



### Top Stories

#### McDonald's petitions Oxford English Dictionary to remove the word McJob

Unhappy with the OED's definition of McJob, McDonald's is petitioning to have it changed. The company is also lobbying the UK Parliament.

#### Illinois law means end to horse slaughter in US

Legislation banning the slaughter of horses for human consumption in Illinois, was signed into law today by Governor Blagojevich. This will close the last horse slaughterhouse in the US.

### Featured story

#### Exclusive video interview with New Zealand Opposition leader, John Key

John Key, New Zealand's Leader of the Opposition, and leader of the National Party, posted a video response after being sent questions by Wikinews. Key discusses how and why he participates in video blogging, and shares the details of his video blogging activities and future plans to make use of so-called 'new media'.

### Wikipedia Current Events

- The widow of Anthony Ashley-Cooper, 10th Earl of Shaftesbury is found guilty of his murder together with her brother.
- Six foreign oil workers (two British, three American and one South African) have been

### Wikipedia Current Events

kidnapped in Nigeria.

- Japanese sources tell the Kyodo news agency that North Korea has test-fired several missiles towards the Sea of Japan.

- The Ukraine's political crisis worsens after the President of Ukraine Viktor Yushchenko fires the prosecutor general Svyatoslav Piskun. Piskun has defied the order and his supporters have occupied government buildings.

- NASDAQ agrees to buy OMX AB which runs several stock exchanges in Scandinavia and the Baltic States for 25.1 billion kronor.

- Exit polls indicate that Taoiseach Bertie Ahern's Fianna Fáil leads in the Irish General Election.

- The IAF carried out an air strike near the residence of Palestinian Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh. The IDF said that the air strike was not targeting the Prime Minister, and was on a structure used by Hamas, located in the Shati refugee camp. Local residents said that a IAF missile hit a vehicle patrolling Haniyeh's home in Gaza, and that the attack wounded one person.

- The Ostankino Tower has once again caught fire. The BBC reports that the fire is believed to be not as serious as that in 2000 and was isolated to a platform on the outside of the tower. The fire was successfully extinguished, with no casualties.

#### McDonald's petitions Oxford English Dictionary to remove the word McJob

The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines McJob as "an unstimulating, low-paid job with few prospects." The McDonald's fast-food giant has begun a campaign to have the word removed from the dictionary, or to have its definition changed, by lobbying British MPs. The company has also set up an online petition with the slogan "Change the definition. Sign the petition."

Clive Betts, MP for Sheffield Attercliffe agrees with the restaurant chain. Betts has tabled a Commons motion on the issue. The motion has so far gained the support of 15 other Mps. "It is indicating that the jobs they are doing are worthless, that anyone could just walk in off the street and do them, that all workers are untrained. We do need well trained staff with good customer relations and I think the description is derogatory. The hospitality industry is very important to this country. The people who work there are the public face of this country to millions of tourists who come here every year. One thing I am interested to hear from McDonald's is that they do train their staff. They put a lot of effort into that."— Clive Betts, MP

The compilers of the OED point out that they merely record the description of how the word is used, rather than prescribe how it should be used. The term, McJob, has been in usage a least 20

years, they say. It was popularised in 1991 in Douglas Coupland's novel *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture* as one of the margin definitions. Here it was described as "a low-pay, low-prestige, low-dignity, low benefit, no-future job in the service sector. Frequently considered a satisfying career choice by people who have never held one."

In 2003, Merriam-Webster included *McJob* in the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, and defined it as "a low-paying job that requires little skill and provides little opportunity for advancement." This definition prompted a letter from then CEO Jim Cantalupo who said it was "an inaccurate description of restaurant employment" and "slap in the face" of restaurant employees.

### **Illinois law means end to horse slaughter in US**

Legislation banning the slaughter of horses for human consumption in Illinois, was signed into law today by Governor Rod Blagojevich.

"It's past time to stop slaughtering horses in Illinois and sending their meat overseas. I'm proud to sign this law that finally puts an end to this practice," Governor Blagojevich said.

Most states in the United States have already outlawed horse slaughter. Illinois was the last state with an operating slaughterhouse. At the beginning of the year there were also two slaughterhouses in Texas. Although that state has had a ban since 1949, but it was not being enforced. A lawsuit ended with the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit declining to hear further appeals, forcing them to

shut down in March.

Sid Miller, a State Representative in Texas and the chairperson for the House Agriculture and Livestock Committee, has sponsored legislation to repeal the 1949 ban. However, his last proposal died in committee.

"People were selling horses not knowing that they were being used and treated like livestock and ended up on the slaughter room floor," said Illinois Senator John Cullerton. "This bill will ensure that using horses for the purpose of human consumption is illegal throughout the State of Illinois just as it is in 48 other states in the nation."

"There is no domestic market for horsemeat and, therefore, no need for this practice to continue in Illinois," State Agriculture Director Chuck Hartke said. "Meat from the slaughtered horses is being shipped overseas to places like Belgium, France and Japan."

Wayne Pacelle of the Humane Society of the United States told CBS News that 100,800 horses were slaughtered in the United States, last year, with a further 30,000 horses being sent to Canada and Mexico for slaughter.

Opponents of the new law say horses should be considered to be in the same category as cattle or other livestock. They say that horses are killed humanely. They point out that the slaughterhouses provide jobs.

The consumption of horse meat has a long history, but in some cultures it is considered taboo. Some places it is a delicacy, and yet others it is just another staple food.

### **Bird dumps on Bush; press corps cackles**

United States President George W. Bush received an unwelcome gift from an overhead-flying sparrow, which deposited a fresh batch of its feces on the left sleeve of Bush's suit.

Bush was addressing the American press in the White House's Rose Garden. The incident occurred just as Bush said "I've got confidence in Al Gonzales doin' the job," referring to a question asked by a reporter about the controversial dismissal of several U.S. attorneys. Bush then tried to remove the offending material several times with his hand.

Deputy Press Secretary Dana Perino said the 'poo-drop' signified good luck saying, "It was his lucky day...everyone knows that's a sign of good luck." On the whole the media coverage of the incident has been lighthearted and humorous.

### **Pentagon report reflects concerns over China's increased military**

The United States Department of Defense has today released its annual report to the United States Congress, called the Military Power of the People's Republic of China, which assesses the military of the People's Republic of China. The report documents a steady increase in China's military budget allowing for increased deployment of resources and technology. "I don't think it [the report] does any arm-waving, I don't think it does any exaggeration of the threat. But it paints a picture of a country that is devoting substantial resources to the military and developing, as I say, some very sophisticated capabilities. We wish that there were greater transparency, that they would talk more about what their intentions

are, what their strategies are. It would be nice to hear first hand from the Chinese how they view some of these things.”

— Robert Gates, United States Secretary of Defense

The report details China's development of five new nuclear ballistic missile submarines (SSBN) called Jin-class submarines that will each be outfitted with 12 5,000-mile-range JL-2 missiles, the 2007 Chinese anti-satellite missile test, vastly improving China's nuclear missile strike capabilities with a new mobile land-based DF-31A intercontinental ballistic missile that could target the whole United States and a directed deployment of forces that can be used beyond a regional conflict in Taiwan. “If China puts these systems in place effectively on the scale reported in sea-basing and land-basing, it will now have a robust second-strike capability. What was grey before now is becoming clear. China now can effectively fight a nuclear war.”

— Lyle Goldstein, China Maritime Studies Institute at the US Naval War College

The United States military considers the Chinese build-up a serious threat, with a need for increased preparation in the region. “The U.S. needs to stay well out ahead of any potential adversary so that we are properly prepared, should somebody's intent change, to deal with that threat when it rises.”— General Peter Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

The previous 2006 years report stated China's build-up focused on the political status of Taiwan. China has said it would attack Taiwan if the self-ruled island, which Beijing views as a renegade province, formally declares

independence; however, with years of significant growth in arms spending that gave it the ability to project power beyond Taiwan. President Hu Jintao stated on Wednesday his country must build a more modern armed forces to safeguard their national security. “President Hu Jintao probably does not appreciate the effect on the US that his military leaders' new deployments will have. These Chinese steps only play into the hands of our hardliners and push the US towards worst-case scenarios. The Chinese have an apt proverb: 'Don't pick up a rock and drop it on your own feet.' President Hu needs to cut back this development and head off a cold-war style arms race.”— Mike Pillsbury, Pentagon consultant on the Chinese military

In 2005, Chinese General Zhu Chenghu threatened the United States with nuclear weapons. The comment created concerns of a strategic stance change for China's weapon's of mass destruction. Chinese officials later restated the country's “no first use” policy and have privately played down Zhu's influence. Some analysts have suggested China's ballistic missiles could be partly in response to US plans to develop a National Missile Defense system.” There was something to the argument that China was simply responding to US nuclear capabilities. The Chinese were more concerned about US stealth capabilities and cruise missiles and that its naval development was driven more by internal political logic. The Chinese have maintained that they have a ‘no first use’ policy [for nuclear weapons] and that they have a minimal deterrent policy, which means they have only enough nuclear capability to retaliate, but open source journals and discussions and their own

modernisation suggest that they are possibly developing capabilities for a more flexible use of nuclear weapons, and survivability and tactical uses that would call into question this declared policy.”

— Michael Green , former senior Asia adviser to President George W. Bush

### **US President Bush nominates new surgeon general**

Yesterday, United States President George W. Bush nominated James W. Holsinger as the next Surgeon General of the United States. “Today, I have announced my intention to nominate James W. Holsinger, Jr., to serve as the 18th Surgeon General of the United States. Dr. Holsinger is an accomplished physician who has led one of our Nation's largest healthcare systems, the State of Kentucky's healthcare system, and the University of Kentucky's medical center.” — George W. Bush

Since August 1, 2006, Kenneth P. Moritsugu has been the acting surgeon general. Richard Carmona was the last surgeon general. He left when his four year term expired at the end of July, 2006.

### **Protesters turn their backs on Australian PM**

Protesters in the Central Western New South Wales city of Bathurst gave Australian Prime Minister John Howard a cold reception as he arrived for a Liberal Party luncheon in the city.

Around 200 unionists and university students gathered to protest the Howard government's new industrial relations regime called Workchoices, the lack of funding for higher education and the introduction of Voluntary Student Unionism.

Protesters claimed that the

Howard government had ignored rural and regional Australia. Daniel Walton, the community campaign co-ordinator for Macquarie Your Rights at Work told Wikinews that Mr Howard was only interested in Bathurst after it had been moved to a marginal seat.

"In the 11 years Howard has been Prime Minister not once has he visited Bathurst", he said.

"Now Bathurst is in the seat of Macquarie, which is seen as a marginal electorate, Mr Howard is suddenly interested in the city".

The strongly blue-collar cities of Bathurst and Lithgow were relocated to the Macquarie electorate, previously considered a safe Liberal seat after an electorate redistribution.

Mr Howard was in Bathurst campaigning for the re-election of Kerry Bartlett and was a special guest at an invite-only Liberal Party fundraiser costing AUD\$95 per person. The luncheon was attended by 400 members of Bathurst's business community.

Unionists responded by offering a \$0.95 "worker's lunch" across the street.

Before the luncheon, Mr Howard held a community morning tea at the Mount Panorama motor racing circuit, promising funding of \$10 million to investigate planning, engineering and environmental issues surrounding the construction of an expressway over the Blue Mountains following the Bells Line of Road route. Mr Howard said this funding was contingent upon the NSW government matching the federal government's contribution and would be available under Auslink II from 2009.

Prior to the Prime Minister's arrival at the luncheon, protesters called those attending the luncheon "Chumps", booing at and calling MP Kerry Bartlett a "loser" when he walked outside. Unionists also chanted slogans such as "Workers united, we'll never be defeated" and "Johnie Howard is a twerp, he wants to take our rights at work".

As Howard arrived at the luncheon, protesters held up their placards and turned their backs on Mr Howard, claiming to be doing the same as his government had done to ordinary workers.

Michael Foggarty from the Public Service Association said while big business could afford luxuries such as a \$95 lunch, workers were struggling.

"They might be able to afford \$95 for lunch, but when you have workers on as low as \$13 an hour that is a lot of money, ordinary workers are struggling under Workchoices", he told Wikinews.

Mr Foggarty added that rising interest rates and petrol prices were having an impact on working families.

Giving a speech at the luncheon, Mr Howard said those wishing to dismantle the government's industrial relations reforms were rolling back a "major economic reform". Mr Howard said both Workchoices and the removal of unfair dismissal laws had reduced unemployment and generated prosperity.

### **New environmental housing regulations for Western Australia**

The Western Australian Government has announced that after September 1st 2007 all

construction approvals for new homes must comply with new Enviromental regulations. The new regulations known as Five Star Plus will be implemented in two stages.

Michelle Roberts minister for Housing and Works announced that the first stage would increase the cost of a new house by around A\$1000 with a second stage to commence next year. "People building new houses should remember these costs would be offset by ongoing savings in water and energy bills of up to \$750 per year." she said

The first stage aims to reduce greenhouse gas omissions by 129,000 tonnes over five years. Ms Roberts said "This is the equivalent of taking 30,000 cars off the road, and (has) the same benefit achieved by planting 15 trees per household."

The first stage requires house to have a range of measures including Solar, or five star rated gas or heat pump hot waters systems.

"It is estimated that if all homes in WA upgraded to the Five Star Plus standards, there would be water savings of 30 gicalitres over five years," she said. by requiring water efficient taps, showerheads and dual flush toilets. As well as all new swimming pools will be required to have a pool blanket which reduce evaporation.

The second stage will require the design to include alternative water supplies like rain water tanks and grey water diversion systems.

### **Ostankino Tower catches fire in Moscow**

Early this morning, Ostankino Tower in Moscow, Russia, caught

fire for the second time since August 2000, due to sparks from welding work on a balcony which set fire to insulation. BBC News Online reported that the fire is not currently considered to have been as serious as the fire seven years ago that killed three and left homes without television for many days. Everyone present in the tower at the time was successfully evacuated. The fire was first isolated to a platform on the outside of the tower and later successfully extinguished, with no casualties or disruptions to any television signals around Moscow.

### **Exclusive interview with New Zealand republican, Lewis Holden**

Wikinewsie Gabriel Pollard interviewed Lewis Holden, the chair of the Republican Movement and a noted blogger who writes about New Zealand's constitution from a republican's perspective. [He is not to be confused with New Zealand economist Lewis Holden.]

In New Zealand, Queen Elizabeth II is the de jure head-of-state, holding the title Queen of New Zealand, despite having very little actual political influence. Surveys sometimes conducted shows that one in three New Zealanders generally support a republic in New Zealand. Holden, living in Auckland, New Zealand, says that it is a way for New Zealanders to show that New Zealand is truly an independent country, standing on and emphasising our own strong tradition of democracy and politics. "I believe a republic is important to mark New Zealand's place on the map."

"The issue isn't that the Queen is doing a bad job, it's that she's doing the wrong job – the position of Sovereign has become symbolically out of step with New

Zealand's aspirations for itself."

In 1997, after reading the book *New Zealand: Republic* by Alan Cook and Barry Wheelan, Holden became a republican, three years after he first heard about it in a speech by former New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger.

23-year-old Holden decided to start his fifth website, *Holden Republic*, mainly due to his interests in republicanism the Internet in general, and being a debater at heart.

As a way to help New Zealand make its mark on the map, Holden says that the international confusion over New Zealand needs to be cleared up. "Some think we're part of Australia, some think we're a colony of Britain and others just don't know we exist." He also cites that there is confusion over our Governor-General (currently being served by Anand Satyand). He gives Greenland as an example of a country with a governor-general, but is under direct rule from Denmark. He also says that people often think that as a result of New Zealand becoming a republic, the flag will have to change, but says that this is also not true, and needs to be clarified, "My own personal view is that change should only be by referendum(s), perhaps with different designs put to the New Zealand public – as to when that happens, before or after we become a republic, I don't know." Fiji's flag still retains the Union Jack, despite being a republic since 1987, and Hawaii retaining the Union Jack as well despite being a state of the U.S..

Despite being a strong supporter of a republic, he believes that neither monarchists, nor republicans are the better patriot,

"monarchists say republicans are disloyal to the Queen, republicans say monarchists are disloyal to New Zealand." He does believe that both have New Zealand's future at heart, but have different views and conclusions about it. He does say that he has often been labelled as a "traitor", and admits once that he was threatened with sedition charges, but "It never would have flown."

Although he is not sure whether or not his blog has actually helped his cause, "I'd like to think so, but I can't really say for sure." But he does know that several other blogs such as *Kiwiblog*, *NZ Monarchy* and *Queen and Country* have now joined the debate over the possibility of New Zealand becoming a republic. Creating the *Holden Republic* blog, Holden says, was a way for him to articulate the case of New Zealand becoming a republic.

In 2003, Holden became involved with the Republican Movement, a member of *Common Cause*, and is now the chairman. During his course of involvement with the organisation, he has helped with research and analysis. When he was elected to be the chair of the organisation, he pondered about shutting down the blog, but his readers urged him keep going.

"Common Cause is a group through which Commonwealth republican groups can work together to share information and ideas."

Lewis Holden says he is, despite not being a big petrol head, a Holden fan; of course.

### **Man attempts to bring 700 snakes onto a plane**

Yahia Rahim Tulba was a passenger attempting to travel

from Cairo, Egypt to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia with at least 700 snakes of various types in a carry-on bag, according to customs officers at Cairo International Airport.

When Tulba attempted to pass the customs checkpoint, officers had him open his luggage and his carry-on bag, but only after they noticed movement and heard hissing coming from Tulba's bag. When he opened the bag, it revealed various snakes and at least two separate smaller bags containing cobras.

According to customs officials, Tulba was going to attempt to sell the snakes once he arrived in Saudi Arabia. Officials took possession of the snakes and arrested him charging him with "violating the national export laws" and "endangering the lives of the passengers" in the airport.

### Today in History

1805 - Napoléon Bonaparte was crowned King of Italy at the Milan Cathedral with the Iron Crown of Lombardy.

1896 - The Dow Jones Industrial Average was first published by Charles Dow as a stock market index.

1918 - The Democratic Republic of Georgia was proclaimed.

1972 - Richard Nixon and Leonid Brezhnev signed the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in Moscow, concluding SALT I.

1986 - The European Community adopted the European flag.

May 26 is Independence Day in Guyana (1966) and Georgia (1918); Mother's Day in Poland; National Sorry Day in Australia.

### Quote of the Day

I'm not a fan of classification. It's very difficult to come up with a classification scheme that's useful when what you're most interested

in is things that don't fit in, things that you didn't expect.

~ Ward Cunningham

### Word of the Day

annular; adj

1. Ring-shaped.

### About Wikinews

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(toll-free in the U.S.)  
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(outside the U.S.)  
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