

National News

Hospital sets up separate AIDS unit

The Illinois Masonic Medical Center clinic has separated its AIDS treatment unit from its regular facilities, the June 19 *Chicago Sun Times* reported.

The Adult Medical Treatment Center closed in May after a 15-month-old girl pulled an HIV-contaminated needle out of a waste container and pricked herself while her mother was being examined. It was one of two incidents in which three people were accidentally exposed to the AIDS virus in the last two months.

The opening of a new outpatient unit for AIDS patients, called the Infectious Disease Sub Specialty Clinic, was speeded up after the AIDS exposure incidents, which resulted in lawsuits, Illinois Masonic President Gerald W. Mungerson said, the paper reported.

Hospital "policy will be to refer elsewhere AIDS patients who do not wish to be treated in the separate clinic, hospital officials said. But that could amount to discrimination, said Debbie Gould, a member of the AIDS activist organization ACT UP. . . .

"Kathy Adler, a program director of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago, a group of hospitals and others who serve people with AIDS, said the discrimination issue was more a concern in the early stages of the AIDS 'epidemic,' when less was known about the disease. Now it is generally believed separate treatment of AIDS patients can be conducive to better, more specialized and comprehensive care, she said," the paper reported.

New suspects in Giarratano case

New leads in the case of Joseph Giarratano, the Virginia prisoner who became internationally known as he spent years on death row, were announced June 21 by Marie Deans, executive director of the Virginia Coalition on Jails and Prisons. Deans told the media, "We are getting increasingly

close to people we believe were involved" in the 1979 double murder in Norfolk, for which Giarratano was convicted.

Last February, after Virginia Gov. L. Douglas Wilder granted Giarratano a conditional pardon three days before he was to be executed, Virginia Attorney General Mary Sue Terry refused to allow him a new trial.

Deans said that during private investigations, two informants have linked another man to the murders. She said one informant reported overhearing a conversation several years after the slayings between two men bragging about a double murder in Norfolk. Recently, a second informant gave the name of an individual cited by the first informant, corroborating that informant's story.

Gerald Zerkin, an attorney for Giarratano, told *EIR* in February that the considerations in his case were more political than legal. Referring to Terry's unwillingness to grant a new trial, Zerkin said, "Rather than taking the position that the Attorney General's office remains a safety net" to "reduce the risk of executing innocent persons—in- stead, they seem to abide by the philosophy that if we admit that it's possible for a mistake to have been made, then that will undermine people's faith in the death penalty."

Labor, Catholics keep up pressure vs. NAFTA

The AFL-CIO has issued a statement denouncing the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) which George Bush is negotiating with Mexico. It was printed in the union federation's *Free Labor World* biweekly on May 31.

Tom Donahue, AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer, declared that "we believe that the substance of the U.S. administration's proposal is harmful and ill conceived. We believe American workers would pay for it with their jobs.

"We hear about a market stretching from the Yukon to Yucatan. . . . The poetry is impressive, but the practicality is depressing," he said.

Donahue contrasted how Europeans are working to establish a Social Charter to protect workers in the 1992 single market, in-

cluding rights to collective bargaining, vocational training, health and safety protection, and a minimum wage. The Bush administration and the Mexican government "resist any such protection in the U.S.-Mexico arrangements," he said.

Donahue pointed out that the "European Community has a huge assistance program—the European Regional Development Fund—which will spend at least \$68 billion over the next four years to narrow the gap between the richest regions, such as Germany, and the poorest regions, such as most of Portugal. There are no such plans here."

In a June 4 letter to U.S. Trade Representative Carla Hills, Msgr. Robert Lynch, the general secretary of the U.S. Catholic Conference, the public policy agency of the U.S. Catholic bishops, also urges that in the NAFTA agreement, "questions of economic and social justice receive priority attention." There must be "concern for the poor in both lands."

Trend toward lawmaking by ballot referendums

Reflecting a national trend toward making laws via ballot referendums that bypass legislatures, the New Jersey Senate began considering a constitutional amendment to permit citizens to enact or repeal laws through ballot initiatives.

This has become a hot political issue due to anger over Gov. Jim Florio's (D) \$2.8 billion tax increase passed last year. While many legislators are apprehensive over such mob democracy, which Florio correctly points out is "contrary to the principle of representative government," taxpayer ire is so intense that some sort of amendment will likely be proposed and enacted.

Victim fights for AIDS testing, full disclosure

Kimberly Bergalis, one of five patients who contracted AIDS from dentist Dr. David Acer, blasted Florida health authorities in a

Briefly

● **NEIL BUSH**, the President's son, has dropped his appeal of the administrative sanctions levied against him by the Office of Thrift Supervision for his actions while a director of the now-defunct Silverado S&L, the June 19 *Wall Street Journal* reported.

● **THE LOUISIANA** legislature has enacted an anti-abortion law described as one of the strictest. Alex Sanger, grandson of Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, the largest operator in the lucrative abortion industry, whined to CBS News that "abortions are down about 6% from last year."

● **GEORGE BUSH** lashed out at *Newsweek* magazine in mid-June. "You're talking to the wimp," he said, after discussing the possibility of not running for office. "You're talking to the guy that had a cover of a national magazine, that I'll never forgive, [that] put that label on me."

● **ECO-TERRORISTS** from the Animal Liberation Front claimed credit for a fire in an animal food and processing building of the Northwest Farm Foods Cooperative near Seattle June 15, the second attack in the Northwest in June.

● **ONE OF THE** Gulf war's dangerous aspects is that it has psychologically conditioned the U.S. population to accept and/or to support wars against Third World nations, Robert Jay Lifton of New York University warned in a commentary in the June 20 *London Guardian*.

● **A PLAN** to ask Congress to allocate \$91 million to bolster vaccination and immunization programs, was deferred by George Bush just one week after he announced the dispatching of teams to U.S. cities "to learn why kids aren't getting immunized." The plan, which is being kept secret, warns that "immunization programs across the country have inadequate resources," the June 23 *New York Times* reported.

letter to Florida Health and Rehabilitation Services investigator Nikku Economou April 6, which appeared in the June 20 *Miami Herald*.

Bergalis, now near death, has lobbied for mandatory AIDS testing of health care workers and full disclosure of AIDS status between doctors and patients. Florida authorities allowed her dentist to continue his practice knowing he had AIDS.

"Who do I blame? Do I blame myself? I sure don't. I never used IV drugs, never slept with anyone, and never had a blood transfusion," she wrote.

"I blame Dr. Acer and every single one of you bastards, anyone who knew Dr. Acer was infected and had full-blown AIDS and stood by not doing a damn thing about it."

Acer's status was shielded by Florida law, and he claimed he was following standard infection control procedures. According to AP, Acer never told his patients he had AIDS until he released a posthumous letter to them, advising them to seek testing.

In Minnesota, it was also revealed that Dr. Philip Benson, an obstetrician, has had AIDS since September 1990. He has been treating patients, including carrying out invasive procedures, without informing any of his patients of his condition, and despite an agreement with the state that he could continue to practice only if he did not carry out invasive procedures. Now, 328 of his patients are being contacted and told that they may have been exposed to AIDS.

Weckstein bias to be reviewed by court

The Virginia Court of Appeals June 17 decided to review a case alleging collusion between Roanoke Circuit Court Judge Clifford Weckstein, who has presided over several trials of associates of presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche, and top-level emissaries of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). The court granted the petition, which argued that Weckstein should have recused himself due to "an appearance of bias," in the case of Richard Welsh.

While presiding over Welsh's case in May 1990, Weckstein covertly correspond-

ed with ADL representatives seeking to enlist their support in a controversy over his handling of previous LaRouche-related trials. When Welsh requested full disclosure of his relationship to the ADL, Weckstein selectively revealed one set of correspondence, but withheld documents which obstructed the defendant's ability to prove bias. The full picture only emerged later, during an evidentiary hearing on government misconduct.

The court will also hear Welsh's petition seeking reversal of his conviction under *Kastigar v. United States*. Welsh contends that a hearing held by Weckstein was constitutionally insufficient to determine if immunized testimony given in a prior proceeding, was improperly used by the prosecution.

FBI hiding files in LaRouche case

In answers to interrogatories in mid-June in the 17-year old civil rights case *LaRouche et al. v. Webster*, the FBI refused to answer questions about the extent of its collaboration with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) on matters against Lyndon LaRouche and his associates, a central claim at issue in the suit.

"Any information responsive to this interrogatory, if it exists, is contained in pending criminal investigative files," the FBI refusal reads.

Had the evidence of the influence of the ADL been available to present to the jury in LaRouche's federal trial in Alexandria, Virginia, the corruption of the government could have been on trial rather than the defendant's "crimes" manufactured by the government.

The FBI also denied that there has been any investigation of LaRouche under Executive Order 12333 since Jan. 1, 1989. The denial contradicts both an FBI affidavit from a July 1989 Freedom of Information Act case brought by LaRouche associate Paul Goldstein stating that such a file exists, and an FBI affidavit in this case in September 1989 acknowledging a E.O. 12333 file but calling it a "repository for national security information."