Sequence Chain

Characters:

Setting:

Time: June 1, 1981
Place: U.S. Church

Characters:

- Di Zaccaria
- Father

Characters:

- Di Zaccaria
- Father

Characters:

- Di Zaccaria
- Father

Characters:

- Di Zaccaria
- Father

Characters:

- Di Zaccaria
- Father

Characters:

- Di Zaccaria
- Father
THE MIDDLE EAST

Bin Laden denounces Obama

BY SEBASTIAN ABBOT
Associated Press

CAIRO — A day before President Barack Obama is to deliver a speech here seeking goodwill with the Islamic world, al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden tried in a new message to convince Muslims they should hate him.

The message was the second from al Qaeda in as many days criticizing Obama, a PR offensive that analysts said shows the terrorist organization worries the new president will succeed in improving America’s image in the Muslim world and undermine the group’s jihad, or holy war.

“Obama’s election is just about the worst thing that could have happened to these guys,” said Tom Sanderson, a terrorism expert at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Obama met with Saudi King Abdullah during the first leg of his Mideast tour. Obama’s speech at Cairo University on Thursday is part of a campaign to prove he differs from former President George W. Bush, whose invasion of Iraq and aggressive counterterrorism tactics stoked Muslim ire and helped al Qaeda rally support.

Al Qaeda has tried to counter that message by painting Obama as no different from Bush, highlighting U.S. involvement in the conflicts in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq.

In his audiotape, aired on Al Jazeera television, bin Laden said Obama has inflamed hatred toward the United States by ordering Pakistan to crack down on militants and block Islamic law there.

He claimed U.S. pressure led to a campaign of “killing, fighting, bombing and destruction” that prompted the exodus of a million Muslims from the Swat Valley in northwest Pakistan. He was referring to a Pakistani military campaign against the Taliban that began in April, an indication the tape was made since then.

White House press secretary Robert Gibbs, in Saudi Arabia with Obama, said al Qaeda wants “to shift attention away from the president’s historic efforts [to] have an open dialogue with the Muslim world.”

Obama is popular in the Middle East, in part because of his friendly words toward Islam, his promises to withdraw from Iraq and his own personal background. Still many Arabs also remain skeptical how deeply he will change U.S. policy, which they see as biased toward Israel.

Sanderson said Obama’s approach could make it harder for al Qaeda to recruit supporters and raise money.

“It starts to tighten up avenues for them for finance, for people, for information,” said Sanderson.

Al Zawahri has been critical of Obama since his election, even releasing a message that referred to Obama as a “house negro,” a slur for a black subservient to whites. Bin Laden has been more sparing in his criticism, and his harsh rhetoric in the message could indicate he has become more concerned about Obama’s impact.

Obama’s decision to deliver his speech in longterm ally Egypt highlights one of al Qaeda’s frequent propaganda points — the alliances between the U.S. and repressive Arab governments.

The Obama administration has hinted it won’t hinge its relationship with Egypt on human rights demands and democracy promotion.

Still, in an apparent nod to rights concerns, the Obama administration invited several opponents of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to the Cairo speech.
Sequence Chain

Roger Federer and Robin Söderling

Setting
Place: Roland Garros
Time: Monday, June 8, 2009

Federer won in Paris after losing three finals.

Rafael Nadal beat to Roger Federer in two finals.

Federer won Roland Garros and he showed that he was the best tennis player in the world.

Roger Federer said that this game was one of the most difficult in his life.

Chinese think that if Roger didn’t have a break point, Söderling could win the game.
Federer trounces Soderling

FRENCH OPEN, FROM 5B

at Roland Garros.

Federer came heartbreakingly close in the past, losing the previous three French Open finals, so there certainly was something poetic about his surprising Sampras' Grand Slam mark at this particular tournament, on this particular court.

"Now that he's won in Paris, I think it just more solidifies his place in history as the greatest player that played the game," said Sampras to The Associated Press.

"If there's anyone that deserves it, it's Roger. He's come so close — lost to one guy who's going to go down as probably the greatest clay-courter of all time."

That would be Rafael Nadal, the men who beat Federer at Roland Garros in the 2006-08 finals and in the 2005 semifinals, too. But Nadal's 31-match French Open winning streak ended this year with a fourth-round loss to the hard-hitting Soderling.

Only 7-13 against Nadal, Federer entered Sunday 9-0 against Soderling and, other than the threat of postponement because of rain, there was never any doubt that would become 10-0.

That's because Federer showed off the athleticism and artistry that carried him to five championships at Wimbledon, the last five at the U.S. Open and three at the Australian Open. Federer hit more aces than Soderling, 16-2. He broke Soderling four times. He won 40 of the first 47 points on his serve. He won five points with delicate drop shots.

BIZARRE EPISODE

For only two moments was Federer the least bit shaken: As the last few points were played — victory tantalizingly close — and during a bizarre and worrisome episode when a man jumped over the photographer's pit and ran on the court.

It happened after the first point at 2-1 in the second set, security guards even got "A touch scary," Federer said.

WILD DAY AT ROLAND GARROS: Roger Federer, top, celebrates his 6-1, 7-6 (4-1), 6-4 victory in the men's final. Earlier, an intruder runs onto the court, above left, and eventually is grabbed by a security guard. Losing men's finalist Robin Soderling, left bottom, fell to 0-10 in his career against Federer.
1. The renovation of the buildings in the United States included new green technologies.

2. The Empire State Building in Manhattan, around 2 years old, now has a new technology, high-tech water system.

3. The Chinese Building in London, which had 81 years old and needed to be recycled, used new technology in the capital.

4. The Chicago’s Sears Tower got its roof a new technology, solar panels, wind turbines, and green technologies, which can cover 21 acres. This is a use of green technology.

5. Nowadays, the building’s energy cost is 20 percent cheaper, due to the energy-saving system.

6. The concept of this new system is saving energy.
NEW FACE: The Empire State Building's renovation included a $13.2 million investment in new green technologies. The goal was to sufficiently reduce greenhouse gases without spending more than what could be justified to investors.

Skyscrapers find a new luster

BY CHRIS KAHN
Associated Press

NEW YORK — When owners of the Empire State Building decided to blanket its towering facade this year with thousands of insulating windows, they were only partly interested in saving energy.

They also needed tenants. After 76 years, Manhattan's signature office building had lost its sheen as one of the city's most desirable places to work. To get it back, the owners did what an increasing number of property owners have done — they went green, shelling out $120 million on a variety of environmental improvements, a move would have been considered a huge gamble a few years ago.

- Buildings that define city skylines across the United States, some national icons, are catching up to the sleek, new structures designed with efficiency in mind, as property owners and managers become convinced that a greener building now makes financial sense.

- Over the years environmental retrofits have begun to pay off for owners and tenants alike. Higher-profile companies are seeking out more efficient office space, and new technology at older buildings has started to translate into higher property values, leases and occupancy rates.

- "In a good market, we're going to get the best rents for the best tenants," said Anthony E. Malkin, who leads a real estate firm that owns the Empire State Building. "In a bad market like we have now, we're going to get tenants when other buildings won't."

- Renovation specialists around the United States have been plugging porous walls in numerous old buildings, adding high tech water systems and using recycled material in carpets and tile.

- One of them is the Christianum Building in Lansing, Mich., an 81-year-old Elizabethan Revival office that's listed on the National Register of Historic Places. While repairing the limestone exterior and preserving unique fixtures, the building owners spent $8.5 million to add water-efficient plumbing and increased the amount of natural light. They also capped the building with a reflective "cool" roof.

- Chicago's Sears Tower announced late last month that it will embark on a five-year, $350 million green renovation. The 110-story, staggered skyscraper, which turned 36 this year, will crown its rooftops with solar panels, wind turbines and up to 35,000 square feet of sunlight-absorbing gardens.

- When complete, the improvements will cut the tower's annual electricity use by 80 percent and save 24 million gallons of water, property managers say.

- Building owners trumpet their environmental commitment when extensive modifications are made, yet in many cases those changes are being pushed by tenants. Many high-profile tenants won't even consider moving into a property without the U.S. Green Building Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, said Allan Skodowski with Transwestern management group. They may not even know what the certification means, he said, but they demand it nonetheless.

- "They say 'We want LEED,' " Skodowski said, "and that's it."

- Nine of Transwestern's properties received certification this year. A combination of energy efficient light bulbs and other green equipment helped those buildings slash energy consumption.

- On average, they've seen a 2 percent drop in energy costs, even as electricity rates jumped between 10 percent and 40 percent, Skodowski said.

- Leasing rates have not risen as a result of the changes, Skodowski said, yet at the same time occupancy rates have not fallen. That's a victory for an industry hit hard by the recession. Vacancy rates at office buildings nationwide have gone from 10.9 percent at the end of 2007 to 12.4 percent in the
designed for a cause

Highly-skilled Third World artisans' goods arrive in the U.S. market as designers try to bridge global art and poverty gap.

BY KIM COOK
Associated Press

NEW YORK — In Africa, Asia and Latin America, gifted craftspeople who can express age-old traditions in beautiful ways often lack access to raw materials and distribution venues. And they may have no expertise in getting their goods to a wider marketplace.

In the spirit of an artistic global village, many established designers are using their talent, contacts and financial clout to give Third World artisans an international platform.

Some have found these artisans through their travels, and became inspired to help the artisans' communities while also introducing U.S. buyers to new and intriguing products.

These aren’t the mass-produced knockdown tables, inexpensive knickknacks or inexpensive knickknacks or inexpensive knickknacks that we find in our big box stores, although most of us appreciate being able to add an exotic, global vibe to our homes without spending too much.

We're talking about pieces that are thoughtfully designed and hand-made by their livelihood. “Our challenge is to develop a competitive product that will encourage the survival of indigenous craft,” the design firm Artecnica notes. "Filling this mission requires a smart designer, a visionary project producer, and an ambitious artisan."

The company believes that today’s sophisticated collectors appreciate more than simply the charm of a craft; they’re interested in the maker’s life and community.

Designers Tucker Robbins, a soft-spoken former monk, is in the vanguard of the movement for sustainable furniture design. In many cultures, he notes, furniture plays an important role at gatherings, formal and informal. Chairs and stools may be valued personal objects and status symbols, for instance.

“We’ve forgotten about this, and instead we talk about furniture as conversation pieces,” Robbins says.

By studying a village’s history, available materials and the techniques of its craftspeople, he creates furniture designs that can be simple and beautiful.

stool from Cameroon, for instance, is carved in a lattice-work motif, relating the story of a spider who wove a web to catch creation. The acacia wood Z-stool utilizes the Ijagao carvers' skills to depict three coins falling.

On YouTube, short films show Robbins sitting on the ground observing a carver with traditional tools begin work on a rough log, which may well find its way into Nobu or a W Hotel or the tony environments of style setters like Calvin Klein.

Robbins says that developing a relationship of trust and respect with an artisan group takes time.

Only after that can money matters be broached. “The pricing comes with discussion, comparing the prices of other producers, the quality and what the market can bear,” he says.

He cites the group Aid to Artisans as having done good work in Honduras, Guatemala and Peru.

The nonprofit organization, which also has had projects in Iraq and elsewhere, tries to create economic opportunities for artisans in which craft traditions are at risk, often where conflict has taken a toll, particularly on women.

Many of its products are sold online, including beautifully worked iron bowls and screens forged by artists in Haiti’s ironcraft center, Croix de Bouquet. ATA has worked with them on their techniques, and helped them devise better ways to purchase raw materials and market their wares.

ATA's Colleen Pendleton says red tape can make it difficult in some places to get ATA projects off the ground, but so far no country has rebuffed them.

She points to Artecnica as one of her group's most successful partnerships: “In 2002, Artecnica founded Design With Conscience, a program that supports self-sustaining communities of skilled artisans in underdeveloped countries. They've invited talented, internationally known designers to team with them and with artisans in need around the world.”

Tord Boontje, Stephen Burks and Hella Jongerius have all taken part, and the products are sold on the Artecnica website.

Look for Burks' clever Tatu coffee table, which breaks down into a tray, a bowl and a basket. Jongerius designed a series of stunning ceramic bowls embellished with glass beads, and Boontje helped conceive a dramatic beveled glass mirror that features a dog's head.

The pieces look contemporary, yet are imbued with some element of a craft tradition.

“Colombian journalist Marcella Echevarria has started the design firm SUREvolution, which brings Indian and Latin American handicrafts such as textiles, baskets, ceramics and an array of fashion pieces to the luxury market."

Earthy black La Chamba pottery is made from the mini-rich clay of the Colombian hillside. Velvet smooth bowls are turned out of rosewood stumps from carefully managed forests in Bolivia, workshops whose earnings help raise their community twice the country's poverty line.

“When you think about it, embedded in textiles, metals and ceramics you find the DNA of us as world citizens. We deserve to know about the techniques, materials and craftsmanship, because they’re the carriers of our identity,” says Echevarria.

SUREvolution's products are featured in Ralph Lauren, Pottery Barn, Barney's, Donna Karan and others.
The price of healthcare reform is high, but had we had it before we might have been spared the Jon and Kate saga.

BY LIZA MUNDY
Washington Post Service

Poor Jon and Kate. Their marriage is over, their show on hiatus, their domestic ordeal entering a new phase of acrimony. Possibly nothing could have saved this marriage, but one thing would have made it less fragile: A mandate for health insurance to cover in vitro fertilization.

If the Gosselins, whose efforts to raise eight kids have been chronicled on cable television, had enjoyed, and availed themselves of, ready access to IVF — the most sophisticated, controlled and expensive form of fertility treatment — they almost certainly would not have had six children at once. Just one "more baby," is how Kate described their goal after twins. Without the added stress of sextuplets, they would have had a fighting chance at not fighting nearly as much as they did.

The price tag for healthcare reform is already higher than anybody expected, so it’s probably unreasonable to think that it could include better insurance coverage for the millions of U.S. citizens who suffer from infertility. But such coverage for women of childbearing age could lower the extraordinary healthcare costs associated with the birth of triplets and lower-income U.S. citizens access to treatment that is currently reserved for the well-off or the unusually well insured.

Infertility is the result of a host of conditions — age, yes, but also infections, hormonal imbalances, chromosomal abnormalities, blockage of reproductive passages. It’s nearly as common among men as among women, and possibly more common among the poor than among the rich, for the simple reason that the less money you have, the less likely you are to have had access to healthcare.

In their best-selling book Multiple Blessings, Kate describes pretty much that scenario. She and Jon met and married in their early 20s and soon were ready to start having children. While she doesn’t detail what their health insurance covered, the couple lived in Pennsylvania, which like most states does not require insurers to cover IVF.

THE DOCTOR

When Kate failed to get pregnant naturally, she sought out a doctor who confirmed that she had polycystic ovary syndrome, a condition in which a woman usually has problems ovulating. Wanting another baby, this time, she saw a different specialist. They told him they did not want multiples but would not selectively reduce.

The doctor proceeded with treatment, in which about this treatment is that it’s relatively cheap, a couple thousand dollars compared to the more than $10,000 average cost for a single round of IVF. The bad thing is that it’s notoriously hard to control how many eggs will be fertilized.

When the Gosselins went for an ultrasound during the treatment, they saw three, possibly four mature follicles, the cyst-like structures that cradle a developing egg. The doctor, Kate writes, told them that would be unlikely to end up with three or four babies — an odd claim, nation and try again later. They decided to go ahead. When the sonogram showed seven developing embryos (one would later disappear), Kate writes, Jon dropped to his knees.

The thing is, if they had gone straight to IVF, all of this would have been much less likely to happen. They might well have gotten twins, but they would have been highly unlikely to get six. Largely because of IVF and fertility drug treatments, such births have increased dramatically.

In recent years, the rate of IVF and at least one. Connecticut, sensibly limits the number of embryos that may be transferred.

And insurance coverage is hardly the big-ticket item you might think. In Massachusetts, which mandates coverage, a 2002 study argued that the rise in the annual premium is really a matter of just a few dollars. Yet replicating Massachusetts around the United States is a tall order because of the persistent public view that infertility is somehow not a legitimate disease.

MAKING THEIR CASE

Last week, advocates descended upon Washington to make their long shot case for increased insurance coverage for infertility treatments. In Congress, Rep. Anthony Weiner, D-N.Y., and Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., have introduced a bill that would broaden insurance coverage for IVF.

TLC has done a lot of the legwork for them. More than 10 million people tuned in to watch the televised implantation of the Gosselin family last week. Maybe no marriage could have survived that much TV Weekly, or that many cameras. But really, it seems to have been the burden of being "plus 8," when all they wanted was "plus 3."

If sweeping healthcare reform includes more substantial IVF coverage, TLC will have fewer candidates for its carnival sideshows.
Deaths at day care center stir anger

BY OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ
Associated Press

HERMOSILLO, Mexico — As the day care swiftly filled with smoke, caretakers, neighbors and parents fought to evacuate 142 children — many of them babies and toddlers — through a single working exit until rescue crews arrived.

No fire alarm or sprinkler system had gone off, and one mother said a second door to the day care was bolted shut and nobody could find the key.

Forty children were killed in the devastating fire, which raised doubts about safety standards at more than 1,500 centers where Mexico’s government provides low-cost care for at least 200,000 children.

President Felipe Calderón, who visited some of the 33 children hospitalized Saturday night, pledged to launch a thorough investigation into the cause of a tragedy that has stunned Mexico.

Firefighters, parents and neighbors who rushed to help rescue the children said there was only one working exit. Several desperate civilians broke huge holes into the outer walls, including one man who rammed his pickup truck against the day care three times.

Yet the ABC day care — a converted warehouse in Hermosillo, capital of the northwestern state of Sonora — passed a safety inspection less than two weeks before the fire Friday, according to Daniel Karam, the director of Mexico’s Social Security Institute, which outsourced services to the privately run center.

“How is it possible that they found no problems? Here we have the results,” said Karla Gastelum, whose 3-year-old daughter and 2-year-old niece were at the day care but escaped unharmed. Four children in her daughter’s class died.

Gastelum, 25, said she was having lunch at her mother-in-law’s house about a block from the day care when she saw the fire and raced over. She found her daughter hovering near the door, swept her out of the smoky building and ran back inside to search for her niece. She did not find the younger child but later found out she had also escaped unharmed.

Hermosillo Fire Department chief Martin Lugo said the building had fire alarms but they did not go off because they were not installed properly, the daily Reforma newspaper reported.

Another fire department official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said firefighters fought to evacuate children through the only working exit and the huge holes that civilians had punched through the walls.

Although government officials initially indicated only six caretakers were on duty at the day care Friday, Gastelum and other relatives said the day care had about 20 staffers.

Gastelum said the day care practices fire drills, but on the day of the fire, some of the teachers seemed too injured or in shock to go back inside the building after initially rushing out with as many children as they could.