



## Today in History

*February 20, 1986*

▲ The Soviet Union launched the Mir space station into orbit, with special laboratories for scientific research and living quarters for three cosmonauts

**1816:** Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* was performed for the first time

**1971:** An emergency warning of a nuclear attack was broadcast in the U.S. in error, triggering widespread public fear

**1994:** Swiss voters approved a ban on all foreign trans-Alpine freight travelling by road rather than by rail

**1996:** Two senior defectors returned to Iraq six months after fleeing to Jordan; they were murdered three days later