

National News

Neo-cons gun for DOJ civil rights nominee

President Clinton nominated Deval Patrick to be assistant attorney general in charge of the Department of Justice (DOJ) Civil Rights Division on Feb. 1. Even before the nomination was announced, the same neo-conservative circles which were involved in sinking the nomination of Lani Guinier for the same post last June, geared up to go after Patrick. Clint Bolick of the Cato Institute, who first labelled Guinier the "quota queen," called Patrick a "stealth Guinier" and said on Jan. 31 that he "is part of the same pro-quota chorus that produced Lani Guinier."

Bolick attacked Patrick, a Boston lawyer, for his work with the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund, and particularly his challenge to the death penalty in the 1987 case *McCleskey v. Kemp*. In that case, Patrick argued to the U.S. Supreme Court that the death penalty was unconstitutional on the grounds that blacks were far more likely to be executed than whites.

Although Bolick had begun the campaign against Lani Guinier's nomination, it was organized opposition led by the Anti-Defamation League and the American Jewish Congress which sealed her fate. The ADL has traditionally regarded the Civil Rights Division as its "turf" in the Justice Department.

Indy resolution calls for Pike statue removal

A special resolution calling for the removal of the Albert Pike statue located in Washington, D.C. was introduced at the Indianapolis, Indiana City-County Council meeting on Jan. 31, by Republican Ron V. Franklin and Democrat Tim Mullin. In an unusual move, however, the resolution was sent to the Rules and Public Policy Committee, which will hold a hearing on March 1. Both council members believe that the resolution has no chance for passage there because that

is the committee where most issues and resolutions get buried. Special resolutions ordinarily are heard by the full council and are passed by consent.

The statue of Confederate Gen. Albert Pike was erected on federal property in Washington, D.C. in 1901 by the Scottish Rite of Freemasons. In 1992, when the Prince Hall Masons revealed that Pike had been a founder of the Ku Klux Klan, the presidential campaign of Lyndon LaRouche and Rev. James Bevel launched an international effort to force the statue's removal. The Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith came out in defense of Pike, claiming that to take down the symbol of race hatred, treason, and oppression would give credibility to its enemy LaRouche.

The Feb. 1 issue of the *Indianapolis News* covered the council's decision and remarks by Ron Franklin. "Taxpayer support of this monument should not be given to the memory of one who practiced beliefs and attitudes that are perverse to the principles of our great nation. . . . Since we are paying for this out of our federal tax money, it's a concern of everybody in Marion County," he said.

Schools' physical plant in scandalous disrepair

Twelve percent of American schools are officially "beyond habitability," according to a study by the American Association of School Administrators, reported the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* on Feb. 7. One in eight American schools is in such poor shape that it creates a "major handicap" for learning. The report says that studies have shown that children who go to schools in the worst condition—leaking roof, disabled plumbing, broken furnace—perform nearly 11% lower than children of equal economic background who go to schools in excellent condition.

Nationwide about \$125 billion is needed, according to the *Times-Dispatch*, to rebuild and repair aging schools, and the nation's three largest cities—New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago—need more than \$1 billion each.

Sen. Carol Moseley-Braun (D-Ill.) has introduced an amendment to the Education Goals 2000 bill that would require the government to create standards for what is acceptable for the condition of a school building. Of course, standards are one thing; doing something is quite another.

Cosmonaut joins U.S. shuttle mission

Space Shuttle orbiter Discovery was launched at 7:10 a.m. on Feb. 3 for an eight-day mission in Earth orbit. This is the 60th flight of the Shuttle program. Cosmonaut Sergei Krikalev, who has flown two long-duration missions aboard the Russian Mir space station, inaugurates the U.S.-Russian manned space program, which will include American astronaut tours of duty aboard the Mir, and up to 10 link-ups of the Shuttle and the Russian space station. This is the first part of a three-phase cooperative effort, which is supposed to culminate in a joint space station.

In anticipation of his flight, Krikalev was interviewed by *21st Century Science & Technology* quarterly, for the Winter 1993-94 issue. He said that the most difficult part of his training was learning English. Krikalev will be participating in joint U.S.-Russian medical experiments aboard the Shuttle, and in the Shuttle Amateur Radio Experiment, which consists of live teaching broadcasts to schools from space.

The Shuttle mission will include the first flight test of the Wake Shield Facility, a small spacecraft that will be released from the orbiter's cargo bay and will fly about 40 miles from the Shuttle. As it travels through space, it will create a wake behind it. An ultra-high vacuum will be created behind that wake, and this will be used to test processes that promise to lead to new manufacturing techniques for semiconductors.

Littleton, Colo. scraps OBE graduation criteria

The Littleton, Colorado school board voted

to replace outcome-based education (OBE) criteria for graduation with traditional guidelines requiring students to pass a certain number of core courses, reported the Feb. 3 issue of the *Washington Times*.

Three years ago, Littleton began phasing out standard measures and replacing them with "performance-based" requirements. Their "Direction 2000" program stated that, beginning with the 1995 class, students would have had to perform more than 100 tasks to show they had mastered certain skills instead of completing required courses. The board also voted to eliminate their "Students Out Serving" community service program as a graduation requirement.

Critics said the new criteria were too ambiguous and noted that education experts have said such performance tests have not yet been proven valid. Board member Bill Cisney said, "There were a number of outcomes we thought were distinctly unacademic" and assessments were almost entirely subjective. "The human relations outcomes had a standard on group participation that said basically students would fail if they didn't yield to the group."

Students had characterized demonstration assessments in "human relations" and "personal growth" elements of the OBE program as "a joke," in comments to the board and letters to the editor, as Littleton High School principal Tim Westerberg steadfastly maintained his support for Directions 2000.

Prosecution case weak in Trade Center bombing

After four months of testimony from 207 witnesses, with 1,003 exhibits entered into evidence, prosecutors rested their case on Feb. 6 in the World Trade Center bomb plot trial.

According to a report in the *New York Times*, prosecutors were unable to present any evidence proving that the four defendants had actually manufactured the bomb that exploded last February in the parking basement of the New York skyscraper, killing 6 and wounding 1,000. Instead, prose-

cutors gave the jurors an "avalanche" of circumstantial evidence, showing that the defendants had rented the van, fragments of which were found inside the Trade Center garage, that they had purchased chemicals that could have been used to construct the bomb, and that they all knew each other and had been frequently seen in public together.

It is not clear what kind of defense will be presented by attorneys for the four accused. In earlier press statements, defense attorney William Kunstler had accused an FBI informant, Colonel Salem, of being the driver of the van in which the explosives used in the bombing were planted, claiming to have evidence that Salem checked into a hospital in lower Manhattan the day of the bombing for inner ear problems caused by being too close to a loud explosion.

Virginia school prayer bills pass committee

The Virginia House of Delegates passed a bill on Feb. 9 that directs the state to set guidelines for voluntary prayer in schools, according to the Feb. 10 *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. Introduced by Del. Clinton Miller (R-Shenandoah) with 48 co-sponsors, the bill directs the state Board of Education to develop guidelines for student-initiated prayer, including what roles teachers should play, how school facilities and equipment can be used, and how prayer can be introduced during class time. The state Senate must still pass the bill.

"I just think the courts and public officials have gone to the point of silliness in exiling out of public life any mention of God," Miller stated, and "the government must act to reverse the decay in civility and the rejection of religion in modern society." Another bill, sponsored by David Brickley (D-Woodbridge) and passed by the House Education Committee, would allow students to engage in voluntary prayer "consistent with constitutional principles."

The Virginia chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union said their lawyers would be lined up at the courthouse doors waiting to challenge the measure if Miller's bill was passed.

Briefly

● **MORTON HALPERIN** was named to the National Security Council as "senior director for democracy," in early February. According to the *Washington Times*, Halperin, the former director of the American Civil Liberties Union, is a friend of National Security Adviser Anthony Lake, and will work with NSC Counselor Richard Schifter in a new NSC directorate coordinating policy for central and eastern Europe.

● **LYNDON LAROCHE** made his debut appearance on the cable TV program "The LaRouche Connection," on Feb. 8. The program is aired by 65 public access stations throughout the country, with combined subscribers of 10 million households.

● **THE PROPOSED BUDGET** for 1995 includes \$585 million for "population control assistance," up from \$503 million for the current year, according to the Feb. 6 *Boston Globe*. The program focuses on the surgical sterilization of Third World mothers and fathers. U.S. payments into the United Nations Population Fund will grow from \$40 million to \$60 million.

● **ADAM GLICKMAN**, owner of CONDOMania, the first nationwide chain of condom boutiques, has just introduced "The Official Condom of the 1994 Great L.A. Quake," according to UPI. There may not be any infrastructure in California, but Glickman is going to make sure that southern Californians get a handful of condoms in their emergency earthquake kits. Proceeds from the sales will go to the Red Cross fund for earthquake victims.

● **HENRY HUDSON**, the former U.S. attorney who ran the "get LaRouche" prosecution in 1988, has been named to Virginia's 32-member Commission on Parole Abolition and Sentencing Reform. The commission met for the first time on Feb. 7 and heard from Gov. George Allen, who said their task is to get "these grisly, violent predators" off the streets.