

National News

Calls renewed for Mars colonization

In a *New York Times* commentary on Sept. 18, S. Fred Singer, director of the Science and Environmental Policy Project, called for sending manned space probes to Mars, in the wake of the failure of the scaled-down, unmanned Mars Observer probe. Citing Space Station Freedom as the key, Singer said that its main justification should be to prepare for the exploration of Mars. After a manned space lab orbits Mars for weeks or months, the data gathered could be used to determine whether the moons of Mars can be mined for raw materials.

Singer concluded: "Inevitably, manned exploration and habitation of the red planet would follow. There are even plans afoot for 'terraforming' the Martian atmosphere to make it livable for earthlings. It would be tragic if the setbacks and mistakes of the last 20 years dampened the Senate's enthusiasm for the great human adventure of space exploration."

The colonization of Mars also received surprisingly favorable coverage during Cable News Network coverage of the Shuttle space walk. When a caller asked reporter John Holliman how long it would take to get to Mars, Holliman breezily revealed that he had discussed the matter with Vice President Dan Quayle, when Quayle was also head of the National Space Commission. The vice president said he had planned to have a man on Mars by 2025, and that it would only take four months to get there if spacecraft used an atomic-powered rocket engine.

Nat'l Symphony refuses to cross picket line

The strike of the Washington, D.C. Opera Orchestra against the Kennedy Center management entered a new phase, when the members of the National Symphony Orchestra refused to cross the picket line in mid-September. With NSO members now walking the picket line every night, NSO General Manager Stephen Klein announced

Sept. 13 that the official opening of NSO season Sept. 16-18 was being cancelled. "There's not going to be any live music at the Kennedy Center until this strike is settled," Opera Orchestra spokesman Melanie Mattson said on Sept. 16. The Boston Ballet and San Francisco Ballet, due to open Oct. 12 and 19, are expected to honor the picket line. "They're going to have rather strong feelings about dancing 'Swan Lake' to nothing but a tape," she said.

Management in many other cities are also making demands that unionized orchestras be phased out. The Philadelphia Orchestra is on the verge of a strike; the Milwaukee Symphony is already on strike, as is the Honolulu Symphony. Strikes are also likely at the San Antonio Symphony and the St. Paul Chamber Orchestra in Minnesota, musicians report. The Kennedy Center strike "appears also to be a dry run for a major management attempt to bust the orchestra unions in New York City by forcing a long strike on Broadway," a union source stated. Local 802 of the American Federation of Musicians is now in negotiations with the League of American Theatre Producers over the contract with orchestras at all Broadway theaters. Management let the "All-Broadway" master contract expire Sept. 12, and a "cooling-off period" expired at midnight Sept. 18.

OBE programs picketed as schools opens

Activists who have vowed to shut down "outcome-based education" (OBE) programs in American schools picketed selected schools in Virginia and Pennsylvania where these programs are being imposed. A key weapon in the growing national opposition has been a pamphlet issued by *New Federalist* newspaper, "Will You Allow Your Child To Be Spiritually Molested?" which includes an introduction by Lyndon LaRouche. Many programs, under names such as "Atlas" or "Cozi," operate with corporate or foundation backing, as local education budgets evaporate.

• Five people picketed Norview High School in Norfolk, Virginia to protest the "Atlas" project at its home base. One parent,

who had fought against sex education six years ago, reported to protesters that her children come home and tell her, "We don't have to listen to you anymore, we have our own values."

• Protesters at nearby Bowling Park Elementary were told by a local reporter that the school principal is saying that they may have to modify the Common Core curriculum but they will never give back the grant money, or terminate the "Cozi" program.

• The Ambridge, Pennsylvania school board's September meeting was picketed by activists, who exposed the fact that next year's curriculum includes instruction in so-called extra-sensory perception for the fifth grade.

• The school board meeting in Phoenixville, near Philadelphia, was also picketed, where activists briefed parents on Virginia Gov. Douglas Wilder's declaration shutting down some of the state's OBE programs.

Report terms Holtzman 'grossly negligent'

A New York City investigation reported that City Comptroller Elizabeth Holtzman committed "gross negligence" when her 1992 campaign for U.S. Senate took a \$450,000 loan from Fleet Bank; she later approved the bank as the underwriter of New York City bonds. Holtzman, as U.S. congressman in 1978, wrote the legislation establishing the so-called Nazi-hunting unit of the Justice Department, the Office of Special Investigations.

Holtzman blocked the release of the city's Department of Investigation report until the last minute. The report was finally released on primary election day, Sept. 14. Assemblyman Alan G. Hevesi, who narrowly defeated her in the primary, faces Holtzman in a runoff on Sept. 28.

Holtzman continued to lead the fight to have the U.S. Justice Department prevent OSI victim John Demjanjuk from returning to the United States, after the Israeli Supreme Court acquitted him of Nazi war crimes. Demjanjuk has been an innocent target of the OSI for 16 years.

American Jews back PLO-Israel accords

Among the great majority of American Jews who support the PLO-Israel agreement, Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Jewish Congregations, wrote a "Memo to a Hawk" opinion page column in the Sept. 17 *New York Times*, admonishing neo-conservative Norman Podhoretz to get on board. He tells Podhoretz, the editor of *Commentary*, who has vehemently denounced the accord: "You backed Begin. Now, back Rabin. . . . From American Jews [Israeli leaders] deserve fervent prayers at the very least—not muttered curses from those who, within the safe haven of these shores, still deify land over life."

In the same issue, columnist Anthony Lewis reported that American Jewish Congress head Robert Lifton just returned from Israel, where he found that friends of his, conservative businessmen who had voted for the Likud party in the last election, are now excited about the economic potential of peace.

Farmers continue milk lift for Iraqi children

A group of American farmers announced on Sept. 17 from Sioux Falls, South Dakota that they were sending a fifth shipment of non-fat dry milk powder to children in Iraq, who are still being starved by the continuing United Nations embargo. The shipment is being organized by local grain farmer Ronald Wiczorek.

The farmers' "milk lift" started in October 1991, as an alternative to ineffective farmer protests against low prices, such as dumping milk. The milk lift is intended to save the lives of innocent children and to protest the use of food as a weapon, as well as to dramatize the desperate economic condition of independent farmers in the United States.

The milk lift is being coordinated by the Committee to Save the Children in Iraq,

founded in 1991 by His Beatitude Raphael Bidawid, Patriarch of the Chaldean Catholic Church; Helga Zepp-LaRouche, founder of the Schiller Institute; and Dr. Hans Koechler of the International Progress Organization.

Du Pont Co. attempting to break coal strikers

Consolidation Coal (Consol), the de facto leader of the Bituminous Coal Owners' Association (BCOA), is moving toward bringing in scabs to break the four-month-long strike against them and a handful of other companies by the United Mine Workers (UMW), according to sources in southwest Virginia. Action to replace the 1,000 striking miners at Consol's three mines in Buchanan County would greatly heighten tensions in this area.

Efforts by governors of the states where the strike is occurring have succeeded in restoring bargaining, but brought no resolution of the issue which led to the strike: BCOA's violation of agreements to hire a certain percentage of laid-off union workers at non-union mines.

Day-long sympathy strikes for the miners were held at mines in South Africa and Australia in August. Independent gubernatorial candidate Nancy Spannaus has called for international support for the UMW strikers.

UMW head Richard Trumka just completed a tour of the striking areas, seeking to rally the miners, but warning against any outbreak of violence on the picket lines, if scabs begin to cross the lines.

The impetus behind the union-busting effort must be laid at the door of the Du Pont Co. which owns 50% of Consol, and the leading power within Du Pont, Edgar Bronfman. Under Bronfman, the Du Pont group is on a deindustrialization tear throughout the United States. Hundreds of layoffs have been announced at the company's Virginia factories, in addition to the assault on the coal miners' union. Bronfman, who lives in the Charlottesville area and is the international chairman of the organized crime-linked Anti-Defamation League (ADL), has given \$10,000 directly to Democratic candidate Mary Sue Terry in the Virginia gubernatorial election.

Briefly

● **THE ASBESTOS SCARE** in New York City schools was described as a "needless" worry that detracts from more serious problems, according to a report issued on Sept. 17 by the Environmental Health and Safety Council of the American Health Foundation. UPI quoted council director Dr. Gary Williams that "issues such as environmental asbestos exposure are of little significance compared to the important consequences of disrupting the education of children."

● **FORMER CANCER** patient Gregory Maas, the chief executive of incurably ill For Animal Research (i-FAR), visited Houston in September to organize support for the use of animals for medical research. He spoke to about 200 doctors, nurses, and patients at the M.D. Anderson Cancer Center about the need to counter the propaganda of the animal rights movement. "We have a silent majority, and we are being defeated by a very vocal minority," Maas told them.

● **'MORTAL KOMBAT'** is the name of the latest violent video game released on Sept. 13 by Sega. The children's game, being promoted for the Christmas holiday, allows the winner to shoot an electrical jolt into the loser, making his head explode; ripping out the loser's beating heart; or pulling off his head, with the spine attached.

● **VIRGINIA'S EXECUTION** of Joe Louis Wise on Sept. 14 set a new U.S. record for executions in a single year, bringing the 1993 total to 32. More than 10 executions are scheduled between now and November in Texas alone.

● **CIVIL RIGHTS** activist Roy Perry has filed an official complaint with the Virginia State Corporation Commission against the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Perry is demanding the SCC remove the ADL's charter on the basis that its illegal spying and activity against Lyndon LaRouche contradicts its official purpose as stated in the charter.