Colombian official plans resignation after death threats

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Bombs exploded at seven bank offices Sunday in the cocaine trafficking center of Medellin, and newspapers reported the justice minister plans to resign because of death threats against her and her children.

News reports also said an appeals court has revoked an arrest order accusing a top drug lord of ordering two assassinations.

The bomb blasts occurred between 1 a.m. and 2 a.m. at seven branches of the national Banco Cafetero, owned by the state and coffee exporters, a police spokesman in Medellin said.

He said the bombs did $100,000 in damage but caused no injuries.

Bombs were found at four other branches of the same bank and were defused, the spokesman, who demanded anonymity, said.

He said two men were arrested in a car near one of the explosions and were being questioned by detectives.

Police said they were uncertain whether the bombings were carried out by drug traffickers or leftist guerrillas of the National Liberation Army, which has attacked the bank's offices in the past.

Last week, the traffickers declared war on the government after it began a crackdown in response to the assassinations of a magistrate, a police colonel and a leading presidential candidate during a 48-hour period ending Aug. 18.

"We don't have any group in particular that has taken responsibility for the explosions," the spokesman said. Police may learn more after interrogating the two suspects, he said.

Medellin, 215 miles north of Bogota, is the base for the world's biggest cocaine trafficking cartel that is believed to be responsible for 80 percent of the cocaine smuggled into the United States.

The traffickers threatened to target the government, judges, journalists and industrialists because of the government's offensive.

The crackdown by the military has confiscated hundreds of luxurious homes, office buildings and shops believed to belong to traffickers in addition to aircraft, cars and trucks, yachts and other goods.

Authorities said the raids will continue, but so far the cartel bosses have eluded security forces.

Bogota newspapers on Sunday carried unconfirmed reports that Justice Minister Monica de Grieff plans to resign.

She left Friday for Washington, and the daily *El Espectador* said she may remain in the United States.

Another Bogota daily, *El Tiempo*, said Communications Minister Carlos Lemos Simmonds would fill in for de Grieff on a special national council that must decide on the proposed extradition of traffickers.

Protesters: Use of snakes for advertisement cruel

LONDON (AP) — Hundreds of video rental shops on Friday received promotional kits for a horror movie with live snakes inside the packages, and outraged animal protection officials called the stunt "cruel and irresponsible."

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals called on Cinema International Corp. to take back the 700 reptiles.

The snakes were in danger because instructions accompanying the kits had incorrectly said they did not need to be fed for their planned month-long stay in the stores, the society said.

It said it was receiving dozens of calls from unhappy shop owners.

Paul Brett, CIC's marketing manager, said the snakes were intended to be kept in shops to promote a thriller about voodoo called "The Serpent and The Rainbow."

The snakes were bred domestically and the company began sending them out Thursday from its London headquarters, he said.

The snakes, silver with gray stripes, are not poisonous but might carry harmful parasites if they came from abroad, said RSPCA spokeswoman Diana Jones. They needed to be fed weekly, she said.

While admitting there'd been "some confusion," Cinema International denied the snakes would harm anyone or be harmed.

"We've sent out 700 in clear, plastic, aerated boxes as conversation pieces," Brett said. "Snakes make wonderful pets."

The 18- to 24-inch snakes used in the promotion came from a company called Animal Actors, which assured Cinema International they did not have to be fed for three months, he said.

Lawrence Cane, Cinema International's marketing assistant, said, "Whenever we launch a new video title we normally send to our distributors posters, sleeves and cardboard cut-outs. With this film, we decided to send snakes. In marketing terms it's called live points of sale."

Some recipients weren't impressed.

"We felt complete and utter horror," said a London video shop manager, who refused to be identified to protect his relations with the distribution company.

Refresher course may lower risk of car accidents

WASHINGTON (AP) — A California study indicates that older people who take a driver training refresher courses may have fewer traffic convictions and serious accidents than do non-participants.

The report cautioned that drivers who took part in a voluntary program on which the study is based were "a highly self-selected group who would be expected . . . to have lower subsequent accident rates."

Nevertheless, it said, there was "suggestive evidence" that the driver training course helped reduce accident risk.

"We feel the results are quite suggestive and promising," said Ray Peck, director of research for the California Department of Motor Vehicles.

Drivers over age 65 are second only to those age 15 to 24 in traffic accidents, and when the number of miles driven is taken into account, the two groups are almost equal.

Leadership

(Continued from page 1)

"The group clicked a little bit better than in past years," he said. "They seemed to interact better right off the bat — maybe it was because of that crazy bus ride."

Throughout the conference, A&M faculty and staff members and other speakers lectured on such topics as advertising and publicity, creative and innovative thinking and relations with advisers.

The keynote speaker for the conference was Robert Segner, class of '69 and the interim department head for the Department of Construction Science. Segner, a former yell leader, spoke about the qualities of leadership to the A&M student leaders.

Other guest speakers included former Aggie Parents of the Year John and Peggy Erickson and Frank and Joanie Abbott, Vice-President for Student Services Dr. John Koldus, and Jane Mobley.

Among the recreational activities were a square dance, some intramural — type sports, and a theme dance.

Keith Powell, director of activities for the conference, described a unique quality of the conference: "You get to know people very well at FLC, because once you've lived for three days with a group of people and showered, eaten, slept and laughed together, it's a friendship that can never be matched by meeting in a cubicle in the MSC."

Holland said the conference is funded by fees paid by those leaders in attendance, and by fund raising, consisting of contributions from former students, many of whom attended the conference in past years, and endowments from corporations.

Joe Holland, director of fund raising for the FLC committee, said M.D. Andersen Foundation and Houston Endowment were two major contributors to the organization.

The attending student leaders had many positive comments about the conference. Kim Roberts, public relations executive for MSC Hospitality said the conference helped prepare her for the upcoming year. For Roberts, the most important aspect of the retreat was "to build that 'Aggie network' and have 'FUN' — friendly unstructured networking."

James Johnson, chairman of FLC in 1987, commented on the change in the caliber of student leaders attending the conference.

"The people here are more aware of their relationship with the faculty and what they expect of them," Johnson said.

Henry also commented on the success of the conference and the quality of students.

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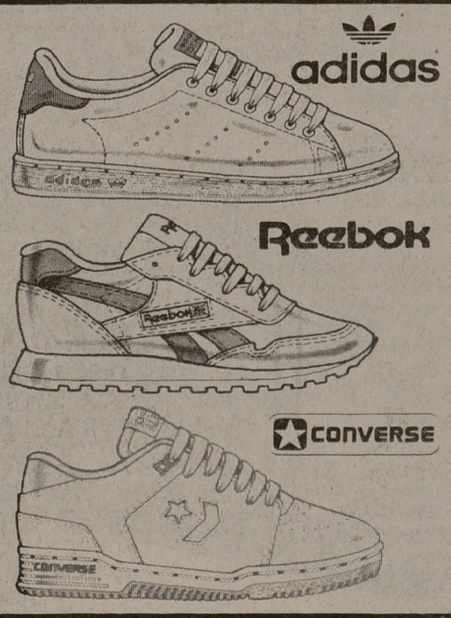

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