CBC Radio Show Program Logs

Show: **AS IT HAPPENS**
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Nov 28, 2006 - As It Happens

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POPE IN TURKEY **Duration: 00:08:21**

From the moment his plane touched down at Ankara Airport early this morning, fifteen-thousand Turkish police went on high alert. Snipers took up their positions, and decoy motorcades went into action -- all part of the extensive security measures in place for the four-day visit to Turkey by Pope Benedict XVI.
The trip was arranged, in part, so that the Pope could meet the spiritual leader of the Orthodox Christian Church. But it's also a bid to build bridges to the country's seventy-million Muslims. During a September visit to Germany, Pope Benedict enraged Muslims when he characterized Islam as a violent religion. And in recent days, tens of thousands of Muslims have taken to the streets, to protest the papal visit.
Tracy Wilkinson is the Rome correspondent for the Los Angeles Times. Ms. Wilkinson was on the Pope's plane when it touched down in Ankara, which is where we've reached her tonight.

FTR: RAE ON NATION **Duration: 00:01:30**

A rose is a rose is a rose. But when is a nation a nation? And is a Quebecker the same as a Quebecois? What does it all mean?
These are the semantic, and political, questions dominating Parliament Hill these days. Sure, the motion to recognize the "Quebecois" as "a nation within a united Canada" passed easily yesterday. But today, it seems that figuring out just what the motion means is proving plus difficile.
For his part, constitutional warhorse and Liberal leadership candidate Bob Rae has had enough. During a news conference this morning, Mr. Rae was asked what he thought the motion's wording meant. For the record, here is some of what he had to say.

FTR: HOGG ON NATION **Duration: 00:01:25**

Today, the Liberal motion that started this whole nation-within-a-nation debate was withdrawn from the agenda for the upcoming leadership convention.
Why the removal? Well, the man who put forth the original Liberal motion took credit for prompting the House of Commons vote, declared victory, and said his motion was no longer needed. Liberal riding association president William Hogg made his withdrawal announcement to reporters this morning. The reporters listened politely to Mr. Hogg -- then asked him if he could please explain what the government's motion means.
For the record, here is some of what Mr. Hogg had to say earlier today in Montreal.

TB: NATION MOTION **Duration: 00:01:38**

Last night, the PM's political lieutenant for Quebec tried. Oh, how he tried. Conservative cabinet minister Lawrence Cannon explained that a Quebecois nation was made up of all Quebecois -- not English Quebeckers. But, when pressed, he admitted it could include English Quebeckers. And, perhaps, French-speaking Quebeckers who now live outside Quebec.
Other Quebec MPs said no, the definition was limited to those who choose to stay and live in Quebec. So it's a Quebec nation that is ethnically or, maybe, linguistically defined in a geographical kind of way? Or perhaps the Prime Minister's own definition will help. He says the motion simply recognizes Quebecois as a nation in a "cultural sociological" sense. Ookay.
The one thing we do know is that the Quebecois, or Quebeckers, in the nation are not the only ones scratching their heads over this. So can anyone explain what is a nation and who is a Quebecois?
Talkback gets the last word.

FTR - UN CHILD SOLDIER **Duration: 00:02:01**

When Ishmael Beah was eleven, life as he knew it changed forever. Civil war broke out in his native Sierra Leone, and his parents and two brothers were killed. Like thousands of other children in Sierra Leone, Ishmael was recruited to fight as a child soldier. He was then just thirteen.
For almost three years, he fought -- seeing and doing things that most children in the rest of the world could never begin to imagine. Today, Ishmael was a guest speaker at a United Nations panel discussion on children and armed conflict. Here is a part of what he had to say, for the record.

TEXAS GERMAN **Duration: 00:06:07**

Few states evoke such powerful imagery as the Lone Star State. The wide-open spaces; the oil derricks dotting the landscape; steaming bratwurst with sauerkraut; and, of course, cowboys in lederhosen singing "Don't Fenz Me In".
Now, I suppose for some of you, these are not the first images of Texas that spring to mind. But that's because you don't know Texas like Dr. Hans Boas. Dr. Boas is a Professor of German Linguistics at the University of Texas.
And he's currently trying to preserve examples of the dialect called "Texas German" -- before it's time to say "Auf Wiedersehen" to the regional language for good. We reached Dr. Boas in Austin, Texas.

A-G REPORT **Duration: 00:06:44**

Ron Stewart, the former Ottawa Roughriders halfback, is no stranger to rough tackling. But today, years after his football heyday, he was hit hard -- and he may not entirely recover.
Auditor General Sheila Fraser released a new report accusing him of shirking his duties, skipping work and collecting hundreds of thousands of dollars in questionable salary. Not as a football player, of course -- but as Canada's ombudsman for federal prisons.
To tell us more about Mr. Stewart -- and some of her other findings -- we've reached the Auditor General herself.
Sheila Fraser is in Ottawa.

SUDAN & UN **Duration: 00:08:28**

It's hard to put much faith in any good news about Darfur these days. So optimism was muted when U-N Secretary General Kofi Annan announced two weeks ago that the government of Sudan had agreed to allow a joint U-N/African Union peacekeeping force into the region.
And as it turns out, the news was just too good to be true. Last night, Sudan's president rejected the plans for the hybrid mission, saying he would only allow African Union troops to patrol the region. But the undermanned and underfunded A-U force currently in Darfur has so far been unable to stop the rapid escalation of violence.
Ali al-Sadek is a spokesperson for Sudan's Foreign Ministry. He is in Khartoum.

SC. & MUSIC: ROBERT MCFERRIN OBIT **Duration: 00:02:01**

His baritone voice made him a pioneer, when he became the first black male soloist to perform with the New York Metropolitan Opera. Robert McFerrin Sr. died Friday in St. Louis, Missouri. He was 85.
His jazz-vocalist and conductor son, Bobby McFerrin -- whose hit "Don't Worry Be Happy" topped the charts in 1988 -- is now the more famous of the two. But in 1955, McFerrin Sr. made headlines with his debut as Amonsaro in the Metropolitan Opera's production of "Aida". The role made him only the second black performer to become a regular member of the then-seventy-year-old company, just three weeks after black contralto Marian Anderson made her historic debut.
Robert McFerrin Sr. was born in 1921, in Marianna, Arkansas, the fourth of eight children. His Baptist-minister father discouraged his singing anything but gospel music. In 1936, however, the family moved to St. Louis, and his high school music teacher introduced him to classical vocal music when he auditoned for the school choir.
After receiving an undergraduate degree from the Chicago College of Music in 1946, McFerrin moved to New York. He landed Broadway roles in the revival of "Green Pastures" and "Lost in the Stars", and it was with the National Negro Opera Company he first took on the role of Amonsara. At the time, Philadelphia Orchestra conductor Eugene Ormandy passionately proclaimed him to be "as great as any baritone before the public today."
In 1953, McFerrin enrolled in the Metropolitan Auditions of the Air, a radio program featuring young singers competing to make the Met's working roster -- a kind of "American Idol" for the operatic talent of the day. The judges unanimously awarded McFerrin the first prize: a contract with the company. After his critically-lauded debut in "Aida", McFerrin remained with the Met for three seasons, performing in a total of ten operas, including the title role in "Rigoletto". And in 1959, he sang for Sidney Poitier's on-screen portrayal of Porgy in the film version of "Porgy and Bess".
More recently, McFerrin performed as a vocal soloist, when his son conducted the St. Louis Symphony in 1993. A stroke four years earlier resulted in speech problems, but McFerrin kept singing for many years. He was honoured by Opera America in 2003, by which time his doctors suspected he was suffering from Alzheimer's.
Bobby McFerrin had this to say about his father: "His work influenced everything I do musically. When I direct a choir, I go for his sound. His musical influence was absolutely profound. I cannot do anything without me hearing his voice."
That voice will live on for many years to come. Here now is Robert McFerrin Sr., performing the spiritual "Ain't Got Time to Die."

BE A SLOUCH **Duration: 00:05:02**

Here's a story that will make your back-bone slide.
All that haranguing you got from teachers and parents, telling you to sit up straight -- well, it was just plain wrong. Turns out, the best way to sit up is actually to lean back, kick out your legs and just settle back into your chair. Oh yeah -- that's the stuff.
Dr. Waseem Bashir is a radiology fellow at the University of Alberta. He recently conducted a study that delivered a swift kick to the posteriors of posture fanatics -- and bolstered the sitting practices of devoted slouchers everywhere. We reached Dr. Bashir -- a hero, in our books -- in Chicago.

TB: SAUDI RAPE **Duration: 00:01:36**

On last night's program, we heard the disturbing story of a 19-year-old student in Saudi Arabia who was gang-raped by seven men. Often rapes go unreported in that country -- but in this case, the girl actually reported the attack to the police, and a trial was held. Four of the men were sentenced to either be whipped or to be sent to jail. But the judge also sentenced the victim to 90 lashes.
That story prompted these calls to Talkback.

STONEHENGE MANUSCRIPT **Duration: 00:05:16**

It has stood there, north of Salisbury in England, for centuries. It has inspired theories, music, and even the occasional rave. Not bad for a bunch of big rocks.
Stonehenge is without a doubt one of the finest and most celebrated pre-historic monuments in existence. And yet, it remains shrouded in mystery. Of course, fascination with the megalithic monument is not a new phenomenon -- but, while it certainly intrigued people centuries ago, medieval images of the standing stones are extremely rare.
Recently, though, a tiny drawing showing four great trilithons has been discovered in the 15th century manuscript in Douai, France. It's now considered the oldest drawing of the Stonehenge based on a first hand observation.
Christian Heck discovered this drawing. He is a professor of art history at the University of Lille.

RED RAIN **Duration: 00:04:50**

You might call it "A Study in Scarlet": it's taken five years, but a scientist in India thinks he's unravelled the mystery of the red rain.
You may remember that in July of 2001, a red rain began falling over a large area of southern India. At the time, locals believed that it foretold the end of the world -- while meteorologists dismissed the occurrence as the result of wind blowing up desert dust from Arabia.
But Dr. Godfrey Louis remained skeptical. He kept investigating, convinced that the mysterious crimson cascade was more than it seemed. Then Dr. Louis made a startling announcement: the rain contained alien microbes. And, putting no one at ease, he claimed that it was, in fact, an extra-terrestrial phenomenon.
Dr. Louis is in Kochi, on the southwest tip of the sub-continent.

BERLIN SANTA SHORTAGE **Duration: 00:04:46**

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through Berlin,
Father Christmases' forces were spread much too thin
As children lay dreaming of sugar plum spices
The town faced a serious Kris Kringle crisis
A shortage of Santas meant good girls and boys
Might not receive any well-deserved toys.
Now, that's not the classic Christmas Eve poem we're used to hearing. But in Berlin, it may foreshadow the Christmas-yet-to-come. Although there's still time to reverse this fate.
Rene Heydeck is the Ober-Weinachtsmann -- or chief Santa -- for an agency that has been providing Santas to Berlin and the surrounding area since 1949. We reached him in Berlin.

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