

Features

Russians link Atlanta killings to Nazis, poor, jogging

VIENNA, Austria — Depend- on which communist report you read, the killings of black children in Atlanta show the rise of the Nazi Party in the United States, the Reagan Administration's lack of concern for the poor or America's preoccupation with jogging. The Atlanta killings have become important news — and propaganda — in the communist countries of East Europe, discussed in the state-run newspapers, magazines or wire services of East

Germany, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Hungary and the Soviet Union. Czechoslovakia's Communist Party newspaper Rude Pravo, in a broad-stroked article March 21, linked to killings, shootings of black children in the South African township of Soweto, immigration policies of Britain and Adolf Hitler's dream of a master race. "Are the racist murders of black children in Atlanta in the U.S. any less gruesome than the massacre

of schoolchildren in South Africa's Soweto?" it asked. "Discrimination against the non-white population of Great Britain and the unequal position of foreign workers in France are also to be condemned. We all still have in fresh memory the Hitler theory of racial supremacy and what it led to." In Hungary, the newspaper of the state-run trade union Nepszava began a March 29 article objectively, noting there was nothing yet to prove the Atlanta kill-

ings were racially motivated. But it went on to accuse investigators of racism and to blame the Reagan administration for escalating racial tensions by cutting social welfare budgets and showing a lack of concern for the poor. "If white children had been killed, they would have found the criminals," the Hungarian article said. "There is a great danger of racial clashes, which can spread rapidly in the U.S.A. especially because social funds have been cut by the government. The atmosphere in all black ghettos in the U.S.A. is militantly unquiet."

Party newspaper Neues Deutschland and the state-run news agency ADN both recently lamented the killings of "Afro-American children" in Atlanta. In its March 3 report from Washington, ADN managed link them to an increased military budget and military buildup under Reagan. "More than a dozen vicars in (Atlanta) have appealed to the government in Washington to help the people living in fear and catch the murderers instead of arming to the teeth against an alleged enemy outside," ADN said. Romania's foreign policy magazine Lumea made an even stranger tie. In its March 6-12, a column entitled "Substance and Shape" began: "Physical exercise is indispensable for human health." It said Americans, burdened with daily work routines, have become "ever more keen on being in shape."

Its last paragraphs mentioned that two black men were shot while jogging with two white women in Cincinnati, then jumped to Atlanta. "In Atlanta, the police are after a tall, fair man who is supposed to have killed 20 black children in the past 19 months," the foreign policy magazine wrote. "Long live the sporting shape."

Older national health care patients get poorer care

IRVING — A study released last week indicates older patients receive worse health care in countries with national health insurance programs than do the elderly in countries with no comprehensive health plan. The report, authored by two professors from the Center for Health Policy Studies at the University of Dallas, concludes that countries with national health insurance discriminate against the elderly in the treatment of most diseases. John Goodman, director of the center and co-author of the report, said in the 15 countries studied, every one gave preferential treatment to younger patients. With few exceptions, Goodman said, the quality of care given a person under socialized programs decreases as a person gets older.

While not denying that patients are refused certain treatments in the United States, the director noted a further difference between the two systems. "The United States has more of a market for medical care," Goodman said. "A patient can shop around for a doctor and for a hospital, which isn't the case in countries with national health insurance." Goodman believes that only competition will improve the quality of medical care in the countries studied. The biggest tip-off as to what constitutes a country with national health care is the percentage of money spent by the government on health care.

The study's findings show that in the 15 countries with socialized medicine, 84 percent of the money used in the health industry is spent by the government. The average government expenditure for the five non-socialized programs was 54 percent. Goodman sees a lesson for the United States coming from the study. He said the U.S. currently is experiencing "creeping nationalism" and noted the percentage of money spent by the government has doubled in the last twenty years. Goodman said the government expenditures include the Medicare and Medicaid programs, as well as funds spent by state and local governments on health care.

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Goodman, an economist and author of two books on national health programs, said the study compared the programs of 15 countries with socialized medicine: 13 non-communist European nations plus Australia and Japan, with the medical plans of five countries without socialized medicine. The non-socialized countries were the United States, Israel, Spain, Greece and Switzerland. Goodman said where the elderly get short-changed is in the use of expensive medical technology, adding that foreign hospitals are not as well equipped as their American counterparts. "Much of the research for the CAT scan machine was done in Britain, but I bet there are more CAT scans in Dallas than there are in Britain," Goodman said. "In this country, every major hospital has one."

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MSC Town Hall