

Nation/World

from The Associated Press

War between states heats up with flag removal

ATLANTA — Retaliating in a tit-for-tat war between the states, a pair of Georgia lawmakers climbed a ladder Tuesday and yanked down New York's flag from the state Capitol.

It was a stunt to get back at New York for removing Georgia's flag after Gov. George Pataki branded the Confederate emblem on the banner as a "symbol of hatred" for all Americans.

"They started it," said state Sen. Eric Johnson, who got a few cheers from onlookers as he and fellow Republican state Sen. Joey Brush marched New York's flag out of the Capitol's Hall of States.

But Secretary of State Lewis Massey was not amused. He promised to have the flag back in place today. "I hope this puts an end to these childish exercises," he said.

The Georgia flag had hung about 100 feet from Pataki's office in the New York Capitol for some 20 years. A group of black lawmakers complained to the governor late last week that they wanted the flag removed.

New York Sen. David Paterson, a Manhattan Democrat who prompted the Georgia flag's removal, condemned the retaliatory move as "quite insensitive."

Death row dog spared

PORTSMOUTH, N.H. (AP) — Prince, a little boy's four-legged friend, condemned to death after killing a rooster, won a reprieve Tuesday — and was ordered to get out of town. "Thank you, everyone," 5-year-old Jeffrey Kristiansen said following the city's decision to lift his dog's death sentence.

Jeffrey's mother, Margaret Kristiansen, was ordered to find a new home for the 3½-year-old black Labrador mix, somewhere outside this city of about 25,000. No deadline was set.

Prince, whom Ms. Kristiansen nicknamed "Houdini" for his ability to escape from cages and leashes, killed the rooster in May. He was labeled a vicious dog under a Portsmouth city ordinance.

Vicious dogs are supposed to be kept leashed or locked up, but Prince got away twice, once by breaking out of a cage and another time by bolting when Jeffrey opened a door. That

"A dog can't be a dog anymore."

TIM RECORD
Portsmouth resident

earned the dog a death sentence under the "three-strikes-and-out" ordinance. He's been in a kennel ever since.

Jeffrey said Prince got a bad rap. "He's not the one responsible — the rooster's responsible," he said last week.

"A dog can't be a dog anymore," resident Tim Record said Tuesday.

Ms. Kristiansen said she'll interview prospective owners for Prince and work out a visitation agreement.

The Lighter Side...

of The Associated Press

Studying kissing doesn't help

EVANSVILLE, Ind. — Professor Michael Christian is making the perfect kiss academic.

The Boston College professor is an expert on kissing. He's even written two books on the subject.

Christian said there are about 25 different kinds of lip-locks, from the lip-o-suction kiss to the upside-down kiss. At a speech at the University of Southern Indiana, Christian told students that most Americans kiss for less than a minute, but the longest kiss on record lasted more than 200 hours.

His interest turned academic after a girlfriend complained that he kissed with his eyes open. He now knows he was just kissing the wrong girl. One-third of the population likes to kiss 'n' peep.

But Christian admits being a kissing expert hasn't helped his love life.

"Women's expectations are too high and they always say things like, 'You've got to be kidding. You wrote the book on the art of kissing and this is the best you can do?'"



JIM MEHLING/DN

Serbian Parliament votes to restore opposition wins

Next step for Zajedno party is to free the media from government control.

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP) — Serbia's democratic opposition gained its first major triumph over President Slobodan Milosevic as parliament reinstated opposition victories today in local elections.

But opposition leader Vuk Draskovic said Milosevic could not be trusted to fully implement the bill that, after months of protests, recognized the Nov. 17 election wins.

The parliament, where Milosevic's Socialists and their allies hold a majority, voted 128-0 to pass the bill today. There were two abstentions.

The bill gave the three-party Zajedno opposition alliance control of

Belgrade and 13 other cities in Serbia. It closed one chapter in the opposition's struggle and opened another — the bid to drive Milosevic from power in nationwide elections scheduled later this year.

Milosevic is barred by Serbia's constitution from seeking his third term, but the opposition fears Milosevic may use legal maneuvers to stay in power.

Although the parliament acted on orders by Milosevic, the debate dragged late into the evening. Of the 250 lawmakers, only 130 were present. The opposition boycotted the session, and the ultranationalist Radical Party also skipped the vote.

Zajedno said its next step will be to free the media from government control and gain equal access to state-run television, Milosevic's most powerful propaganda tool during his 10 years in power.

Although the pro-democracy drive has seen the arrival of independent newspapers, the government has hampered their distribution outside Belgrade. Two independent radio stations can be heard only in Belgrade.

The opposition said its efforts will be made harder by Milosevic's apparent intention to install Radmila Milentijevic as his information minister.

Milentijevic, a U.S. citizen who teaches history at the City University of New York, has been a hard-line Milosevic supporter who backed Milosevic's nationalist policies in the past.

The opposition also plans to press for punishment of officials responsible for the election fraud and for a police crackdown on protesters Feb. 2-3 in which more than 100 people were injured.

Ecuador picks interim president

QUITO, Ecuador (AP) — Congress selected its own leader, Fabian Alarcon, as Ecuador's interim president Tuesday night.

It was the latest act in a week-long political drama that forced the country's elected leader from office.

Alarcon was chosen by a vote of 57-2 to replace caretaker president Rosalia Arteaga.

Arteaga resigned earlier Tuesday after threatening to remain in office. Before resigning, she issued a decree calling for a national referendum on whether the country's vice president should succeed the president if the position becomes vacant.

Arteaga was Ecuador's vice president before Congress named her to the presidency on Sunday.

"I will return to the presidency of the republic only if that is the determination of the referendum," she said.

Meanwhile, Abdala Bucaram, dismissed as president last week by Congress, left Ecuador Tuesday. Bucaram has said publicly that a civilian dicta-

torship has been imposed.

"I am President of the Republic. I never resigned and never will resign," Bucaram, dressed in jeans and a sports shirt, told reporters and a small group of onlookers after arriving at Panama City airport Tuesday night.

Bucaram, who was dismissed for "mental incapacity," said his trip would include stopovers in other Latin American countries. He denied he was going into exile.

Amid a three-way struggle for the presidency, Congress picked Arteaga for the job Sunday under a military-negotiated agreement that put her in power only until legislators elected the interim leader. Alarcon, 49, will serve as president until 1998, and must call new elections.

Arteaga's announcement Monday that she would not immediately step down infuriated some in Congress. She changed her mind later Monday, only to change it back Tuesday before finally submitting.

Arteaga said the constitution

makes no provision for an interim leader. She said there must be a constitutional amendment before Congress can elect a temporary replacement.

"I think they're preparing a new coup against the constitution," she said Tuesday, calling it "a dangerous precedent."

Arteaga also said the armed forces would have no role in resolving the political crisis, which began with Congress' dismissal of Bucaram.

"The role of the armed forces is internal and international security, but not acting in politics," she said.

The struggle for the presidency raised fears of a military coup. While that did not happen, the crisis served to highlight the power and influence of the armed forces in the fragile democracy. Ecuador's military — the ultimate arbiter of power — had to step in and negotiate a solution.

Palestinian women prisoners freed

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — Israel freed 31 Palestinian women prisoners Tuesday after the Supreme Court rejected a final petition from a group whose family members were victims of Palestinian attacks.

The releases came after a year of delays and wrangling and a long day of waiting and confusion.

Two Palestinian officials — legislator Hisham Abdel-Razek and Soufian Abu Zaida, head of the Israel desk in the planning ministry — greeted the women as they left the

prison in Tel Mond in central Israel.

In the West Bank town of Ramallah, family and friends waited anxiously to welcome the returning prisoners. Yasser Arafat, who was in Ramallah to welcome the women, called the move a good sign for peace with Israel.

"No doubt this will help the relationship between the two peoples," he told reporters.

Seven women had left the prison earlier Tuesday — but one was brought back by her jailers because of

the Supreme Court petition, and three others demanded to be returned to prison in solidarity. Finally, after 11 p.m., all the women were freed.

Aisha Abu-Hazem, who served two years of a 12-year sentence for stabbing a police officer, expressed mixed feelings about her release.

"I'm not happy that I left while there are still prisoners in the prison — and I mean all prisoners, including the men," she said.

Daily Nebraskan

Questions? Comments? Ask for the appropriate section editor at 472-2588 or e-mail dn@unlinfo.unl.edu.

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FAX NUMBER: 472-1761

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Corrections & Clarifications

An artist's name was misspelled in Monday's Daily Nebraskan. Carlos Frey, not Carlos Reyes, will exhibit his art Friday at Noyes Art Gallery.