

# National News

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## Two-parent income evaporating, says CDF

A recent report by the Children's Defense Fund reflects reality more than most: The report, "Rescuing the American Dream: Halting the Economic Freefall of Today's Young Families," showed that the median income of young two-parent families has plummeted in the past two decades.

Two-parent black family median income has fallen the most, by 46% in the last 24 years. In 1973, the average black family with children earned \$19,153. Today, the figure is \$10,380. This puts 64% of African-American children below the government's official poverty line of \$11,821 for a family of three. Other families didn't fare much better, according to the report. White families saw their median income drop 22% while Hispanic families' median income dropped 28%. In every region of the country, 30-49% of children in young families are now poor, and the poverty rate of children headed by full-time wage-earners has tripled since 1973.

There is a strong correlation between parental age and the rate of poverty. The relative hourly wage of workers in their 20s is only 73¢ for every dollar earned by an older worker, down from 88¢ in 1973.

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## Black farmers protest becoming 'extinct'

John Boyd, president of the National Black Farmers Association from Baskerville, Virginia, will lead a demonstration in front of the White House on Dec. 12—replete with mules, tractors, and trucks—preceding a Dec. 15 meeting with President Bill Clinton, to discuss the plight of small farmers, and particularly black farmers. U.S. black farmers have become virtually "extinct," Boyd charges, as a result of racial discrimination at the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the onslaught against the family farmer by the nation's food cartels.

On Nov. 19, Boyd told the weekly newspaper *New Federalist* that the number of

black farmers has gone from over 1 million in the 1940s, to less than 18,000 today, making up roughly 1% of all farmers. Boyd said he is fighting not only for black farmers, but for all small farmers. The meeting he will have with President Clinton will include representatives of small farmers and other "socially disadvantaged" groups.

Boyd said that there are nearly 1,000 USDA-acknowledged complaints pending, which relate to discrimination by the USDA, about which he wants to ask President Clinton for action. Black farmers, he said, have been systematically discriminated against in obtaining loans for emergencies, equipment, and farm ownership. Boyd recommended that President Clinton "should step in and have a special task force evaluate the department's conduct, as it relates to socially disadvantaged farmers and how they perceive program delivery at the department. . . . We were brought here on slave ships and worked the land and cleaned it up for free, slave labor. We deserve the fair and equitable right to keep our homes. Our forefathers have paid their price. If we lose all of our land, we've lost part of our heritage."

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## Los Angeles plans mass water and power layoffs

In an effort to make the Department of Water and Power "more competitive," the Los Angeles Board of Water and Power commissioners unanimously approved a plan to slash 2,000 jobs, according to the Nov. 19 *Los Angeles Times*, in what would be the largest municipal layoffs in the city's history. Further, the board plans to implement a still-undisclosed plan to reduce what is being called the utility's "huge burden of debt." The announcement came at hearings which were packed by angry DWP workers. Pat Sanders, vice president of the DWP workers union, said that DWP General Manager David Freeman was leaving "devastation and chaos in his wake . . . killing the Department of Water and Power, and killing the city."

If all this seems reminiscent of debates on restructuring developing nations' debt, it should. The Los Angeles DWP is the largest municipal power company in the

country, and owns some of the largest and newest energy-generating facilities. If the utility is to be privatized, as foreseen by the city's austerity-meisters, its "mountain of debt" will have to be paid down, possibly by liquidating DWP's facilities.

This is the third potentially dangerous municipal crisis to break in Los Angeles. The first was the transport problems caused by the Union Pacific merger, which threatens, among other things, the safety of the city water supply. And a week before the DWP crisis, the County Board of Supervisors announced major cuts in the replacement of the County Medical Facility.

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## Infighting hits Scaife's 'Get Clinton' kindergarten

The journalistic equivalent of a hair-pulling match has broken out among the kept writers funded by "Get Clinton" (and earlier "Get LaRouche") sugar-daddy, Richard Mellon Scaife. In October, one of the founders of the *American Spectator*, Ronald Burr, was fired for demanding an audit of the \$600,000 annual subsidy to the magazine from foundations controlled by Scaife. It was reported that Burr objected to spending the bulk of the Scaife funds poking around Arkansas and hiring investigators to examine Clinton's past.

Now, a counterattack has been launched by Joseph Farah, the director of the Scaife-financed Western Journalism Center. Farah's article in his Internet "newspaper" *World Net Daily*, on "The Unquiet Death of the 'American Spectator,'" accuses "all three of America's conservative magazines—the *National Review*, the *Weekly Standard*, and the *American Spectator*"—with having found something they can agree on: "the professional disembowelment of investigative reporter Christopher Ruddy, author of the new book, *The Strange Death of Vincent Foster*." Ruddy, yet another Scaife hireling, is reputedly the only reporter for any daily paper whose full-time assignment is the Vincent Foster case. That paper is Scaife's own Pittsburgh *Tribune-Review*.

Farah targets Byron York, a staff writer for the *American Spectator*, who attacked

**PLACIDO DOMINGO**, director of the Washington Opera, blasted the media's miserly coverage of Classical art, in favor of movies and rock, during a press conference at the National Press Club on Nov. 20. The world-famous tenor said, "Children have all the possibilities to learn, but they learn rock music." He called on corporations to subsidize opera performances so tickets can be given free to those who cannot afford them.

**WASHINGTON POST** employees organized by the Communications Workers of America, currently in bargaining with the daily, are running radio ads spoofing the *Post's* advertising and slamming its rotten health policy and its plan to hire part-time workers with no benefits. Parodying the John McLaughlin talk show, the ad's truculent host asks: "Didn't they learn anything from UPS?" To which a "guest" responds (a parody of the *Post* ads' come-on), "I guess they just don't get it."

**'BIBI' NETANYAHU** snubbed moderate Jews during his visit to Los Angeles in mid-November, preferring to attend a \$10,000 a plate dinner for the Aish HaTorah. A reform rabbi angrily told the *Los Angeles Times* that Netanyahu "has refused every similar invitation from the Reform movement since taking office, both in Israel and here." An Orthodox rabbi said Aish HaTorah was not in the "mainstream of Orthodox Judaism."

**GEORGE SOROS** came under attack for his funding of drug legalization operations in Baltimore by former Maryland Gov. Donald Schaefer (D), who commented that what Soros was doing was "Wrong. Absolutely wrong. He should have put at least a minimum of \$5 million in prevention programs. He's a legalization man, which I don't approve of at all."

**ESTABLISHMENT** mouthpiece Jim Hoagland complained that the Clinton administration's collaboration with Russia to settle the Iraq standoff was a rejection of the "brilliant duplicity" of Henry Kissinger.

Ruddy's book in the pages of the *Weekly Standard*. Farah complains that York said that Ruddy can't be trusted because he works for a paper owned by Scaife. "Huh?" Farah grunts. "Is investigative reporter York so clueless as not to realize Scaife is also the biggest financial contributor to his own *American Spectator*?" Farah calls the *American Spectator* "directionless" and "spineless," and describes it as "gravely ill, if not on life support."

## Moonies push 'family'; Will Bush renew vows?

According to the *Washington Post* of Nov. 19, the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church has planned a "Blessing '97" ecumenical marriage and rededication ceremony for as many as 30,000 couples, for RFK Stadium in Washington, D.C., on Nov. 29. The ceremony was to conclude a week-long "World Culture and Sports Festival III," starting on Nov. 24.

The *Post* reports that Moon has shifted from an anti-communist theme to one of "save the family," through his Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, which is officially sponsoring the festivities. One member described Moon's purpose as follows: "Last year, he founded this federation to transcend religions. . . . What he's really saying is . . . we have moved past the age of organized religion and into the age of direct personal experience of God. . . . You experience God in the family." The article reports that Moon's "theology holds that he is a sinless man fulfilling the role that Jesus Christ did not accomplish, because Jesus did not marry and was rejected by his people." Marriage is central to the church's mission, they say.

As *EIR* has reported, last year in Argentina, with George Bush at his side, Moon eulogized man's use of his "organ" as an object of religious worship, an appeal to "family values" matched only by the pornographic definition of masculinity professed by the Promise Keepers.

On Nov. 23, the *Post* expanded on Moon's connections to some more "respectable" proponents of "family values": The Moonies donated \$10.7 million to the Wom-

en's Federation for World Peace in 1995, which sponsored a series of speeches by Sir George Bush and Barbara Bush in Asia and the United States, paying them some \$1 million in fees.

The WFWP made a \$3.5 million grant to the Christian Heritage Foundation in 1995, which later bought a large portion of the debt of Jerry Falwell's Liberty University. In 1996, the Moonies' News World Communications, parent of the *Washington Times* lent \$400,000 to Liberty at 6% interest. Liberty University spokesman Mark DeMoss is also a spokesman for the Promise Keepers.

## 'Religious persecution' is latest populist fad

Representatives of some 50 Conservative Revolution groups met in Washington, D.C. on Nov. 18, to map out building a populist movement to subvert U.S. foreign policy under the cover of "stopping religious persecution," with special emphasis on China and Sudan. Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.), a leading member of British Baroness Caroline Cox's Christian Solidarity International, assured his audience that the "Freedom from Religious Persecution Bill" would pass Congress, although "in what form, I don't know." Later, stressing the populist appeal, he qualified that its success or failure would depend on the ability of the community to express its "values."

Nina Shea of Project Democracy's misnamed Freedom House, blasted the October speech Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at Catholic University, where Albright emphasized that the commonality of universal values underlies both engagement with other countries, and also efforts to alleviate what the United States sees as "human rights" problems. Shea mischaracterized Albright's remark that "we must take into account the values of others," as giving credibility to the idea of "Asian values."

Ironically, much of this crowd's attacks on China centers on alleged "religious persecution" against Tibet, which suffered under a Buddhist theocratic dictatorship which freely employed physical mutilation as a form of punishment.