

National News

Meese refuses testimony on Contras' drug ties

Attorney General Edwin Meese has refused to give testimony on illegal drug ties between the Contras and their backers, according to press reports. Meese apparently refused a request of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, which was seeking to probe the Contras' role in drug trafficking, because it would jeopardize the ongoing Contra hearings.

The story emerged when Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.) said that Meese had refused to allow Drug Enforcement Administration officials to take part in a private briefing to his committee. Rep. Lee Hamilton (D-Ind.), chairman of the Irangate hearings, wrote a letter saying that such testimony should create no problems for the Irangate hearings, contrary to Meese's concerns.

Weinberger hits isolationist spirit

Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, speaking in London on June 3, cautioned against complacency and isolationist sentiments within the NATO alliance, and warned that the Western world today needs the quality of leadership which characterized the Allied war against Hitler. Weinberger was addressing the English-Speaking Union, on the 40th anniversary of the Marshall Plan.

"Complacency has taken its toll on our alliance," he said. "Today we face threats from within, and they stem paradoxically from the very democratic spirit that defines our nations.

"It would be terribly naive, and worse, given the bloodshed we have suffered in this century, to believe that free peoples can disengage themselves from the world arena.

"Unfortunately, democracies seem to lose interest very quickly in the complicated and harsh world outside of domestic affairs. . . .

"Today our alliance is challenged not

only by the inherent reluctance of democratic peoples to provide for the common interest, but also by the disregard within some circles of the moral bonds and shared values which united us in the past."

Referring to the leaders who mobilized the United States and Britain to fight the Nazis, Weinberger said, "Our continued survival will depend on whether we will be granted such leadership in the future, and whether we will recognize and follow it in time."

This was Weinberger's third trip to Europe in three weeks. He had attended the NATO Nuclear Planning Group meeting in Norway, then the NATO defense ministers' meeting in Brussels. Following his London speech, he went to France, to meet with Saudi Defense Minister Prince Sultan.

Soldier with AIDS faces court martial

A U.S. Army private faces court martial charges for having sex with others while knowingly carrying the AIDS virus, the Army disclosed on June 3. An Army spokesman said it was the first time that such a case had been brought to court, in either civilian or military proceedings.

Pfc. Adrian Morris is charged with aggravated assault, sodomy, and "conduct of a nature to bring discredit upon the armed forces." The victims include one female and one male soldier. If convicted of all counts, Morris would face maximum penalties of 17 years in military prison, dishonorable discharge, reduction in rank, and total forfeiture of pay and allowances.

Michael Ledeen: 'They think I am a spy'

Michael Ledeen, the professed fascist and protagonist in the Irangate affair, is under investigation for being a "Pollard number-two," Ledeen confided to an Israeli friend during a recent trip to that country. Ledeen

was in Israel to initiate a lawsuit against Amiram Nir, an adviser to Foreign Minister Shimon Peres, who had charged that Ledeen had pocketed money from the arms-for-hostages deal with Iran. Ledeen said that by blowing his role in the deal, Nir did "a disservice to me, and all American Jews. The CIA thinks that I am a spy."

Israeli sources further report that U.S. Attorney Joseph Di Genova, who prosecuted the Jonathan Pollard spy case, is now investigating Ledeen's role in the affair. Ledeen's likely role in deploying Pollard and other agents on behalf of the deals arranged between then-Secretary of State Alexander Haig and Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, is the focus of the investigation.

Haig and Sharon had arranged for leaks of U.S. intelligence to Israel, through such channels as the Pollard network. These channels remained open after Haig left office, and after the deals were canceled due to the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, leading U.S. investigators to wonder just whom Ledeen was working for.

President lobbies for constitutional convention

President Reagan has promised to send a letter to the California state legislature, backing a bill which would mandate a constitutional convention, and may personally visit his home state to lobby for it, according to Sacramento sources. The President backs the drive to pass a constitutional amendment mandating a balanced federal budget.

The bill, Assembly Joint Resolution 8, was drafted by Assemblyman Tom McClintock (R-Thousand Oaks), with help from Lew Uhler, chairman of the National Tax Limitation Committee. Hearings are scheduled for July 1. If passed, it would make California the 33rd state to call for a constitutional convention, one short of the 34 required to assemble a convention.

Parts of the old-line Reagan machine are outraged at the President's support for the effort to rewrite the Constitution. A spokesman for the Eagle Forum, an activist group run by Phyllis Schafly, said May 29, "We

are very disappointed" that the President has chosen to endorse the convention. Reagan was "neutral on the issue" until early this year, when he suddenly climbed aboard the bandwagon. Eagle Forum members have been lobbying against the convention idea in state legislatures.

The Daughters of the American Revolution passed a resolution in April urging members to take up the cudgels against the constitutional convention, on the grounds that Lloyd Cutler's Committee on the Constitutional System, a "powerful group of elitists," wants to use it to ram through a European-style parliamentary system.

Kemp raises issue of loans to U.S.S.R.

A bipartisan group of congressmen, led by Rep. Jack Kemp (R-N.Y.), have asked President Reagan to discuss at the Venice summit of OECD leaders the security problems posed by large Western cash loans to the Soviet Union. The congressmen stated, in a letter to the President dated June 2, that nearly \$4 billion in cash has been loaned to the Soviets by Western banks in the past year alone, and charged that Western capital flows have allowed the Soviets to divert hard-currency revenues "to finance aggression abroad, and oppression and the military buildup at home."

Kemp called this "the tip of the iceberg" of a larger security problem, warning that the Soviet Union "is preparing to enter the Eurobond market, which is also an untied loan market, thereby tapping American pension funds, insurance companies, and other corporations."

Cardinal attacks Moynihan on abortion

Cardinal John O'Connor, the archbishop of New York, has opened fire on Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.), accusing him of "newspeak" to disguise his stance on abortion.

O'Connor, who has also blasted Gov. Mario Cuomo and former Democratic vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro for "pro-choice" stands on the issue, accused Moynihan of ducking the subject by using "the kind of language a totalitarian government would use to deceive, confuse, and stultify us."

The attack appeared in O'Connor's weekly column in *Catholic New York*, the archdiocesan newspaper. O'Connor did not name Moynihan, but his target was clear. Moynihan was quoted by the *New York Post* June 2, saying that the archbishop's attack was sparked by a statement Moynihan made on Jan. 22, in which he claimed he was opposed to abortion, but "will not impose my moral beliefs on others." O'Connor wrote that he did not want "to damage [Moynihan's] political career," or his chances for reelection.

FBI said to probe Wedtech-PTL link

FBI agents are reportedly investigating the possibility of a link between the Bakker-PTL scandal and the bribery and influence-peddling scandal surrounding Wedtech, the Bronx, New York-based defense contractor which grew phenomenally after various middle-level administration officials went to work for it.

FBI agents recently attempted to question Jessica Hahn, Jim Bakker's bed-mate, about payments she received and Wedtech. Law enforcement sources said investigators were checking into whether some of the money paid Hahn to keep quiet about her affair with the TV evangelist originated with Wedtech and was passed through the Rev. Aimee Cortese, a PTL board member. Cortese is the sister of U.S. Rep. Robert Garcia, now being investigated in connection with the Wedtech bribery case.

Investigators reportedly think that Wedtech founder John Mariotta, a born-again Christian, gave company money to Ms. Cortese, pastor of Cross Road Tabernacle in the Bronx. Sources close to the case speculated that Hahn may have received as much as \$20,000 from Cortese.

Briefly

● **THE NEW FEDERALIST**, America's newest national-circulation weekly newspaper, released its first issue on June 8. The paper is intended to fill the gap left by the forced closing of *New Solidarity*, whose publisher was placed in involuntary bankruptcy on April 21. The *New Federalist* chose as its slogan a quotation from Benjamin Franklin: "Whoever would overthrow the liberty of a nation must begin by subduing the freeness of speech."

● **HENRY KISSINGER** has been asked to chair a congressional panel monitoring activities in Central America. The panel was established last fall; its mission is to monitor and report to Congress on any negotiations involving the U.S. and Nicaragua or other countries in the region. It is not yet known whether Kissinger will accept the assignment.

● **THE ADMINISTRATION** notified Congress May 29 that it intends to sell 1,600 Maverick air-to-ground missiles, valued at \$360 million, to Saudi Arabia. The move is seen as a setback for the Zionist lobby. Opposition is expected to be intense.

● **NEW YORK'S** Mayor Ed Koch called on June 2 for AIDS tests for all foreign tourists and businessmen entering the United States. Koch said he feared that an influx of foreign AIDS victims seeking treatment in the U.S. would spread the disease. He also said he was asking the city's five district attorneys to study Gov. Mario Cuomo's proposal to make it a crime to knowingly spread the virus.

● **PAT ROBERTSON** announced on June 5 that he was laying off 500 employees at his Christian Broadcasting Network, as a result of the scandal surrounding PTL televangelists. Contributions to his television network have dropped by 50% since the scandal broke, he said. Jim Bakker of PTL was a protégé of Robertson.