

National News

Veterans targeted for cuts in benefits

The General Accounting Office, an oversight agency of Congress, spent over \$750,000 on its own initiative to investigate how many disabled veterans are receiving disability benefits from the Veterans Administration for "ordinary diseases of life." The study was clearly devised to build a rationale for cutting the VA budget.

The GAO found that in a study of 400 cases, 49% involved disabilities caused by diseases. Physicians said that in 13% of these cases, they could not determine whether the illness was caused or aggravated by military service.

The study further concluded that 19% of VA disability cases result from diseases that are neither caused nor aggravated by military service, but are ordinary or pre-existing diseases, like a heart murmur or multiple sclerosis. Thus, the GAO says, "Congress may wish to reconsider whether these diseases should be compensated as service-connected disabilities."

One American Legion spokesman asked, "How much would be saved by transferring the costs of caring for these people from the VA to the states and localities?"

The *Washington Post*, in reporting these findings, endorses the proposal of former Budget Director David Stockman, for cutting the VA health budget by 10% through elimination of all health care except for service-related disabilities of poor veterans.

SDI will be devastated by cuts, general warns

Lt. Gen. George L. Monahan Jr., the Director of the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization, said that the cuts in the SDI budget would be devastating to the program, in a *Houston Chronicle* commentary on July 26.

Monahan said that reducing the fiscal 1990 budget will "jeopardize the technical and strategic successes we have achieved in

the program," and that, unlike other years, "we now have many projects that are moving into the testing and validation phase." Cancellation of validation tests will disrupt programs, costing time and money, and will require major modifications in these programs.

The current program retains a balance between research on an initial system, and development of advanced technologies for follow-on systems, he said. A budget cut would "force us to either sharply reduce directed energy and other advanced technology programs or forego a timely Phase-One deployment decision by applying the reduction across the board."

Skull and Bones club has Nazi paraphernalia

Skull and Bones, the elite and highly secretive club which George Bush belonged to during his days at Yale University, has a "little Nazi shrine" in its New Haven headquarters, according to an article in *Fame* magazine.

Author Steven Aronson quotes several women who managed to penetrate the male bastion. "One room on the second floor has a bunch of swastikas, kind of an SS macho Nazi iconography," claimed one of the female invaders. A second unidentified woman confirmed the presence of Third Reich memorabilia. The article also reports that the society apparently is the scene of frequent "drag" revues.

NASA upgrades its long-term planning

National Aeronautics and Space Administration Administrator Richard Truly announced July 27 that Johnson Space Center Director Aaron Cohen will come to NASA headquarters in Washington to lead the agency's long-term planning effort. The program has been upgraded in response to President Bush's speech on the July 20

Apollo anniversary, in which the goals of returning to the Moon and manned missions to Mars were put forward.

Cohen worked on the Apollo program in the 1960s, and has led the Johnson Space Center group that works on the Shuttle and Space Station Freedom programs. Truly stated that the recommendations to the President from the National Space Council will be "influenced markedly" by what NASA proposes.

Johnson Space Center scientist Wendell Mendell told *21st Century Science and Technology* magazine on July 25 that "President Bush said exactly the right thing," because he "cut off certain branches in the planning tree" at NASA, such as a trip to Mars without going first to the Moon, which means that the NASA planning work will now be more focused.

Mendell has been key in a small group of planetary scientists in Houston who started lobbying for a manned return to the Moon soon after the first successful Space Shuttle flight in 1981.

Mendell said the specific milestones "can be revealed in stages." The important thing, he stressed, is that the general plans lay out the directions for sorely needed technology development work.

Energy policy to be made by 'consensus'

Energy Secretary James Watkins announced July 26 that he will prepare a comprehensive energy strategy to be submitted to President Bush and carried out through legislation or regulation. The strategy will not be based on a scientific program, but on the basis of "public consensus."

Watkins said that if a series of public hearings scheduled around the country show that rejection of nuclear power "is the consensus of the responsible people of this country, then that's the way the report's going to come out."

Watkins intends to "listen to everybody," he said, because otherwise the "action plan" he submits to Bush "will be looked at as a DOE document and I think everybody in this room will agree . . . that DOE does

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not have the kind of credibility to come out and pontificate its own national energy strategy."

The first hearing was held in Washington, D.C. on Aug. 1, and hearings are set for Tulsa, Oklahoma on Aug. 8; Boise, Idaho on Aug. 23; Seattle, Washington on Aug. 30; and Louisville, Kentucky on Sept. 8.

The themes to be discussed include priorities for a National Energy Strategy, how environmental and energy objectives can best be met, what DOE's research and development priorities should be, and what states and industry expect from the federal government.

White House sabotaged SDI, columnists charge

Nationally syndicated columnists Evans and Novak charged July 28 that the Bush administration sabotaged its own budget request for the Strategic Defense Initiative by refusing to release a Pentagon report for the last six months which warned that the U.S.S.R. may achieve "a decisive military advantage" because of its offensive and defensive military programs.

Evans and Novak reveal that National Security Adviser Scowcroft only released the report, which strongly defends the SDI, after he received a toughly worded letter from six Republican Senators. The White House ensured that the report was not released in a sufficiently timely fashion to affect the July 25 anti-SDI congressional vote. They note that Capitol Hill insiders blamed "indifferent administrative lobbying" for the destruction of the SDI program. They note that insiders have always doubted Bush's commitment to the SDI.

U.S. charges Soviets with SALT violation

The Soviet Union has exceeded a numerical ceiling of the expired SALT II strategic arms treaty by deploying new ballistic missile launchers, and bombers with cruise missiles, according to a senior Bush administra-

tion official quoted in the July 31 *Washington Times*.

Earlier in July, an interagency group determined that the Soviets went above the sublimit of 1,320 total MIRVed ballistic missile launchers and heavy bombers equipped with long range ALCM (air-launched cruise missiles). The treaty violation was the result of Soviet deployment of an estimated 35 Blackjack bombers equipped with nuclear cruise missiles.

While several conservative senators have continually pointed out Soviet SALT II violations over the past several years, this is the first time that a Bush administration official has been cited making the allegation.

Fairchild announces for governor of Illinois

Mark Fairchild, the LaRouche Democrat whose 1986 Illinois Democratic Party primary victory for the office of lieutenant governor shocked the political Establishment, announced his candidacy July 31 for governor of Illinois.

"I am announcing my candidacy for the office of governor because I am convinced more than ever that Illinois is rapidly becoming a police state under the current administration. I am running to clean the corruption out of both parties," he said.

Referring to Democratic frontrunner Attorney General Neil Hartigan and Republican frontrunner Secretary of State Jim Edgar, Fairchild said, "Illinois voters don't want either Stalin or Hitler!" Hartigan and Edgar have both conducted political harassment of supporters of Lyndon LaRouche.

Fairchild also condemned his opponents for their attacks on "those citizens who are pro-life and participate in Operation Rescue, which I support 1000%," for their attacks on black elected officials and farmers, and for their refusal to attack Satanism.

"The fact that Gov. Jim Thompson has yet to sign an anti-Satanic rituals bill into law, further underlines the reality that if you are fighting against Satanism, you will legally have no rights, as the 'thought police' under either an administration of Neil Hartigan or Jim Edgar are arrogantly unleashed."

● **WILLIAM VON RAAB**, the outgoing commissioner of the U.S. Customs Service, blasted the State, Justice, and Treasury Departments for not waging a serious war on drugs, in remarks made on ABC's World News Tonight July 27. He said that U.S. anti-drug policy has been a "total and abysmal failure."

● **MORTON DOWNEY, JR.**, the professional provocateur, recently had his TV show canceled, because of plummeting ratings and his increasingly bizarre behavior, and is now being sued by the Bank of New York for failing to repay almost \$32,000 which it says he owes on a promissory note taken out last January.

● **BALTIMORE ATTORNEY R. David Pembroke** asked permission of the Fourth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals on July 27 to add 250 new signers to an *amicus curiae* brief voicing profound concern over constitutional and civil rights violations in the prosecution of Lyndon LaRouche and six associates.

● **ONE MILLION** dollars in escrow funds mysteriously released to former Panamanian President Eric Delvalle at the request of then Undersecretary of State for Latin American Affairs Elliott Abrams, were discovered missing by a General Accounting Office audit. Abrams had assured Treasury that the funds were "for appropriate official use."

● **DRUG CZAR** William Bennett intends to announce an updated strategy against drugs on Sept. 5, which will include a direct role for U.S. troops in Ibero-America, according to the Associated Press July 27. He will reveal a list of possible options, including direct action by U.S. elite military units.

● **THE INDICTMENTS** of 46 commodities traders on the Chicago Board of Trade were handed down on Aug. 2. Activity on the Board of Trade ground to a halt.