

EC for armed action against Y'slav army

BELGRADE, Dec 3: An internal European Community report leaked to the media sharply criticizes the federal army for indiscriminately attacking civilian targets and recommends military intervention to stop it, reports AP.

New fighting broke out Tuesday, meanwhile, between Croatian paramilitary troops and Serb rebels supported by federal forces between the towns of Novska and Lipik, about 70 miles (110 kilometers) east of Zagreb, Belgrade television reported. Croatian radio reported artillery fire around Novska.

Ostjck, the focus of fighting since the eastern Croatian stronghold of Vukovar fell last month, was reported calm. UN envoy Cyrus Vance, after meeting with Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and federal Defense Minister Gen Veljko Kadijevic on Monday, said Tuesday the ceasefire and other elements of the UN peace plan for Yugoslavia were not being implemented.

Asked if there had been any progress on dispatching

peacekeepers, he said: "some progress, but not much."

The internal EC report criticized the federal army for shooting "indiscriminately at purely civilian targets with random fire, or... deliberately selecting... schools, museums and — particularly — hospitals."

The unusually harshly worded in-house report, sent from the mission's base in Zagreb to its head quarters in Brussels, was made available to journalists by sources close to the European Community in Belgrade.

Its authenticity was confirmed by EC spokesman Ed Koostal in Zagreb.

The document said the army's "offensive is continuing in full swing," adding that "throughout broad areas of territory in innumerable smaller villages Croatian inhabitants are killed or forced to leave after which their villages are bulldozed out of existence."

"In the last analysis the (Yugoslav Army) is a cowardly army, fighting for no recognizable principle, but largely, instinctively, for its own status and survival," said the report.

No room for negative politics in Pakistan: Nawaz Sharif

ISLAMABAD, Dec 3: Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif yesterday urged the opposition to cooperate with the government to carry on the task of national progress, reports Xinhua.

He told reporters at Islamabad Airport after seeing off the Czechoslovak Prime Minister that the Opposition should join hands with the government with a positive approach to serve the people.

There is no room for agitational and negative politics in the country, he said, apparently referring to the decisions made by the opposition

at their three-day conference in Karachi on Sunday that they would hold country-wide protest rallies and demonstrations to force the government to step down.

The opposition conference, attended by 23 parties including the former ruling Pakistan People's Party led by Benazir Bhutto, demanded the resignation of President Isha Khan and Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif because they are "corrupt, incompetent and insensitive."

Nawaz Sharif said he is always prepared to talk with the

opposition. It is now up to the opposition to select the time for this purpose, he added.

On the poor response of the people to the call of strike in Sindh province two days before by the opposition, Nawaz Sharif said that the people have reposed their confidence once again in the policies of the present government.

He said that the government is implementing a well-planned and integrated programme to purge the society of evils and develop the country into a progressive nation within the next two years.



MOSCOW: American Ambassador to the Soviet Union Robert Strauss (L) toasts with Ivan Silayev (R) Chairman of the Soviet economic management committee and an unidentified man signing an implementing agreement for food credit from the US worth 1.25 billion dollars on Monday.

Gorbachev fears new coup

MOSCOW, Dec 3: Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev was quoted today as saying there could be a new coup attempt in the Soviet Union and the way to avert it was by pressing on with reform, reports Reuter.

There are some who expect a new coup. Perhaps they are even organising one. Someone from the military industrial complex, someone from the communist party structures, Tass news agency quoted Gorbachev as telling the Weekly Literaturnaya Gazeta in an interview.

So the conclusion is just press ahead, because we have no way back. We must push reforms forward, and push them systematically, he added. Tass citing extracts from the interview ahead of publication, quoted Gorbachev as saying not even Jesus Christ could break the ties uniting the peo-

ple of the Soviet Union. The Soviet leader also stressed the need to avert bloodshed in the country, which is threatened with disintegration as republics move towards secession.

Tass said speaking about the situation in the Ukraine, he (Gorbachev) notes that today the main thing is to keep the country intact to preserve the community of peoples to keep a human world, our multinational world in which human destinies are so intertwined that nobody can break apart.

Jesus Christ could not break these ties, it added, quoting Gorbachev.

On Sunday nearly 90 per cent of Ukrainians who voted endorsed independence, breaking with Moscow after

nearly 350 years of subordination.

"We must do everything we can today to avoid major bloodshed. Therefore my task is to push democratic processes forward and the main thing is for the people to be involved in these processes."

We cannot give up what we were striving for so long and couldn't get this oxygen, this spiritual struggle, political freedom with which real humanity begins... the Soviet leader said.

Gorbachev said it was shameful to bring Russians and Ukrainians into confrontation.

He added if someone wants to interpret independence as break with other peoples then that is brickery. Independence means a greater degree of freedom.

UN asks Sihanouk to get peace process on right track

PATTAYA (Thailand), Dec 3: Head of state Prince Norodom Sihanouk convened Cambodia's reconciliation body today after the United Nations told him to get the embattled nation's peace process back on track soon, a senior French diplomat said, reports Reuter.

"We delivered a very clear message," said Jean-David Levitte, envoy of the co-chairman of the Paris peace conference on Cambodia. "We want to see the SNC working in Phnom Penh as soon as possible."

The delicate process has come a long way in the past few months toward ending two decades of civil war and political turmoil in Cambodia.

Lankan court upholds expulsion of dissidents

COLOMBO, Dec 3: The Supreme Court Tuesday upheld the expulsion of eight members of the ruling United National Party who were behind an abortive attempt to impeach President Ranasinghe Premadasa, reports AP.

Justice Mark Fernando, who headed the three-judge bench, said the court unanimously validated the removal of two former Cabinet ministers, Lalith Athulthumudali and G M Premachandra, because they misled the Cabinet.

Fernando said he dissented in the cases of six other Parliament members but was outvoted two-to-one.

The lawmakers will lose their seats once the decision is conveyed to Parliament. The secretary-general of the United National Party may nominate their replacements. The dissidents had ap-

pealed their expulsion last September from the ruling party after they sponsored a petition to impeach Premadasa. They claimed the move initially had the support of would-be defectors in Premadasa's party who later changed their minds.

Gamini Dissanayake, one of the dissidents, said he was disappointed but accepted the judgement of the court.

"God has given us an opportunity to walk the way we should in restoring parliamentary democracy in the country," Dissanayake told reporters after the judgement.

He said the dissidents will join a new political party — Democratic United National Party. "We will go to the people and continue our struggle non-violently," he said. "Whatever the President does, we will be a formidable challenge to him."

Romanian diplomat leaves India

NEW DELHI, Dec 3: A Romanian diplomat abducted by Sikh separatists for 49 days has left India "for good" with his family, saying he was finding the security blanket thrown around him unbearable, newspapers reported today, reports AFP.

Liviu Radu, 53, told reporters at Calcutta airport Monday that he was leaving his "second motherland" as his movements had become restricted since his kidnappers released him November 26.

"I am leaving the country for good," Radu was quoted as saying by the Times of India and other newspapers.

Being in India since 1959 had "made me feel as if I was half-Indian," he said. "It is very painful to leave a country when I know almost all its places. But we have to go back as I find no other way."

Israel to free all Lebanese prisoners

JERUSALEM, Dec 3: Israel said today it would release all Lebanese prisoners, including pro-Iranian cleric Sheikh Abdel Karim Obeid, in return for the remains or the release of its six servicemen missing in Lebanon, reports Reuter.

"We expect that within the initiative of the Secretary General of the United Nations Javier Perez de Cuellar we'll have all our boys home. In consequence all Lebanese prisoners presently under Israel's control would be released," Chief Israeli hostage negotiator Uri Lubrant said.

Asked if Obeid, kidnapped by Israeli commandos from his home in South Lebanon in 1989, would be included in the Swap, Lubrant replied: "Yes, if all our prisoners are released."

Soldier goes berserk, kills 6 in Philippines

SAN FERNANDO (Philippines), Dec 3: An army soldier killed six people after he went berserk at a government militia outpost, police said Tuesday, reports AP.

Superintendent Edgar Aglipay said the incident took place Sunday in San Jose City, 60 miles (100 kilometres) northeast of San Fernando and 80 miles (130 kilometres) north of Manila.

Aglipay said Private 1st Class Rodolfo Garcia was meeting with a group of militiamen when he suddenly went into a rage and began shooting with his government-issued M-16 rifle.

Garcia fled after killing six people, including a soldier training militiamen in counter insurgency tactics, four militiamen and a woman, Aglipay said. A manhunt for Garcia was launched.

12 robbers executed in China

BEIJING, Dec 3: China executed 12 robbers on one day last week and sentenced 19 others to death as part of a nationwide crackdown on theft and robbery, Chinese state media reported, says Reuter.

The 12 were shot in Beijing last Friday immediately after a public trial, the legal daily reported in its Monday edition seen on Tuesday.

The next day 19 people were sentenced to death at a mass trial of gangsters. A further 16 people were given sentences ranging from prison terms to death, the paper said, it gave no details.

Off the Record

Gorbachev yet to get November salary

MOSCOW: In a new twist on the Soviet cash crisis, the speaker of one of the houses of parliament said Monday that President Mikhail Gorbachev and his staff were not paid their November salaries, reports AP.

But this was denied at the Kremlin, where a member of the press service said "everyone was paid because everyone worked."

Konstantin Lubyenchenko, the Head of the Chamber of the Union, however, told journalists that he and his aides had not received their salary as scheduled on Friday, the day the Gosbank, the Soviet central bank warned that state coffers were nearly empty and it would have to stop payments on Monday.

The Kremlin accountant had no ready cash. He told us that the directors of the Gosbank had blocked everything, Lubyenchenko said.

There is only one account for the entire Kremlin, so the presidential services could not have received anything either, he said.

When asked if this also meant Gorbachev, he replied, "Of course Mikhail Sergeyevich also received nothing."

Over the weekend, the Russian federation took control of the Soviet budget, agreeing to guarantee the salary of federal government workers through the end of the year.

Napoleon Bonaparte now in Lanka

COLOMBO: A Sri Lankan docker was surprised to see a copy of his birth certificate calling him Napoleon Bonaparte and was planning to use the register general for the mix up, a local press report said Monday, reports AP.

Norbert Perera does not mind the new name but feels that the late French Emperor would be insulted by the error in the copy of his birth certificate, the Island newspaper said.

It was thought the mistake was made by a clerk transcribing Perera's name from Sinhalese for an English version of the birth certificate.

No to 'Nyet'

ATLANTA: City officials don't know how to say "Nyet" to a gift from Atlanta's sister city in the Soviet Union — a 67-foot (20-metre) sculpture that will require \$500,000 to assemble, reports AP.

"The Birth of a New Man" has languished in the Soviet Georgian republics capital of Tbilisi for three years as Atlanta officials ponder how to politely turn down the expensive, and some say inappropriate gift.

"How do we diplomatically say, after all this time, 'Thanks, but no thanks?'" said City Councilman Robb Pitts. "It would be totally unfair for us to walk away from it."

Former Mayor Andrew Young accepted the sculpture in 1988 from renowned Georgian sculptor Zurab Tsereteli, who offered it as a symbol of friendship from Tbilisi.

Pitts, who went to the Soviet Union to see the sculpture, wants it brought to Atlanta at any cost.

But the Urban Design Commission told Mayor Maynard Jackson it would be too difficult to justify the expenditure, given the funding needs of the local arts community.

Critics say the sculpture's image of a man breaking through a massive wall, symbolizing the struggle for freedom in the Soviet Union, is too European — and all wrong for the city that gave birth to the civil rights movement.



DRESDEN: 21 year-old Diana Leisgen from Iserlohn is all smiles after she was chosen new "Miss Germany" during a ceremony in Dresden on December 1. —AFP/UNB photo

A dubious award for Dan Quayle

LONDON: US Vice President Dan Quayle won a dubious award Monday from the Plain English Campaign for making an incomprehensible remark on an unidentifiable subject, reports AP.

Quayle won his "Golden Bull" prize for two sentences quoted from a Washington Post story in July.

Quayle was quoted as saying: "We offer the party as a big tent. How do we do that (recognize the big tent philosophy) within the platform, the preamble to the platform or whatnot, that remains to be seen. But that message will have to be articulated with great clarity."

Jonathan Allman, editor of the Plain English Campaign, a non-profit organisation that battles "gobbledygook and official double-speak," said he had no idea what Quayle meant.

"We do not know the context of the speech or remarks, because they were quoted out of context by a British newspaper. But it would be difficult to imagine what the words might mean in context," Allman said Monday.

"We contacted the White House to ask what Quayle was talking about, but by the time of the awards the best they had come up with was that they could not find the quote."

"The quote is a classic example of US double-speak. Americans are renowned in their official language for saying things that mean either the complete opposite of what they are saying, or nothing at all."

This year's "Plain English" award for clear writing went to the government's Department of Social Security for a leaflet on welfare payments for disabled people.

BRIEFLY

UK, France to build anti-air frigate: Britain and France announced Monday they will cooperate in developing a new anti-air frigate, marking what British officials called "a new milestone in Anglo-French defence cooperation," reports AP Tuesday from London.

The announcement came after Prime Minister John Major and French President Francois Mitterrand held a three and half hours meeting ahead of next week's key summit of closer union among the 13 nations of the European Community.

In a statement Major's No. 10 Downing Street office gave no immediate details of the cost of the new frigate. But British and French officials said the warship would enter service in "the next decade."

Arafat arrives in Damascus: PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat arrived in Damascus on Monday evening to discuss Arab-Israeli peace talks with Syrian leaders, official sources said, reports Reuter Tuesday from Damascus.

Syrian and Palestinian delegations have both set out for Washington hoping for a media field-day if Israel's chair stands empty on Wednesday, the day the United States invited participants to resume talks begun in Madrid.

Israel wanted the talks postponed and is unlikely to be represented at their start.

Arafat and President Hafez al Assad patched up a long-standing quarrel when both decided to support US-brokered peace negotiations.

Another American to be freed soon: Pro-Iranian Lebanese kidnappers said Tuesday they would free American hostage A. Steen within 48 hours, reports Reuter from Beirut.

In a statement sent to Beirut's An-Nahr newspaper with a photograph of Steen, kidnapped in January 1987, the Islamic Jihad for the Liberation of Palestine (IJLP) said it was sticking to a UN-brokered pact to free the hostages first.

"We announced our complete commitment with its (the agreement's) contents and with the clause stipulating the release of the hostages first."

"We will release American A. Steen within 48 hours in the hope of fulfilling the commitments of the concerned parties."

Nobel Prize winner dead: George J. Stigler, an economist who won a Nobel prize for his studies of government regulation and the marketplace, died Sunday of heart failure. He was 80, reports AP Tuesday from Chicago.

Stigler, author of one of the first modern textbooks on microeconomics, "The Theory of Price," received the Nobel prize in Economics in 1982. His Nobel citation praised his studies of the functioning of markets and the causes and effects of public regulation.

"Stigler was a man of great wit and insight who showed us that economics is not dismal science but rather an important and exciting way to view and understand the world around us," said John Gould, dean of the University of Chicago's Graduate School of Business, where Stigler taught until his death.

Stigler also won the National Medal of Science in 1987 as well as honorary degrees from eight universities and colleges.

'Kennedy Smith did it in the moonlight'

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla., Dec 3: William Kennedy Smith listened solemnly Monday as a prosecutor depicted him as a cruel and vicious rapist and his attorney portrayed him as a man who made love to a willing woman in the moonlight, reports AP.

The differing versions came as testimony began in the sensational trial of Sen Edward M. Kennedy's nephew, accused of raping a woman at the Kennedy family estate last Easter weekend.

Earlier Monday, a judge decided not to let three other women testify about their claims that Smith had sexually assaulted them in the 1980s. The ruling deflated prosecution efforts to show that Smith had a history of abusing women.

But Assistant State Attorney Moira Lasch said she would prove her case anyway.

"The evidence will demonstrate that the defendant's conduct was not only cruel, violent and against her will, it was most importantly criminal under the laws of Florida," Mrs Lasch told the jury of four women and two men.

Defense lawyer Roy Black countered that the incident was a romantic encounter between two people attracted to each other. He said Smith and the woman who says she was raped met at a bar, went to the estate, hugged and kissed in the car and went to the beach.

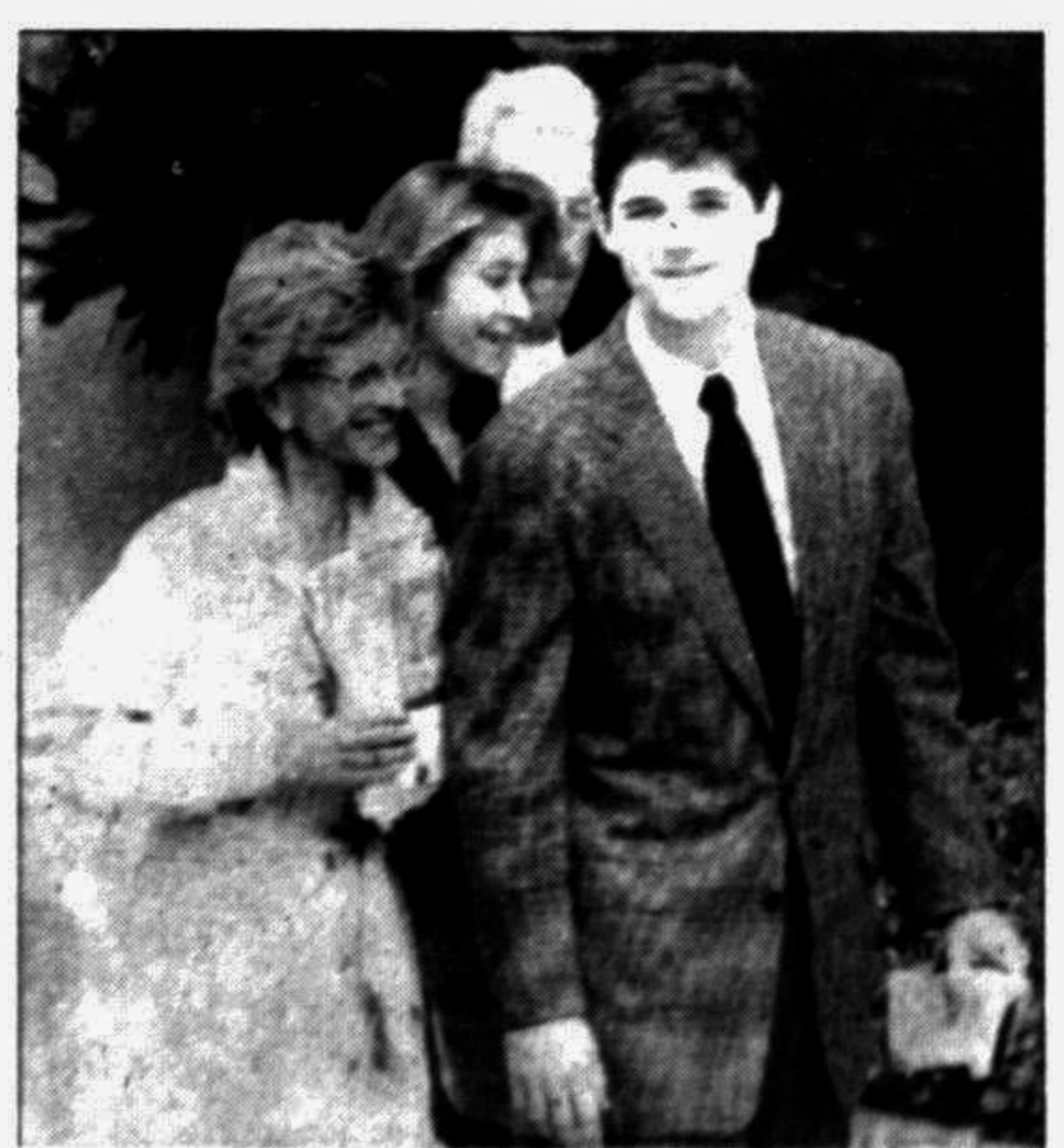
"They got into foreplay and they made love," said Black. "It was a totally consensual act of love between two people."

Mrs Lasch told of a woman lured to the Kennedy estate only to be raped and pursued by a "ferocious" young man who told her no one would believe her if she claimed rape.

"He was a famous, prominent person," said Mrs Lasch. "She was an unknown person." She said woman feared that the police would take no action against the powerful Kennedys.

Black, however, said the woman made up the rape story after Smith acted "cold" after sex. "She had expectations here that were not fulfilled," he said.

Black also said he would prove that the woman lied about many details.



FLORIDA: William Kennedy Smith and his mother Jean Smith arrive Monday at the Palm Beach Courthouse for the start of his rape trial. —AFP/UNB photo

The lawyers spoke after Circuit Judge Mary Lupo rejected prosecutors' bid to present evidence from three women who said Smith sexually attacked them in the 1980s. Lupo gave no explanation.

Prosecutors had hoped to prove that Smith had a history of attacking pretty, unescorted brunettes after charming his way into their confidence.

Smith's accuser, a 30-year-old Florida woman, is a brunette who says she met him at a popular Palm Beach discotheque. He invited her back to the estate where she says she was raped on March 30.

Smith, 31, is charged with sexual battery and battery and could receive a maximum of 4 1/2 years in prison if convicted. He came to court surrounded by family.

The trial began with a huge media contingent. Some 500 reporters had credentials to cover the case and TV crews took over a parking lot near the courthouse where dozens of satellite dishes were set up to carry news of the trial across the world.

Lupo has said the trial

should last two to three weeks.

Smith's mother, Jean Kennedy Smith, sat in a front row with another son and daughter and frequently leaned forward to confer with her son across the courtroom bar. Later, she was excluded from court at the prosecutor's request because she many be a witness later.

Following opening statements, Mrs Lasch began methodically laying out her case. Her first witness was Kerry Allison, a Kennedy family friend who was at the estate on Easter weekend.

Allison and another young woman told of a festive luncheon at the estate where drinks were consumed before a late evening outing to a bar. At the bar, Smith, his cousin Patrick Kennedy, the two witnesses and some friends danced and drank until about 2 am, the witnesses said. They said members of the group then moved on to the bar where Smith met his accuser.

A police crime scene expert presented photos she took of the woman's bruised ankle, foot and hand.