

National News

Thatcher to legislature: 'I am a Virginian'

"I'm a Virginian" Baroness Margaret Thatcher told fawning legislators in Richmond on Feb. 3, according to the *Washington Post*. Thatcher had been invited to address a joint session of the legislature (only the second British subject to do so) in her capacity as chancellor of the College of William and Mary (the first British subject to hold that post in the 300-odd years of its existence).

Thatcher, whose 11-year survival as prime minister of Britain earned her the name the "Iron Lady," lavished praise on her own Thatcher Revolution in "free-market capitalism" as "economic democracy. It limits the power of government by maximizing the power of the people."

"As chancellor of the College of William and Mary," she said to a standing ovation, "I already feel at least an adopted daughter of the state of Virginia. But when I consider all that this place has given to democracy, I am moved to say that in spirit: I am a Virginian."

Democrats and Republicans fell over themselves trying to outdo each other in demonstrations of Anglophilia: Senate Majority Leader Hunter B. Andrews (D) shouted, "England forever!" Andrews is known for quoting Oliver Cromwell and Charles I in Senate floor debates. Gov. George Allen (R) made his feelings known by inviting the baroness to a private luncheon, from which Lt. Gov. Don Beyer, a Democrat, was excluded.

Schiller concerts hail African-American month

More than 400 people attended a concert featuring Classical European and American Negro spiritual music on Feb. 3 in San Francisco and 850 in Torrance, California on Feb. 5. The concerts, sponsored by the Schiller Institute, were billed as "A Musical Celebration of African-American History Month," and featured African-American

artists Helen Dilworth (soprano), Elvira Green (mezzosoprano), Richard Riley (tenor), and Aaron Gooding (bass), with piano accompanists Dr. William Duncan Allen and Sylvia Olden Lee.

In addition to organizing attendance from over 36 churches in the Los Angeles area, the institute received such a warm response from the Korean community that the Los Angeles Seoul Chorale asked to participate. Host Dennis Speed introduced the group: "Some people claim that there is a conflict between the Koreans and the Afro-American community. This is only true in the minds of the demented; in fact, the Los Angeles Seoul Chorale, whom you are about to hear, requested to be part of this program tonight. They requested to be able to come to sing for you." This got a tremendous applause.

In earlier remarks opening the concert, Speed had referenced Martin Luther King's conscious decision to drink from the cup of Gethsemane: "This idea is what gives us the strength that is represented by music that elevates the soul. The spirituals come from this kind of heroism, not from oppression, but from the fight against oppression, and the principle that all men are created in the image of God." Speed invited the audience to join with the Schiller Institute to demonstrate that "we will not be sucked into the mud of hatred."

Gingrich on Medicare: 'Let them use HMOs'

While Newt Gingrich told the American Hospital Association on Jan. 30 that he wants to "rethink" the Medicare program in order to offer "greater choices for senior citizens," top on his list of choices was health maintenance organizations (HMOs). In fact, Medicare offers the 37 million elderly and disabled citizens to whom it provides services the choice of using HMOs, managed care, or traditional fee-for-service plans. By 1995, Medicare beneficiaries enrolled in HMOs increased to 2,339,592, while those enrolled in all pre-paid Medicare health care plans jumped to 3,114,566, a 26% increase over 1994.

In 1991, a study by the congressional

General Accounting Office exposed entrenched abuses by the Florida-based Humana Medical Plan, Medicare's largest HMO contractor. GAO found that Humana HMO plans had a corporate philosophy of "aggressive and manipulative marketing practices," in which sales agents manipulated potential Medicare clients into signing.

Humana also denied payment of emergency care obtained outside the plan's service area, then denied clients the right to appeal, forcing them to pay huge medical bills themselves or go to court. To increase profits, the HMO's physicians avoided critical diagnostic tests or ignored test results that would indicate costly treatment.

Virginia AG continues misconduct vs. Billington

In papers filed with the Supreme Court of Virginia, political prisoner and LaRouche associate Michael Billington denounced the continued misconduct of the Attorney General of Virginia. The papers were filed in response to the AG's motion to dismiss Billington's petition for a writ of *habeas corpus*. Billington was sentenced to 77 years in 1990 in a political trial that made a mockery of justice and is drawing shock and disbelief internationally.

In his original petition, filed in October 1994, Billington had charged that he is being illegally incarcerated because his conviction resulted from the treacherous actions of his trial counsel, the late Brian Gettings, and from prosecutorial misconduct by the Virginia Attorney General's office. Billington charged the AG with use of perjured testimony, withholding exculpatory evidence, brainwashing witnesses, black bag jobs, and fraud.

In response, the AG ignored the detailed charges presented in his over 100-page petition, saying that Billington's petition should be dismissed because Gettings was now dead and could not be called as a witness to explain his actions. Gettings died on Jan. 4, 1995 after a long bout with cancer. According to an affidavit of Frank Dunham, Gettings's former partner, in December 1994, Gettings had agreed to help the Commonwealth defend itself against Bill-

ington's *habeas* petition. But, according to the same affidavit, Gettings died before giving a statement. Dunham's affidavit was filed with the AG's response.

Billington charged that the AG is responsible for any prejudice caused by delay, since the AG was fully aware of Gettings's illness and waited more than two months before even attempting to get a statement from him: "In short, respondent, with knowledge of Mr. Gettings' impending demise, simply stalled until, according to him, Gettings was too ill to provide any information."

D.C. in 'worst crisis since 1873,' says Barry

Washington, D.C. Mayor Marion Barry released a new audit of the District's finances, projecting a \$722 million budget shortfall in a \$3.2 billion budget for the nation's capital. He said the city faces its worst financial crisis since 1873. In 1873, the year D.C. "home rule" was lost in the last century, the United States simultaneously plunged into what was then its greatest crisis and depression. That crisis was brought on by the attack of the Drexel-Morgan (British-Austrian) banking house against the pro-nationalist Jay Cooke bank. Cooke went bankrupt, credit disappeared, and the railroad construction Cooke and his allies were sponsoring was suspended.

In a related development, the Board of Education, by a vote of 9-1, agreed to the proposal of School Superintendent Franklin L. Smith to eliminate seven teaching days from the end of the school year. The board also agreed to eliminate 300 teaching jobs and 180 office jobs.

Attorney repeats call to exonerate LaRouche

Months after reviewing the volumes of evidence in the Lyndon LaRouche case, California trial attorney Curtis Clark, who chairs an independent committee of jurists and public officials, recently told an interviewer for *EIR* Audio Reports, "We all felt that we had

been part of the drafting of a document that was historical in nature." The committee that Clark heads reviewed the LaRouche case last September, and stated: "We . . . have come to the conclusion that there has been a gross, even conspiratorial, misuse of prosecutorial and investigative powers by officials and agents of the U.S. government. The common purpose and concerted action of the conspirators was to secure criminal convictions of Lyndon LaRouche and his associates to destroy their political movement."

Clark continued: "Obviously, the President enjoys the executive clemency powers, the powers to pardon, and could certainly do so for LaRouche and his associates, some of whom are still in custody. The Congress has oversight responsibility for the Department of Justice, and can certainly work through their various committees to try to investigate and give fuller airing to what actually occurred in the investigation and prosecution of LaRouche and his associates."

Envoy Gallucci defends North Korea agreement

Ambassador at Large Robert Gallucci entered into a spirited defense of the Clinton administration's framework agreement with North Korea, on Feb. 1 at a symposium sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations. Gallucci was faced by a mostly hostile panel of questioners, led by Bush National Security Adviser Brent Scowcroft and former Nuclear Regulatory Commission member Victor Galinsky.

Galinsky, in his opening remarks, complained that, as time passes, the United States loses leverage over North Korean compliance, that North Korea's facilities remain a latent threat, and that the light water reactors to be provided under the agreement are the poorest way of generating electricity in North Korea. In response, Gallucci asserted that, if implemented, the agreement completely removes the North Korean nuclear program and the leverage remains, because neither critical reactor components nor fuel will be delivered until North Korea complies with the safeguards of the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency as provided for in the framework agreement.

Briefly

● **CALIFORNIA** Gov. Pete Wilson (R) said Jan. 29 that he would like to see a constitutional amendment prohibiting so-called "unfunded mandates." Abolishing unfunded mandates has populist appeal with the "Contract with America" crowd, because the financial burden of unfunded mandates often falls on states, localities, or individuals.

● **THE ANTI-DEFAMATION** League's January newsletter, *ADL on the Frontline*, reported that the ADL held a breakfast for ADL Honorary National Commissioner Alan Gerry for his catalytic role in creating the League's William and Naomi Gorowitz Institute on Terrorism and Extremism. The keynote speaker was former Director of Central Intelligence R. James Woolsey.

● **DERIVATIVES FALLOUT:** Cuyahoga County (Cleveland), Ohio, has had to slash \$14.5 million out of its \$124 million general fund budget in the wake of the collapse of its "safe" investments in financial derivatives last year. Hardest hit are agencies caring for foster children and the elderly, including \$3.2 million cut from foster care and \$1.5 million from the county nursing home. In addition, a \$26 million planned subsidy to the county health and hospital system for the poor called MetroHealth is being cut by more than half.

● **HENRY KISSINGER** pontificated to the Senate Armed Services Committee on Feb. 2, at the invitation of its chairman, Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.), who solicited the British agent-of-influence's comment on "the foundations of American national security strategy as the committee prepares to examine U.S. military planning and budgeting."

● **THE PHILADELPHIA** orchestra will perform all nine Beethoven symphonies next year in honor of his 225th birthday. It will also hold a series of workshops and classes in high schools and colleges throughout the area, according to conductor Wolfgang Swallisch.