

National News

McCaffrey slams U.S. prison system as 'gulag'

Appearing before the House Treasury, Postal Service, and General Government appropriations subcommittee, on March 19, White House drug policy director Gen. Barry McCaffrey listed crowded prisons and jails as one of the unacceptable consequences of the nation's drug abuse problem. He said that more than \$17 billion is spent each year in the United States on prisons, and that this is "simply atrocious." He added that there are more than 1.6 million Americans behind bars, and that this is expected to increase by 25% by the year 2000. What we have with this, he said, is a "gulag in America."

Later on, in an exchange with Anne Northrup (R-Ky.), he pointed to the fact that over half of the people behind bars have drug and alcohol abuse problems, but only 7% have access to any kind of drug treatment program. "If you do in-prison treatment," he said, "you can reduce the likelihood of addictive behavior when these people return to the streets."

Italian daily dubs Scalia high court 'executioner'

"Scalia, the Executioner on the Supreme Court," headlines one in a series of articles in the Italian daily *Il Giornale* of March 20, referring to the death penalty appeal before the U.S. Supreme Court, of Virginia inmate Joseph O'Dell. Justice Antonin Scalia, who avers that morality in law should take back seat to the "will of the people," has become the focal point of *Il Giornale's* attacks, and has also been denounced by the anti-Mafia political group La Rete. The article refers to Scalia as the "Khomeini" of the U.S. justice system, who is "the extreme protector of the tradition of a literal and rigid interpretation of the American Constitution, [known as] 'judicial restraint.'"

Among other background information, *Il Giornale* notes that Scalia is a personal

friend of Virginia's Gov. George Allen, as well as of the prosecuting attorneys of Virginia Beach and Richmond, who succeeded in having O'Dell sentenced to death. O'Dell has a strong claim to innocence, but cannot obtain a new trial, because the evidence was uncovered more than 21 days after his conviction. His case has caused an uproar in Italy because of its rank injustice, and has even been cited by the pope.

On March 19, four Italian officials, including parliamentarian Luciano Neri, visited O'Dell at Mecklenburg prison and emerged to say that they are convinced O'Dell is innocent and to denounce the conditions in the prison. O'Dell's case was argued before the Supreme Court on March 18 and a decision is expected by June.

LaRouche associate files state habeas corpus

LaRouche associate Donald Phau filed legal papers in late March with the Supreme Court of Virginia, charging that he is being illegally held in prison by Virginia authorities, who, in collaboration with corrupt federal officials, the news media, and the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, obtained an illegal conviction of Phau on bogus charges that he violated Virginia's securities statutes.

The 142-page petition, accompanied by eight volumes of evidence, charges Virginia authorities with an accumulation of prosecutorial misconduct, including, presenting false evidence, witness tampering, brainwashing witnesses, black-bag jobs, illegal wiretaps, withholding exculpatory evidence, making false representations in court, and conducting a nationwide campaign of defamation to cover for these illegalities. The petition also charges that Phau's trial attorneys were grossly incompetent.

Phau is one of five LaRouche associates who remain as political prisoners in the Virginia spin-off from the 1986-87 "Get LaRouche" federal prosecutions. The five are serving inhumane sentences ranging from 25 years (for Phau) to 77 years (Michael Billington). An expanded report on their case is included in a new edition of the

New Federalist pamphlet, "The Summary of Relevant Evidence on the Record Demonstrating the Innocence of Lyndon LaRouche and Co-Defendants." First published at the outset of the international campaign to secure LaRouche's exoneration, over 12 million copies of the pamphlet were circulated. The new edition begins with a run of 200,000 and is titled "Have the Mass Media Brainwashed your Neighbor about Lyndon LaRouche?"

FBI doctored evidence in Oklahoma City bombing

The *Los Angeles Times* leaked what it said were excerpts from the Justice Department's Inspector General draft report, which suggests that the FBI laboratory doctored evidence in the Oklahoma City bombing investigation. The March 22 feature appeared after FBI lab scientists Frederic Whitehurst and the National Association of Criminal Trial Lawyers failed to win a court order approving the release of the draft report on corruption at the lab. The excerpts cast a heavy doubt over some of the crucial forensic evidence in the Oklahoma City case, whose first defendant, Timothy McVeigh, was to go to trial on March 31.

According to the excerpts, David Williams, a supervisory agent in the explosives unit of the FBI lab, produced a deeply flawed report on the nature of the bomb that blew up the Murrah Federal Building on April 19, 1995. According to the *Times*, Williams drew a series of conclusions about the composition of the bomb, the specific detonator, the velocity of the explosion, and even the kind of plastic containers used to construct the bomb, based on evidence obtained in raids on defendant Terry Nichols's house and other locations—not on rigorous forensic proof. Under aggressive interrogation by IG investigators, says the *Times*, Williams admitted that he had produced unjustified "scientific" findings, based on the evidence obtained in searches, and other field investigative details. Further, says the *Times*, Williams's boss failed to independently cross-check the findings before signing off on the assessment.

The presiding judge in McVeigh's trial has imposed a gag order on both the defense and the prosecution, against making any reference to the draft IG report. The final report is expected to be released by April 15.

Dirty Dick Morris goes to work for Murdoch

A tantalizing item on the Republican Party's "inside" man in the Clinton campaign, "Dirty Dick" Morris, appeared in the March 24 issue of the *New York Post*, the U.S. tabloid of Australian press czar Rupert Murdoch, whose "respectable" publications include the *London Times*: "He may be spurned at home, but former Bill Clinton aide Dick Morris seems to have fans in Britain, the land of Profumo and countless other political trouser-droppings. Morris has been writing for the *Times* of London, which ran his thoughts on Britain's upcoming election on its op-ed page on Saturday. The deal was fixed by the paper's New York correspondent, Quentin Letts, who says, 'Unlike the liberals of the Upper West Side we think Dick Morris quite a boy. He is a bloody good analyst and also writes well.'"

Lyndon LaRouche, asked for his comment, summarized Morris's common background with Murdoch as intimates of "Gay Edgar Hoover's Roy Cohn." Morris, Cohn's cousin and lifelong protégé, came out with a "kiss and tell book" so quickly after he was fired from the Clinton campaign (he was caught with a high-priced prostitute), that he probably had the book in galleys, before being cashiered.

Hongkong banker scores 'donorgate frenzy'

A Hongkong banker told *EIR* recently that he has received two or three dozen calls from U.S. media about the alleged Chinese effort to influence the U.S. elections through contributions, which he disdainfully called "donorgate." He said, "This is a feeding frenzy for the politicians. The *Washington Post*

wants to make this another Watergate, that is clear. There is an extraordinary resonance with what happened in Watergate, 23 years ago.

"The correspondents in the region [East Asia] are all apologetic about having to ask me these questions; they are disgusted with their head offices in the U.S. But they are under great pressure to follow this story.

"So far, we do not know the facts. But what is frightening in the U.S., is the coalition formed between the left, such as Rep. Nancy Pelosi, and the right, such as Jesse Helms. And the Christian Coalition is playing a very heavy role in this. The U.S. is a very ideological nation; it is held together by ideology," he said. "Both the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* are anti-Chinese fundamentalists." He concluded, "I think that Clinton has it right on China policy. With a strong President, there would be no fundamental problem in U.S.-Chinese relations. But if the President is weakened, there is a very dangerous risk of a new Cold War."

Sweeney: Fed rate hike may weaken economy

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney released a statement on March 25, sharply criticizing the Federal Reserve's decision the day before to raise interest rates: "By increasing short-term interest rates even though there is no evidence of accelerating inflation in the actual data, the Federal Reserve has sacrificed the economic interests of America's working families on the basis of a hunch. . . . A hike in interest rates means real economic pain for working Americans. They will pay higher rates on their consumer and mortgage debt, and face the prospect of a weaker economy with reduced job opportunities and slower wage growth.

"The Fed has carefully searched across the range of inflation indicators actively looking for one that indicates higher inflation. The plain vanilla facts are that there is no evidence of accelerating inflation, and there is no need to raise interest rates. . . . America needs a raise—not a rise in interest rates."

Briefly

AMBROSE Evans-Pritchard is about to be a Beltway has-been, according to a recent gossip item in *George* magazine. The *Sunday Telegraph's* Washington correspondent has been the leading mouthpiece for Britain's Clinton-bashing operations, including such whoppers as setting up the Paula Jones suit and stoking the rumors that Vincent Foster's death was murder.

ASIAN-AMERICANS were justifiably outraged by the March 24 racist cover of the *National Review*. Ostensibly meant to feature the alleged scandal of Chinese contributions to Democratic election campaigns, the cover depicts the President as a coolie, Mrs. Clinton with Asian-stereotyped buck teeth, and Vice President Gore in a Chinese robe and slippers. Maybe the real yellow peril comes from the Conservative Revolution's press sewers.

NATIVE AMERICANS are going to be hit extremely hard by the ravages of "welfare reform," sources who work on the Indian reservations have told *EIR*. Since unemployment on the reservations is 65%, most people are on welfare, and the only way they can go into "workfare" is to be sent off the reservations.

THE COMMERCE Department announced on March 18 that for the month of January, the United States ran a \$12.7 billion trade deficit on goods and services. But, excluding services, the U.S. trade deficit in physical goods alone was \$19 billion in January. This is the highest monthly physical goods trade deficit in U.S. history.

THE LOS ANGELES city council passed a living-wage ordinance on March 18, under which city contractors and businesses receiving city assistance must pay workers \$7.25 per hour plus health coverage and holidays, or \$8.50 without benefits. Republican Mayor Richard Riordan has vowed to veto the measure, but a 12-0 margin virtually assures an override.