

Friday, June 22, 1990

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- *infected cuts
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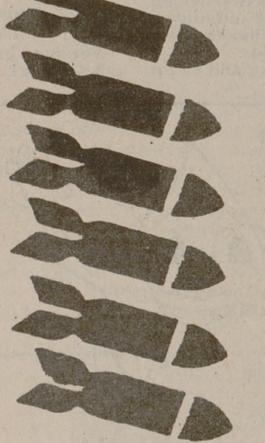
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East German parliament votes to merge economy with West

BONN, West Germany (AP) — East German lawmakers Thursday overwhelmingly approved economic merger with West Germany, ending four decades of failed socialism and taking their biggest and most difficult step toward unification.

"After over 40 years of painful separation, the hopes of the people of Germany for the unity and freedom of all Germans are about to be fulfilled," West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl told lawmakers in his country.

Kohl asked West Germany's Parliament to also pass the historic economic treaty and promise that Poland's western borders were secure. Earlier in the day, East Germany declared a united Germany would not seek to reclaim former lands lost to Poland after World War II.

After the 302-82 vote on the economic treaty was announced in East Berlin, East German lawmakers rose in a standing ovation. There was one abstention.

The Greens and the PDS, the successor party of the old East German Communists, Bundnis

90, which led the fall revolution, rejected the treaty that outlines the monetary and economic merger of the two Germans by July 2.

The two German parliaments met simultaneously in their respective capitals to take final action on the treaty.

Members of the West German Bundestag, the powerful lower house of parliament, debated the measures throughout the day, and a vote was not expected until late Thursday. The upper house of the West German parliament planned to take up the treaty Friday and passage was also expected there.

Kohl urged unanimous approval of the economic merger.

"The treaty shows the way to German unity, and whoever doesn't follow this road sign doesn't want unity," he said.

"For the people in Germany, this will make unity come true in vital areas of their daily existence," he said. "Whoever rejects the treaty also rejects our compatriots in the German Democratic Republic."

Under the treaty, the powerful West German mark becomes the currency of both countries by July 2, and East Germany moves from socialism to capitalism.

East German wages, salaries and pensions will be converted to West German marks at a 1-1 exchange rate. The exchange rate for savings deposits varies with age, with a maximum of \$300 at the 1-1 rate for those over 60.

West Germany's main opposition party, the left-leaning Social Democrats, criticized the treaty, saying it fails to adequately protect East Germans who face economic hardship in the transition from socialism to a free market.

But their chairman, Hans-Jochen Vogel, told the Bundestag a majority would approve the treaty. Failure to do so would be too much of a shock to East German expectations and could lead to "uncontrollable developments," he said.

The leftist Greens party argued against passage, saying the treaty would not bring the two Germans closer together, but would create newer and deeper forms of division by making East Germany a dependent institution.

Supreme Court reinstates man's life sentence

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court has reinstated a Texas man's life sentence in the sexual assault of a young woman.

The court on Thursday unanimously overturned a federal appeals court ruling that said the defendant, Carroll Youngblood, is entitled to a new trial.

The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled last year that Youngblood must be retried because his life sentence was combined improperly with a \$10,000 fine.

The appeals court said that at the time of his conviction Texas law did not allow sentences that included both prison terms and fines.

But Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, in his opinion for the high court, said Youngblood's rights were not violated.

Youngblood was convicted of abducting a 20-year-old woman from her home and forcing her to drive to a secluded area where he sexually assaulted her.

Party chief accuses critics of slander Conservative Communists threaten Gorbachev's future

MOSCOW (AP) — President Mikhail S. Gorbachev accused his hard-line critics of slander Thursday and faced the prospect that one of them would be elected head of the Russian republic's Communist Party.

Gorbachev was put on the defensive for a third day when a Leningrad economist claimed he did not obtain party approval to switch the Soviet Union to a market economy.

"To consider that this idea and program dropped from the sky, or that somebody is undertaking an overnight coup to change our course, that is slander," Gorbachev told the Congress of Russian Communists. A nationwide broadcast showed him angrily waving his hand in the air as he spoke.

Numerous conservatives at the meeting, which began Tuesday, have attacked the 59-year-old Kremlin chief's political and economic reforms. The hard-liners have indicated they will try to replace Gorbachev as party leader at a national party congress starting July 2.

Gorbachev also might have to deal with a conservative party leader in Russia, the largest of the 15 Soviet republics.

Nearly all the seven candidates announced Thursday for first secretary of the Russian party are conservatives. Four of them gave election speeches, and the front-runner appeared to be Ivan Polozkov, one of Gorbachev's critics and one of Boris Yeltsin's unsuccessful opponents in the race for the presidency of the Russian republic.

Polozkov, the 55-year-old party chief of the southern Russian region of Krasnodar, received the most applause. At the urging of delegates, he was allowed to speak at least three times longer than the other three candidates who addressed the delegates.

Polozkov has called for strict party discipline, condemned informal political groups, complained that older party members are not respected and cracked down on cooperatives — private businesses introduced by Gorbachev.

In a speech Wednesday, he blamed the party's falling credibility in part on Gorbachev's reform program.

"The crisis is not just in the Communist Party, but above all in its leading bodies," he said.

On Thursday, Polozkov portrayed himself as a moderate intent on saving the party "from reprisals on the inside from the left and right."

He denied he opposed democratic forces or cooperatives.

Gorbachev did not comment on the candidates for Russian party chief but did shoot back at hard-liners who accuse him of taking the party out of the decision-making process. He cited numerous meetings of the party leadership where officials decided on the need for radical economic reform, including a market economy.

"Don't be suspicious that something is being done secretly to turn the rails and move the country in the direction of capitalism," Gorbachev said.

Senate upholds Bush's veto of Hatch Act

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate barely upheld on Thursday President Bush's veto of a bill to broaden the political rights of millions of government workers.

The 65-35 vote on the Hatch Act fell two short of the two-thirds majority needed to override.

Three Republicans who originally voted for the bill switched sides to support Bush on the veto vote. All 55 Senate Democrats voted to override the veto.

White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater said, "We are pleased that that vote was sustained. We felt that it incorrectly politicized the civil service."

The president vetoed the bill last

Friday, saying it "would inevitably lead to politicizing the federal work force" and "destroy its essential political neutrality."

The House, with nearly half of its Republicans bolting the administration, voted 327-93 on Wednesday to override Bush's veto.

The legislation would have allowed 3 million federal and postal workers to, on their own time, attend political conventions and caucuses as delegates and to speak at rallies on behalf of candidates.

It also would have removed a ban on federal workers holding offices in local, state or national political organizations or from soliciting donations from co-workers for federal

employee and postal union political action committees.

The workers would still have been prohibited from taking leaves of absence to seek elected public office or soliciting campaign contributions from the general public or on behalf of a specific candidate.

One sponsor, Sen. David Pryor, D-Ark., said after the vote he would try to extend the Hatch Act prohibitions on political activity for federal workers to presidential appointees.

Senate GOP leaders portrayed the bill during the debate on override as an election-year bonanza for Democrats.

Democrats "want to get this bill passed before this election," said Mi-

nority Leader Bob Dole of Kansas. He said federal employee and postal union political action committees funneled 88 percent of their campaign contributions in the 1988 election to Democrats.

"The PAC heads of the Letter Carriers and others (unions) want more power to raise more money to give to Democrats," Dole said. "That's how it works around here: money is power."

Vincent Sombrotto, president of the 315,000-member Letter Carrier union, said Bush's "strong-arm tactics" to get Republicans to switch their votes "places him in the same league as the world's most oppressive dictators."

Conference stirs AIDS controversy Scientist: AZT slows infection

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Quick treatment with the drug AZT in the earliest stages of AIDS infection can significantly slow the lethal disease, according to research presented Thursday at the Sixth International Conference on AIDS.

The study appears to provide the strongest evidence yet that early intervention can stall the emergence of full-blown AIDS in people infected with HIV, the AIDS virus.

"We have to come to the conclusion that the greatest advantage has to accrue with early intervention," said Dr. Margaret Fischl. "It has to occur as early as possible in HIV infection."

Fischl, a researcher at the University of Miami, pioneered the use of AZT in people who already have AIDS. However, most infected people are still outwardly healthy. So Fischl and other teams around the country have been exploring the risks and advantages of giving the medicine before AIDS infection reaches its final stages.

The conference opened Wednesday amid angry protests by thousands of demonstrators frustrated over the slow pace of progress in controlling the disease.

Fischl's recommendation is likely to be controversial. During the past year, some researchers have begun to question whether AZT, the only approved AIDS drug, should be reserved for use during the later stages of the disease.

The medicine interferes with the reproduction of HIV. When given to people with AIDS, the drug loses its punch within two or three years as the virus becomes resistant to it.

Some doctors believe that if given early in the disease, AZT will be powerless to slow the disease once AIDS develops.

Fischl's conclusions were based on patients who were infected with HIV but had not developed any major symptoms of AIDS. She found that significantly fewer progressed to AIDS if they got the drug without delay.

Several other reports presented Thursday focused on how the infection is transmitted.

Dr. Nancy Padian of the University of California, San Francisco, found that women who have sex with AIDS-infected men are 12 times more likely to catch the virus than are men who are sexually exposed to infected women.

Among other research presented:

- Dr. Rachel Royce of the University of California, Berkeley, reported circumstantial evidence that cigarette smoking may speed up the development of AIDS in people who are already infected with HIV.

- HIV-infected mothers run a high risk of passing the virus to their babies before birth. Now, a Soviet study has found that infected babies can also pose a hazard to their uninfected mothers.

- Dr. Tom Peterman from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control reported that bisexuality appears to be an important source of AIDS infection in the Army.

He and Army researchers reviewed 43 soldiers who developed AIDS infections.

Twenty-one admitted to high-risk activities, and of these 18 said they had sexual contact with other men. Most of these men had sex with women, as well.

Alaskans play all day on solstice

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — The year's longest day for many residents of northern latitudes consisted of midnight barbecues and 3 a.m. softball games.

In the north of Alaska and other parts of the north, summer solstice — June 21 — brings 24 hours of daylight and one of the year's most celebrated times. The clanging of cream trucks can be heard late into the evening. To the delight of children, bedtime never seems to come.

Along the Arctic coast, the sun has been up since May 11, arcing through the sky. It will set again Aug. 2. Even as far south as Anchorage, twilight lasts all night though the sun does set for about 3 1/2 hours.

North of the Arctic Circle, in communities along the Arctic Ocean such as Barrow and Wainwright, residents in summer hunt and fish work and play all day.

Recreation begins after dinner, often as late as 1 a.m. or 2 a.m. Softball and volleyball games are continuous.

"We just don't sleep. Your body feels like it doesn't need sleep," said Eric Loring, an anthropologist in Anchorage.