne Gretzky, model Elle MacPherson and "Miami Vice" star Don Johnson, a one-time Pepsi pitchman.

"What's obviously shaping up is George Michael and Diet Coke versus Madonna and sugar Pepsi," said Coca Cola USA spokesman Anthony Tortorici. "Frankly, we like those odds."

Terms of the Madonna contract were not disclosed, but if history is any guide the deal with the breathy, brash singer of "Papa Don't Preach" and "Whose That Girl" and star of the movie "Desperately Seeking Susan" should be in the millions.

Tower says tough ethics needed

WASHINGTON -- Defense Secretary-designate John Tower told a Senate confirmation hearing today that laws should be tightened to prevent officials "from profiting unfairly, unethically, or illegally or inordinately" if they move between Pentagon and industry jobs.

Tower also assured the Senate Armed Services Committee that the \$763,777 he collected as a defense consultant over the past three years would not influence actions he might take as defense secretary.

And he cautioned Congress that it should write "revolving-door" laws "carefully enough so that honest, hardworking people who might want to engage in public service are not summarily proscribed" from working at the Pentagon.

Tower noted that Donald J. Atwood, whom he has chosen as deputy defense secretary, has been vice chairman of the General Motors Corp., a major Pentagon contractor.

He said other top aides would be drawn from the defense industry as well.

The atmosphere at the hearings was polite as the senators questioned their former colleague. Tower, a Texas Republican, spent 24 years in the Senate, including a stint as chairman of the Armed Services Committee from 1981-84.

The committee chairman, Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., told Tower that "I know you and I know you are an honest person."

"Frankly, the difficulty here is not that you have worked for a contractor as a consultant, but a number of them, five or six or seven of the major corporations," Nunn said. "If you were to recuse (not involve) yourself on all of them, you couldn't be secretary of defense."

Tower told the committee that "I faced up to this problem when I was chairman" of the commission appointed by President Reagan to investigate the Iran-Contra affair.

In that role, he said, he was required "to inquire into and investigate the actions of a president to whom I was deeply loyal. It was not a pleasant experience."

"My loyalty to my country transcends any of these loyalties," said Tower.

At the opening of his second day of testimony, Tower told the Armed Services Committee about his role as a consultant to several major defense contractors, including Rockwell International, Martin Marietta, Textron, LTV and British Aerospace.

Tower told lawmakers Wednesday that as of Dec. 1 he had severed his ties with defense contractors he had worked for as a consultant over the past two years and did not "stand to gain from the prosperity of any former associate."

In other testimony Wednesday, Tower disavowed the label of "mindless hawk" and promised to take a hard look at all weapons systems in trimming the defense budget.

Meat packers upset at furry jury as they sniff at some Soviet sausage

MOSCOW -- Angry meatpackers are suing a newspaper for an article that said their sausage was so bad that even cats can't stomach it, but editors said they turned to a furry, four-legged jury that proved their point.

"Twenty-four sausage experts don't eat it at all; five only eat high quality sausage or out of extreme hunger. Only one, the 2-month-old kitten Mura, you can say actually sits down to the sausage," the weekly Literaturnaya Gazeta said in announcing the feline findings.

The dispute started with the literary weekly's story on June 15 titled "The Cat Doesn't Know ..." and was brought up recently in the Dzerzhinsky regional people's court.

In a complaint signed by Yu. M. Luzhkov, chairman of the Moscow agroindustrial complex, officials demanded a retraction of the newspaper's report that producers were breaking the law by putting protein additives in the sausage, known in Russian as "kolbasa."

Because of a shortage of meat in many Soviet stores, finding good quality sausage has become a fixation

for many people. A cartoon in an October edition of the satire magazine Krokodil showed a line of shoppers standing outside a theater, not to buy tickets, but to buy the sausage for sale in the theater's buffet.

The case also shows that the more aggressive style of reporting by the Soviet press under President Mikhail S. Gorbachev's encouragement of greater openness is likely to get it into occasional legal trouble. The Tass news agency said this week a court had dismissed a lawsuit against a film producer by a biochemical plant near Leningrad that objected to his documentary about pollution.

Literaturnaya Gazeta reported about its dispute with the sausage manufacturers in an article in this week's edition titled, "May the Cats Judge Us." It gave no indication that the case had gone any further than the initial complaint.

It said that using the permission of state quality control officials to add protein additives, the factories were grinding up the skin and bones of cattle and throwing them into the sausage.

Animal blood, protein paste, blood plasma, starch, flour, and emulsions of protein and fat also were part of the gray, unappetizing mixtures churned out by the factories, Literaturnaya Gazeta said.

"Blocks of frozen meat weren't unfrozen or washed before being chopped, and were happily thrown in with knots of wool and even the trademarks of the factories that produced these blocks. Nails, sand and glass have fallen into the sausage," it said.

To judge the validity of its first story, the newspaper said it sought out the Fauna Cat Lovers' Club in the Dzerzhinsky region, where it is being sued.

Boris Berenshtein fed some sausage to Kuzya, his 2 1/2-year-old cat, "but Kuzya didn't find any joy in it. Just the opposite, he gave a look like a person saying, 'What's that for? What did I do that was so bad, master?'"

It said another cat, Gavril, tests the sausage for the whole family of Maria Klyueva. If Gavril eats it, the whole family will. If she turns up her nose, so does the family.

Anti-drug war intensifies; Iran hangs 16 smugglers

NICOSIA, Cyprus -- Sixteen drug smugglers were hanged in Iran on Wednesday, following a major narcotics crackdown backed by a draconian new law, Tehran radio reported.

Ten key members of a large, armed gang were hung in Tehran, two smugglers were executed in neighboring Varamin, and four in western

Bakhtaran province said the broadcast, monitored in Nicosia.

These deaths raised to 89 the number of drug smugglers executed since the crackdown started Jan. 16. More than 1,000 people have been arrested in the same period in what Iranian newspapers describe as "the biggest crackdown on drug smuggling in Iranian history."

Elderly Rochester man dies after being stuck in trash can

ROCHESTER, N.Y. -- A 73-year-old man was found dead in a garbage can on his front porch, where police believe he had been stuck for three days.

Robert Hamm waved to a mailman and a newspaper carrier while in the trash can earlier this week but may have been too weak to alert them that he was stuck, police said Wednesday.

"I would imagine he was probably trying to signal something, but his expression or whatever wasn't enough to get them to do anything about it," Sgt. R.J. Liepins said. "They all feel very bad."

The 11-year-old newspaper carrier, who had waved back to Hamm on Monday, discovered him on Wednesday.

Hamm, who was of medium height and build, apparently fell backward into the standard-size metal trash can on his enclosed porch and couldn't get out, Liepins said. He was found in the can up to his armpits, with his legs sticking out.

On Tuesday, the mailman, whose name was unavailable, saw Hamm in the can from outside the porch and saw his hand move, Liepins said.

"He thought something was funny ... but he just let it pass," Liepins said.

General ordered officer killed

SANTIAGO, Chile -- A former diplomat said on Wednesday he was told the chief of the military government's secret police ordered the assassination in Washington of dissident Chilean politician Orlando Letelier.

Jose Miguel Barros said in sworn testimony the mastermind was identified to him as Gen. Manuel Contreras Sepulveda. The United States has tried for years to extradite the former secret police chief and his assistant, Col. Pedro Espinoza, both now retired.

Contreras denied the accusations Wednesday night. "Neither I nor any official of the intelligence agency were involved" in the killing, he said on Santiago's Channel 13.

Letelier and American aide Ronnie Moffitt were killed Sept. 21, 1976, when a remote-controlled bomb blew up their car. He had been a Cabinet minister and ambassador to the United States for the government overthrown by Gen. Augusto Pinochet in 1973, and was among Pinochet's most influential critics abroad.

Barros was one of seven former officials questioned last week at the request of the U.S. Justice Department. Newspapers carried his testimony in Wednesday's editions and Barros confirmed the accounts to The Associated Press.

He testified to Judge Julio Bana-

dos that Air Force Gen. Enrique Montero told him during a meeting in the late 1970's "this genius intelligence mounted an operation to assassinate Letelier."

Barros said Montero, then under-

secretary of the Interior Ministry in the Pinochet government, identified the "genius" as Contreras, head of the National Intelligence Directorate secret police at the time of the assassination.

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