

# National News

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## Justices snub funeral mass for Brennan

Four Supreme Court justices—including Chief Justice William Rehnquist—effectively boycotted the funeral mass for Justice William Brennan, who died on July 24. Brennan, who was appointed to the court in 1956 and retired in 1990, was a fierce opponent of the death penalty. Writing for the majority in the 1972 case *Furman v. Georgia*, which invalidated all death penalty laws, Brennan stressed that “Death is an unusually severe and degrading punishment; there is a strong possibility that it is inflicted arbitrarily . . . there is no reason to believe that it serves any penal purpose more effectively than the less severe punishment of imprisonment. The function of these principles is to enable a court to determine whether a punishment comports with human dignity. Death, quite simply, does not.”

The other three sitting justices who failed to honor Justice Brennan, were Sandra Day O’Connor, Anthony Kennedy, and Antonin Scalia. The last, a Catholic, like Brennan, had cast the deciding vote not to hear the appeal of Virginia death-row inmate Joseph O’Dell, despite a direct appeal to him by Mother Teresa of Calcutta. According to the *Washington Post*, Scalia had been attending the segregated, all-men’s elite “camp” at the Bohemian Grove, where nudity, profanity, and similar “sports” are *de rigueur*. Scalia had been scheduled to speak there on—of all things—the U.S. Constitution.

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## LaRouche Democrat runs for Charlotte mayoralty

Jim Harwood, a former financial manager, announced his intention to run as a Democrat for mayor of Charlotte, North Carolina on Aug. 1. According to his statement: “On July 18, 1997, Lyndon H. LaRouche announced his intention to campaign for the Democratic Party Presidential nomination for the year 2000. Mr. LaRouche cited a persisting downward trend in national leadership cou-

pled with the onrushing global financial and monetary crisis as his motivation. . . .

“The post-industrial lunacy of the last 30 years has resulted in the financial speculation bubble that threatens not only Charlotteans, but every person on the planet.

“The coming global financial and monetary collapse is best expressed by Mr. LaRouche’s now famous “Triple Curve Function.” What is demonstrated by the triple curve is the hyperbolic growth upwards of financial and monetary aggregates while plotting the contraction downward of our nation’s productive outputs and inputs. Most financial experts expect a major pop in this bubble to occur before the end of October.

“A prime example of what I am referring to are NationsBank and First Union, headquartered here in Charlotte, N.C. These two financial giants presently have an estimated \$2-4 trillion in off-balance-sheet debt, called derivatives! . . .

“As mayor, one policy I would urge legislators to adopt is to create a transaction tax for the sale or transfer of any bond, stock, security, future option, swap or derivative. This would not only help dry up the excesses in the financial markets, but also provide needed and substantial revenues for the state of North Carolina, it would yield upwards of \$500 million for North Carolina, which could be used to create tens of thousands of well-paying jobs in industry and infrastructure. . . .

“It is my intention to use the office of Mayor to rally forces within the Democratic Party to actively revive and support those economic initiatives that are best expressed today in the person of Lyndon H. LaRouche, and in keeping with the tradition of Franklin Delano Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy.”

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## Columbia/HCA executives under Federal indictment

Federal indictments were handed down against three executives of Columbia/Hospital Corporation of America, on July 30, for charges related to defrauding Federal health care programs, including Medicare. Charged are mid-level officials of the Nashville, Tennessee-based company. Columbia/

HCA is the largest hospital chain owner-operator in the world, now controlling an estimated 30% of the hospital base in states such as Florida, and 7-10% of the hospital base nationwide; the company is also prominent in Spain, Great Britain, and elsewhere in Europe.

Columbia/HCA is the foremost name in the area of so-called managed care, in which private profit streams are sucked out of the health care system, at the expense of the patients and providers who were formerly part of community health systems which were built up over decades of hard work.

The modus operandi of Columbia/HCA gives new meaning to the term “blood money.” The company took blood collected free of charge by the Red Cross, provided to Columbia/HCA for free, and then racked up its own profits. One such case is Columbia/HCA’s West Florida Hospital in Pensacola, which the Internal Revenue Service says grossed \$1.2 million at its blood bank, based on selling blood it had received from the Red Cross for free.

Columbia/HCA chief executive Richard C. Scott, who resigned July 25, headed up the company since its formation in 1987, and pushed through the takeovers of community medical facilities, and cutting budgets, staff, and care along the way. The company’s board interlocks with the insurance and bank cartels, through Prudential Insurance, Warburg, Brown Brothers Harriman, and others.

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## Khobar bombing suspect breaks plea agreement

The Saudi dissident who was deported in June to the United States from Canada, as a suspect in the July 1996 bombing of the Khobar Towers in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, is now saying that he knows nothing about the bombing of the U.S. military barracks, which killed 19 Americans. Amid speculation that he would point the finger at Iran, Hani al-Sayegh was supposed to plead guilty to a charge of conspiring to kill Americans in Saudi Arabia in an earlier incident, and then to cooperate with U.S. authorities in providing information on the 1996 bombing. Instead, al-Sayegh entered a plea of “not

guilty" in a court appearance on July 30, and his attorney declared that the plea agreement was a "dead letter."

The previous day, al-Sayegh's immigration lawyer, Michael Wildes, said he had drawn up papers requesting political asylum. Wildes said that his client "does not know anything or know who perpetrated this atrocity" at Khobar Towers. Wildes described him as a religious studies student who had visited Iran's holy sites, and said that he considered requesting asylum in the United States because he "really feels he was set up by Saudi intelligence to take a fall for this bombing."

## Boston passes, Chicago nixes, living-wage law

The Boston City Council on July 30 voted 11-1 to pass a living-wage ordinance, after months of lobbying by the Massachusetts AFL-CIO and community organizations, according to the AFL-CIO's Aug. 4 newsletter *Work in Progress*. The measure requires large city contractors and business subsidy recipients to pay wages sufficient to keep a family of four out of poverty.

In Chicago, activists stormed past police and pounded on the locked doors of the meeting room, as the City Council voted down a living-wage ordinance. But "the living wage is not an issue that is going away," promised Service Employees International Union Local 880 President Bessie Cannon.

## Control Board takeover of D.C. termed 'shameful'

As part of the "rescue" package which the Washington, D.C. Control Board crafted and President Clinton signed on Aug. 5 as part of the national budget package, the corrections and justice system for the city will be transformed into one of the most severe in the nation. Even Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton, who otherwise embraced the budget package, said, "I cannot tell you how profoundly disgusted I am with the

result of this," and called it a "shameful act," in her speech to the Urban League conference.

The D.C. package, which will be fully crafted by a panel headed by U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno or her designate, will eliminate parole, increase prison time for users of crack cocaine, and shut down the Lorton Correctional Complex (forcing inmates into Federal prisons all over the country). Defense lawyer Christopher Warnock told the *Washington Post*, "Somebody's got to pay the price for this bailout, and it's going to be young, black men." Mayor Marion Barry reiterated his disgust with the entire package, in a speech to the Urban League's 87th National Conference on Aug. 3, saying that "democracy in Washington was raped."

## Gore set to keynote Club of Rome conference

Vice-President Al Gore is the scheduled keynote speaker at the annual conference of the genocidalist Club of Rome this year. The conference, co-sponsored by the Smithsonian Institution, is set for Oct. 23-25 in Washington, D.C., with the theme: "The Global Information Society: Now New Media Will Transform Society."

A leading Club of Rome figure told *EIR* late in July, that the conference will focus on "the consequences of the new information technology for human psychology, human behavior, governance, and global economy." Individual sessions include "New Media, Governance, and Democracy"; "New Media, Culture, and Languages"; "New Media and Education"; "New Media, Psychology, and Behavior of Human Beings"; and "How New Media Transform Society."

Among the speakers are former Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers; former Colombian President Belisario Betancur; Prudential Insurance Company of America Executive Vice-President Michele Darling, a Canadian; Nobel Laureate Lawrence Klein of the Wharton School; and UCLA professor Robert Peccei, the son of Club of Rome founder Aurelio Peccei.

**GEORGE BUSH'S** International Republican Institute and unnamed "U.S. Republican Congressional members" held a workshop in Luanda, Angola, "attended by officials from UNITA and other invited opposition parties, and it allowed UNITA deputies and U.S. Republican Congressional members to exchange views," according to a broadcast from Jamba Voz da Resistencia do Galo Negro on July 28.

**PAUL WEYRICH**, of the neo-conservative Free Congress Foundation, endorsed the National Endowment for Democracy, and its ADL-trained director, Carl Gershman, in Weyrich's daily newsletter, *Net News Now!* on July 23. A major component of the NED is the International Republican Institute, which has backed "democratic" destabilizations of developing countries from Myanmar, to Cambodia, to the Zapatista terrorists in Mexico.

**WHITEWATER** Grand Inquisitor Kenneth Starr said on Aug. 4 that he has no deadline to finish his investigation into President Clinton and Whitewater—a probe which has already lasted over three years. "I've thrown all calendars away," Starr told the American Bar Association convention in San Francisco.

**RUPERT MURDOCH'S** Fox-TV network stopped airing such vapidities as "The Simpsons" and "Married with Children," long enough to push "end-times" hysteria, with a July 30 program on "The Prophecies of the Millennium," basing itself on the "Biblical predictions of the earth's destruction" in the year 2000. The program featured Episcopalian charismatic, gun-runner, and drug-pusher, Oliver North.

**SIX HOUSTON** officials, all of them black or Hispanic, were indicted for bribery by a Federal grand jury on July 30, after a sting operation. The sting operatives did not approach any of the city's white or Asian-American city council members or officials.