

National News

Heritage wants to slash the USDA

Detailed recommendations for curbing the resources of the U.S. Department of Agriculture are contained in the 365-page study written by the Washington-based Heritage Foundation for the Reagan transition team. The study, titled "Agenda for Progress," specifies \$3.3 billion in cuts from the department's budget on the grounds that the allocations are going into "nonagricultural" activities.

Author Don Paarlberg of Purdue University defines as "nonagricultural" activities: 1) payments to compensate producers for market prices below the costs of production; 2) the commodity program, termed too high at \$50,000 per farmer; 3) dairy price supports, to be cut from 80 percent to 75 percent of parity; 4) guarantees for new loans for farm ownership, operation, and emergencies; and 5) crop insurance subsidies and disaster payments.

Paarlberg also recommends that Commodity Credit Corporation interest rates be hiked and loan limits be cut in half to reduce availability of credit.

States prepare for transport deregulation

On Jan. 7, the U.S. Department of Agriculture convened a two-day meeting of state agriculture department representatives to discuss how agriculture must adjust to the passage of the Rail Policy Act of 1980 deregulating railroads.

Dr. Robert Tosserud, associate director of the USDA's Office of Transportation, an organizer of the conference, told *EIR* that in many rural areas, no transportation service will be available. But, he said, "The law is the law, and what we are trying to do is to discuss with the various state agriculture departments

how they will have to adjust to these new regulations." The problems will center on rail abandonments, increased costs in or loss of, service, and fluctuating rates. Many elevators will be forced out of business altogether.

At the annual meeting of the Country Elevator Council of the National Grain and Feed Association in December, one Iowa elevator operator called dereg "the biggest joke played on country elevators in the next ten years." Elevators and shippers will be left at the mercy of the railroads for scheduling and rates.

To counter this, the USDA is piloting a program to allow farm and business interests to form cooperatives to take possession of abandoned rail lines.

Civiletti protecting cocaine runner?

Evidence emerged Jan. 12 that former Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti attempted to use his powers to protect the leader of a group running cocaine into the United States. According to Assistant Attorney General Daniel Guthrie of Dallas, Civiletti, along with Abscam coordinator Irving Nathan, Charles Carroll, and Ann Hoffman, intervened personally to put "tremendous pressure" on Guthrie to transfer the prosecution of alleged cocaine smuggler Sam Weisgal out of Dallas to Baltimore, where, because of the Weisgal family's local clout, a "sweetheart" plea bargain followed by a super-light sentence could be assured. Weisgal's father, Fred Weisgal, was a leading civil liberties lawyer in Baltimore and currently heads the American Law Division of the Israeli Ministry of Justice.

Guthrie refused to move the case, and found it necessary to resign in protest. Weisgal pleaded guilty in Dallas, where he could get up to eight years in prison. The Justice Department's Office of Professional Responsibility is now investigating the entire case.

Nevertheless, an editorial in the Jan. 12 *Washington Post* admonished Reagan appointee William French Smith not to

indulge in GOP cronyism, but to emulate the outstanding impartiality of Benjamin Civiletti.

Volcker and Block address Farm Bureau meet

Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker delivered one of the featured speeches to the annual convention of the American Farm Bureau Federation Jan. 12 in the New Orleans superdome. Surprisingly, Volcker's speech, another of the now-standard demands for sacrifice, was received politely by the 7,000 attendees.

Volcker had followed an impromptu appearance by Agriculture Secretary-designate John Block, who during his confirmation hearings a week ago expressed concern about the Volcker policy. "Nothing can be done that is legal," Block said, "that can return 20 percent!"

Sources at the four-day meeting of the largest American farm organization reported that bumper stickers that read "Twenty Percent Is Illegal" were being snapped up eagerly in the corridors. A number of state Farm Bureaus, including Alabama, have passed resolutions demanding a reversal of the Volcker policy.

Northeast drought: a planned emergency

A scandal may erupt around the Delaware River Basin Commission, which has announced a "drought emergency" for the four-state area of New York, New Jersey, Delaware, and Pennsylvania. Mandatory water limitations will be imposed on residential and industrial users, and the amount of water taken from the Delaware watershed by New York City will be reduced.

The New York City water system is designed to weather five years of drought; the reason the city's reservoirs lack water after only seven months of a dry spell is that Mayor Ed Koch agreed to release one-quarter of the city's stor-

age capacity, 135 billion gallons into the Delaware River and New York State rivers to maintain stream flow and conserve fish life.

The release was ordered by the River Master, an Interior Department official who is mandated by the 1954 Supreme Court decree settling water disputes among the Delaware Valley states to sustain water flow in the river. The River Master demanded that New York City supply the water, because the Army Corps of Engineers' longstanding plan to develop the basin's water resources had not been implemented.

Since 1960, the Corps plan has been undercut by the commission and by environmentalists. The commission itself was set up in 1961 by a \$113,000 grant from the Ford Foundation and Laurence Rockefeller's Resources for the Future organization.

In 1978, Mayor Koch played an especially dirty role by slashing the New York City Board of Water Supply budget 40 percent and throwing the Department of Water Supply into the city's Environmental Protection Agency. Koch then agreed with the commission to reduce the city's intake of basin water from the Supreme Court-mandated 800 million gallons per day.

Kissinger dismissed as Roving Ambassador

Henry Kissinger, who has represented himself in innumerable official capacities over the years, has finally been dismissed as Roving ambassador. The obscure principality of Roving announced last week that it would not renew Kissinger's appointment, for which Henry received \$200,000 a year and all the cheese he could eat, because of "severe economic difficulties afflicting the realm."

European diplomatic sources report that the Roving decision was as much political as economic, although Henry's salary and skyrocketing cheese prices were important considerations.

They emphasized that the real rea-

sons for Kissinger's dismissal stem from a series of strange and disturbing incidents in Roving which resulted from diplomatic maneuvers Henry made for his various governments: knocking down the lines for the cablecar to the Roving casino, which occurred during an abortive attempt by British NATO troops, bearing a treaty signed by Kissinger, to set up a Roving Euromissile site; canceling Roving's daily barrel of oil from Saudi Arabia, negotiated by Kissinger as payment for having his socks washed in Riyadh; and the disappearance of all of the towels and engraved silverware from the Hotel Emperor, some of which later turned up at a pool-side cocktail party given by Kissinger in Rome.

Challenges to UAW antinuclear stand

An impromptu demonstration by pro-nuclear members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers marred attempts by social democrat William Winpisinger, president of the International Association of Machinists (IAM), and United Auto Worker (UAW) environmentalists to railroad a group of antinuclear resolutions through a trade-union conference on energy held this month in Pittsburgh.

According to the UAW's newsletter, on the opening night of the National Labor Conference for Safe Energy and Employment, sponsored by nine major trade unions, some 100 electricians from a nearby local of the IBEW broke into the hall and noisily denounced the conference. Their placards proclaimed: "Anti-Nukes are Kooks" and "Electricians Support Nuclear Power."

The boisterous intervention caused much confusion and embarrassment in the meeting and forced its sponsors to tone down several resolutions attacking nuclear energy up for adoption by the conference. Contrary to the express intent of the environmentalists present, a resolution was adopted which demanded that no worker lose his job because of a threat to the nuclear industry.

Briefly

● **JOHN CONYERS** of Michigan, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee's subcommittee on crime, and Anti-Defamation League Factfinder Division head Irwin Suall have launched a provocative set of national hearings on an alleged "conspiracy against minorities." The two advocate Justice Department takeover of local law-enforcement powers.

● **MARGARET THATCHER** will visit the U.S. in February to convince President Reagan to implement major austerity programs.

● **RONALD REAGAN** states in an interview in the Jan. 19 *U.S. News and World Report* that "There is reason to believe that government mandates have had something to do with troubles in the auto industry. If so, government has two responsibilities; the first is to bail out, or help bail out, a company that's suffered because of that. The second is to do away with the mandates and the regulations that caused the trouble in the first place."

● **THE PRESIDENT'S** Commission for a National Agenda for the '80s will propose to place congressmen under tight centralized control by the official leaderships of the political parties, as in the British parliamentary system. The intent is to reduce constituency accountability. Says a commission staff member, "Interest groups won't compromise for the good of the order. Institutions like Congress are fragmented and incapable of the hard choices that have to be made if the economic pie is smaller."

● **EIGHT GOVERNORS** from the Midwest denounced high interest rates at a meeting called by Michigan's Governor Milliken. The governors also called for tax and depreciation allowances to stimulate research and development. The proposals will be presented to the states' congressional delegations for action.