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### Earthquake in Leponto

The Iliki River Valley was shaken by an earthquake early yesterday morning, estimated at 6.7 on the Richter Scale. The epicenter was near the village of Milanario, fifty kilometers northeast of the provincial capital of Thivai, near the border with Latia. No casualties have yet been reported, but there was significant structural damage.

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### Finance Minister Defends Privatization

Appearing to respond to criticisms from the Trade Union Federation and others, Finance Minister Joseph Monino insisted that privatization of key industries, including power and communications is essential. "For the nation to benefit fully from the potential of international investment, and to defend itself in an increasingly competitive global economy, there is no industry that is immune from privatization," the Minister emphasized in a speech to the Institute for Industrial and Commercial Affairs. Trade Union members picketed the Minister's Neuville speech.

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### Textbook Change Criticized

Claiming that a new history textbook's description of former President Fire is "inaccurate and insulting," the League of Honor calls for the book to be withdrawn and for the Education Ministry to exercise closer scrutiny over the content of all textbooks.

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*Army troops join  
rescue effort in quake-  
damaged Milanario.*



### International Anti-Milosovic March Halted:

Though stopped in their march yesterday, Serbian opposition leaders continue to step up efforts for democratic change in Yugoslavia.

### Politics

The Trade Union Federation of Altair calls a conference on the proposed closing of the Altair Naval Station.

### Arts/Living

An Altair exhibit of Antonio Vegas' paintings is the first public showing in Esperanza since the Republican period.

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## Earthquake in Leponto

The southeastern province of Leponto was shaken by an early morning earthquake on Wednesday. The moderate tremor appeared to be centered near the village of Milinario, on the international border with Latia. Given the rugged terrain of the area it has not yet been possible to undertake a complete assessment of quake damage, but not fatalities have yet been reported.

Structural damage, however, was evident. Buildings swayed and shelves fell as far south as the provincial capital of Thivai. The army and Civil Guard were mobilized to support Red Cross and local relief efforts. Damage was also reported across the border in Latia and an international coordination effort was announced by the Foreign Ministry.

Arthur Morris, the chief seismologist with the Royal Academy of Sciences in Neuvilla, estimated the quake at 6.7 on the Richter Scale. Most of southeastern Esperanza is susceptible to earthquakes. An 1896 quake, since estimated at 7.5 on the Richter scale, did extensive damage to Pireus and resulted in the loss of nearly 10,000 lives.

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## Finance Minister Defends Privatization

Joseph Monino, Minister of Finance, focused on the privatization process in a speech yesterday to the Institute for Industrial and Commercial Affairs. While the Minister did not refer directly to trade union criticism of a recent interim report on privatization during the luncheon meeting at the Neuvilla Board of Trade, his comments appeared to reject any pull-back from an aggressive privatization schedule.

"We live in an era of global capital flows," the Minister told the assembled business leaders. "Like a great river of gold, the flow of this capital seeks the steepest slope and the deepest opportunities. It is in our national self-interest to direct this river to our shores, our streets, our homes. Privatization is the channel through which this great river will come to us."

Approximately thirty Trade Union members and others picketed the Minister's speech from the street in front of the Board of Trade. One of the picketer's, Thomas Elders, a utility lineman from Neuvilla, pointed to problems with privatization of utilities in Asia as a warning to proceed slowly with such a critical national asset.

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## **Textbook Change Criticized**

A new secondary school textbook describes former President Fire as a "staunch authoritarian suspicious of majority rule" among other characterizations. The League of Honor has called for the textbook to be removed from schools and for the Education Ministry to ensure that the educational process is not politicized.

Francisco Salazar, a former history teacher, and chairman of the League of Honor told reporters, "General Fire was the savior of this nation. He loved its people and sacrificed himself for our future. It is wrong for the government to desecrate his memory with our young people. Ferdinand River, Minister of Education, promised that the accused textbook would be reviewed again by the School Publications Committee before it is released.

The League of Honor is a national organization consisting of Civil War veterans. Among other activities it sponsors a national essay contest for middle school students on "How President Fire Saved the Nation."