

National News

'Aztec culture' pushed in California

San Jose, California is planning to erect a statue of the Aztec god Quetzalcoatl, but is meeting stiff resistance from Christian groups, according to the *Sacramento Bee*. While city officials claim the sculpture will "honor the heritage of Latinos," the chairman of the city's planning commission, Salvatore Caruso, has distributed photocopies from a book which reports that "Quetzalcoatl taught his followers to tear out a still-beating human heart using a lava rock axe." Caruso demanded, "How can you bring a symbol of this grotesque indignity to people?" An ethnic studies professor assured people, however, that sacrifices made at the temple of Quetzalcoatl, were "only because the sacrifices were demanded by another god!"

Also in California, a growing organization that wants to break off the southwestern United States as a separate nation, has chapters in more than 90% of the high schools, and almost every junior college and university in the Los Angeles and San Diego areas, according to the Oct. 24 *Washington Times*. The Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlan, or MEChA, wants to reestablish an Aztec empire, to be called Aztlan, in an area stretching from California to Texas, and including northern Mexico, even though historians and anthropologists agree that the Aztecs never established themselves that far north. Incredibly, MEChA subsists almost entirely on public monies granted it by the schools where it operates.

Haitian takes U.S. foreign policy to task

Haitian-American Joel Dejean blasted U.S. Haiti policy as "globaloney" in a letter to the *Houston Post*, in response to a cartoon depicting Haitians as practitioners of voodoo. "As a Haitian-American living in this country for 29 years, I was deeply insulted by your racist and condescending political cartoon on the editorial page Oct. 12.

"Haiti does not need or want the U.S. military coming in as an occupying force, to impose your idea of 'democracy.' Aristide is a pawn of the U.S., who supports debt repayments to the IMF and World Bank, and is well-known for 'necklacing' his opponents. He is every bit as evil as Papa Doc Duvalier, another asset of the U.S. government in his day.

"The Haitian military is defending Haiti's national sovereignty. If any military force needs retraining, it is the U.S. military, which goes around committing atrocities in Panama, Iraq, and Somalia in the name of the new world order.

"If you really want to help Haiti, you should call for completely lifting the embargo/blockade and support immediate assistance in building water projects, power stations, rail transportation, hospitals and schools.

"Haiti needs development, not phony democracy and globaloney!"

The editor, apparently missing the point, responded: "In other words, just send a bundle of money, then butt out?"

TV violence is murder on America

"Screen Violence Is Killing Us" is the cover story of the November-December issue of *Harvard Magazine*. The six-page feature documents the phenomenal rise in violence since 1953, making America "one of the most dangerous nations on earth," and pins the blame on television: "There's no question that violence on-screen leads to violence off-screen." Author David Barry comments, "Clearly something has gone horribly wrong. In looking for a root cause, one of the obvious differences in the social and cultural fabric between post-World War II and pre-World War II America is the massive and pervasive exposure of American youth to television."

The article cites a recent study by Ron Slaby of the Harvard Education Development Center; Ed Donnerstein of the University of California School of Communications; and Leonard Eron at the University of Illinois, which examined 30 years of research and concluded that there is a "clear

consensus" that TV violence is associated with anti-social and aggressive behavior. Among the other statistics, the study found that children aged 2 to 11 log an average of 28 hours per week of television viewing, which means they've seen more than 5,000 murders by the end of elementary school.

Virginia Dems gag conservative groups

The Virginia Democratic Party, which ran former Attorney General Mary Sue Terry for governor, managed to secure a temporary restraining order prohibiting two conservative groups from distributing fliers in churches across the state on Oct. 24. The flier, produced by the Family Foundation and Concerned Women for America, is a two-page voter guide that lists the positions of all six Republican and Democratic statewide candidates on issues such as abortion, crime, and taxes. While demurring that "it's totally appropriate for people to put out fliers in church whenever they want," state Democratic chairman Mark R. Warner continued, "what bothered me so much was that they're trying to portray themselves as some sort of nonpartisan League of Women Voters-type group. They were clearly partisan."

Anne B. Kincaid, spokeswoman for the Family Foundation, charged that the Democratic Party was using "Gestapo-like tactics" to silence opponents. "This is the worst of brownshirt censorship by people desperate to hold onto power."

Fairfax County Circuit Judge J. Howe Brown issued the restraining order, ruling that the groups putting out the flier had not registered with the state. However, many of the approximately 1 million fliers have reportedly been distributed to volunteers who are not bound by the injunction.

School funding inequities open door to OBE

A lawsuit in Ohio is expected to produce a ruling soon in a case which challenges the funding method used in that and many other

states to finance public schools. The issue is the inequity which is created by real estate tax assessments being used to finance local districts, the same question which led to similar suits in Kentucky, Michigan, and Texas, and to suits pending in 16 other states. As rural property values collapse and inner city tax revenues dwindle, wealthy suburban schools' relative prosperity has made the funding inequities glaring, prompting education officials to demand statewide assessments.

The effort to establish expenditures per pupil across the board in the states has left the door open for proponents of "outcome-based education," many of whose brainwashing programs are receiving large amounts of corporate funding which makes the programs alluring to cash-strapped education officials. Because of the infiltration of such so-called education reform, the financing reforms are meeting resistance from parents.

In Maryland, a new network called Public Rejection of OBE (PROBE), consisting of statewide parent groups, activists, and concerned citizens, has begun to operate out of Annapolis. In Oregon, parents' opposition forced the Eugene school system to drop its World Core Curriculum, designed by Robert Muller, which had been incorporated into all levels of the city's school system.

Orchestra wins strike by raising culture issue

The six-week strike in Washington, D.C. by the Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra was settled Oct. 15 in a short-term victory for musicians seeking to preserve the orchestra as a unit ensemble dedicated to classical music. Management, led by Wall Street banker James Wolfensohn, backed off its original demand that the orchestra be disbanded, when the musicians accused him of wanting to end classical culture in Washington.

In provoking the strike, Wolfensohn had intended to stop all performance of Classical music at the Kennedy Center, a national memorial dedicated to presenting

the classics in the nation's capital. "We don't want your orchestra! We don't need your orchestra!" Wolfensohn summed it up earlier in October. He maintained that the American people are too stupid to appreciate the classics, and that classical concerts don't sell tickets.

However, the orchestra won only a two-year contract with the Kennedy Center for the full 67-player tenured orchestra. It simultaneously won a similar, five-year contract with the Washington Opera, acknowledging the orchestra's 67 members as the opera company's ensemble. The contracts freeze wages for two years, and the Kennedy Center contract has a further 15% pay cut in the form of a cut of the ballet season by two weeks.

Spannaus demands end to death penalty

Nancy Spannaus, who ran as an independent candidate for governor of Virginia, held a press conference in Danville, Va. on Oct. 25 with civil rights leaders to demand the death penalty be abolished. Spannaus was joined by prominent figures in the state's Southern Christian Leadership Conference and National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Spannaus attacked her Democratic opponent, former state Attorney General Mary Sue Terry, who prosecuted Earl Washington, an innocent retarded man immediately facing the electric chair in Virginia. "Earl Washington's case once again brings to the fore the sharp differences between me and my opponents: Both Mary Sue Terry and George Allen support the death penalty and have made it a campaign issue. 'Bloody Mary,' when she was Attorney General, opposed all of Earl Washington's appeals on the sole grounds that the clear evidence of his innocence didn't make it to court within 21 days of his sentencing. In Washington's case, DNA evidence was available which proved that he could have not been the rapist and murderer—yet that evidence was never introduced into court by his attorney, who is now a state judge. . . . Terry has consistently put procedure—even if it means executing innocent people—above justice."

Briefly

● **NASHVILLE**, Tennessee's City Council formally voted to hold a two-hour public hearing on the resolution to demand the removal of the statue of Ku Klux Klan founder Albert Pike from Judiciary Square in Washington, D.C. The hearing on the resolution, which was introduced by City Councilman Kwame Leo Lillard, has been set for Nov. 11.

● **THE GIRL SCOUT PLEDGE** of Honor to "serve God" was changed to "serve" at the organization's national convention in Minneapolis last month.

● **FOUR FORMER ATTORNEYS** General defended *habeas corpus* in a commentary in the *Washington Post* on Oct. 24. Benjamin Civiletti, Nicholas Katzenbach, Edward Levi, and Elliot Richardson wrote that, while prisoners often abuse the law by filing repetitive *habeas corpus* appeals, it is possible to streamline procedures without taking the direction of recent Supreme Court decisions that practically close the door to all prisoner appeals.

● **AN EXECUTION** date has been set for Karla Faye Tucker in Texas for Nov. 19. If Tucker is killed, she will be the second woman executed in the United States since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976. Tucker, who has refused to give press interviews because of the pain it might cause the families of the murder victims, is one of four women on Texas's death row.

● **THE UNITED STATES** will respect Russia's sphere of influence, five former U.S. secretaries of defense agreed, according to the German daily *Frankfurter Rundschau* of Oct. 25. Harold Brown, Richard Cheney, Frank Carlucci, Donald Rumsfeld, and James Schlesinger, at a forum in Washington, "specially advised against any U.S. military involvement in Bosnia or on the territory of the former Soviet Union," the paper reported.