

National News

DoJ studies privatizing police-state apparat

The U.S. Justice Department is looking for private sector contractors to oversee hundreds of millions in anti-drug, anti-fraud, victimization of the elderly, and child abuse programs managed by two agencies in the Office of Justice Programs (OJP)—the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Bureau of Justice Assistance.

Contracting out these programs would eliminate over 60% of the career positions in the two agencies. But although the proposal is presented as a cost-cutting measure, in reality it is part of a plan to further insulate the DoJ "secret police" from public exposure.

One of the largest budget items overseen by OJP is the Regional Information Sharing System (RISS), a privately run but federally financed "criminal intelligence" program that provides intelligence to the national "Get LaRouche" task force. RISS is not subject to Freedom of Information Act requests, because it is a "private" intelligence system.

Lockerbie coverup tied to PanAm-CIA links?

The apparently intimate relationship between the CIA and senior management of Pan American World Airways, is one issue that may surface out of the House Select Committee on Narcotics when Congress reconvenes in late January. That tie is related to suppression of accusations of government wrongdoing in the terrorist bombing of PanAm flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, on Dec. 21, 1988.

Recently, a federal district court judge in Brooklyn, New York effectively dismissed a civil law suit against Pan Am brought by family members of the bombing victims. The suit, seeking \$600 million in damages claiming airline security laxity allowed the high-powered bomb to be planted aboard the aircraft, was dismissed when

PanAm claimed that the CIA and other intelligence agencies had been the actual negligent parties. The judge, upon reviewing classified documents from U.S. intelligence agencies, decided that key evidence bolstering the PanAm claim had to be protected for national security reasons.

It appears that the relatives of the tragedy may be the victims of this cozy relationship between PanAm and the CIA. According to several published accounts, this tie was apparently so well known that the PanAm flight 103, which was carrying a team of CIA paramilitary experts from Beirut back to the United States, may have been targeted for terrorist attack as a message to U.S. intelligence from Ayatollah Khomeini.

Both American and British intelligence services knew by no later than March of 1989 that the PanAm bombing had been commissioned by Khomeini and current Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani, and carried out by the PFLP-GC headed by Syrian military officer Ahmed Jibril, according to columnist Jack Anderson. But since neither the U.S. nor Britain was prepared to take military action against Iran or Syria, Bush and Thatcher decided in April 1989, to cover up the incident to avoid further political fallout.

Social Democrats defend Satanism

The Buffalo-based Council for Democratic and Secular Humanism, headed by social democratic philosopher Dr. Paul Kurtz, has recently published a report saying that the fear of the rise of Satanism is unfounded and the alarm surrounding it is largely a product of opportunists and evangelical publicists.

"Millions of taxpayers' dollars are being spent chasing the devil's tail," said Shawn Carlson, head of the study and a principal in Gaia Press which is distributing a book attempting to debunk the Satanist threat. The three-year study by the Committee for Scientific Examination of Religion was co-authored by Prof. Gerald Larue of the University of Southern California, who said, "The hysteria-mongers would have us exhaust our resources going after a non-exis-

tent, nationwide cult of Satanic child abusers."

Kurtz is editor of *Free Inquiry Magazine*, which is part of the network of right-wing Social Democrats including Leo Cherne, a member of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board.

Government blackmailing executives over CFCs

The U.S. is blackmailing executives of top refrigeration and other industries in order to keep them quiet on the chlorofluorocarbon (CFCs) swindle, according to a top industry expert.

The Federal Trade Commission is threatening to jail company executives under the Sherman Anti-Trust Act if they dare to reveal to the public the enormous costs of a CFC ban, the corporate executive told *EIR* on Jan. 16.

One example he cited occurred in 1989 during a conference of the refrigeration industry. There are only five manufacturers of refrigerators in the United States, so they are not allowed to divulge prices in public. But during the conference, the executive directors of two of these manufacturers got up and said a CFC ban would force them to increase prices. As soon as they got back to their offices, there were letters from the FTC threatening them with government action if they dared to speak out in public about price increases again.

When told that the FTC should be prosecuting Du Pont and the CFC cartel, not refrigerator manufacturers, the executive said, "Well, the question is whose cartel, they are obviously creating a cartel."

Bush wetlands plan provokes protests

Environmentalists in the Bush administration are reeling from a deluge of protest mail from citizens opposing President Bush's wetlands plan, the Jan. 15 *Washington Post* reported.

"They come in by the minute, by the

pound," Michael R. Deland, chairman of the President's Council on Environmental Quality and a target of a postcard campaign, told States News Service.

As a result, the White House decided on Jan. 12 to delay, for a second time, an agreement between the Environmental Protection Agency and the Army Corps of Engineers that is a key part of Bush's "no net loss" of wetlands plan.

The *Anchorage Times*, a strenuous opponent of the plan, argues that the wetlands plan would be "devastating" to every sector of Alaskan society. On Dec. 31, the newspaper included postcards addressed to Deland, Nancy Maloley of the Office of Policy Development, Robert E. Grady of the natural resources section of the Office of Management and Budget, and Army Assistant Secretary for Civil Works Robert W. Page. The *Times* said it just wanted to send Washington a message, "and very quickly."

Noriega prosecutor faces misconduct charges

Dexter Lehtinen, the prosecutor who is considered "too inexperienced" to conduct the railroad of Panamanian Gen. Manuel Noriega by himself, and the prosecutor's office, are reported to be facing charges of misconduct.

Lehtinen's office destroyed the practice of Michael Blank, a successful immigration attorney in the Miami area, through a campaign of harassment which a judge has described as "prosecutorial misconduct," according to an article in the Jan. 12 *Legal Times*.

Robert Cornell, an assistant to Lehtinen, initiated an investigation of Blank on the basis of an allegation that he was bribing Immigration and Naturalization Service officials to process applications of his clients. Darrell Brewer, an investigator for a division of the INS which has since merged into the Department of Justice Inspector General's office, began secretly visiting Blank's clients and telling them that Blank was a crook, and that he could not represent them.

According to investigative findings upheld by the District Court, Brewer and the

U.S. Attorney also stopped the processing of all immigration papers filed by Blank. While no evidence of bribery was ever turned up, Lehtinen's office obtained a 91-count fraud indictment of Blank, alleging that he acted in a criminal manner by not telling his clients that he was being attacked by the government. The grand jury was never told that his increasing failure rate was the direct result of DoJ interference at the INS, and Magistrate Ann Vitunac ruled that, "The government thus caused the Defendant Michael Blank's lack of success by failing to adjudicate any of his applications. . . . This action violates fundamental concepts of justice."

Foundation demands judge's censure

Daniel Popeo and Paul Kamenar of the Washington Legal Foundation have filed a motion in the U.S. Second Circuit Court, calling for censure of Judge Robert Sweet who caused a national furor by calling for drug legalization last December.

"The gravamen of our complaint," said Popeo and Kamenar, "is that Judge Robert W. Sweet violated Canons 1, 2(a), and 4 of the Code of Judicial conduct by delivering a widely publicized speech on Dec. 12 . . . advocating the legalization of the selling and use of all drugs, including heroin, cocaine, crack, and marijuana. By doing so, Judge Sweet became the first federal official in any of our three branches of the federal government to advocate the legalization of harmful drugs.

"Not only does Judge Sweet's apparent crusade to legalize drugs violate the Canons of Judicial Conduct, but the statements made by the judge in support of his proposal reveal a palpable and dangerous ignorance about the subject that he is espousing," the complaint read.

"We request that Judge Sweet be publicly censured or reprimanded as provided by [statute] . . . and that the circumstances surrounding the preparation and delivery of his broadside on our nation's drug laws be investigated for further possible misconduct and misuse of his office and staff."

Briefly

● **SEN. JOHN WARNER** admitted at a Capitol Hill press conference on Jan. 13, that civilian casualties during the Panama invasion were higher than the official figure of 220. "Well, I'll have something released . . . that is not right . . . it is higher." The Virginia Republican also said "there may have been some" bombing of civilian districts.

● **MICHAEL O'KANE**, lawyer for Gen. Manuel Noriega's alleged former pilot Daniel Miranda, was attacked by a man wielding a crowbar the day after the prosecutor had told him to be more careful about his requests for classified information. "One of the lawyers said if I didn't get on board it would be bad for me personally," O'Kane said.

● **NUCLEAR WEAPONS** production will be further hurt by environmental impact statements announced by Department of Energy Secretary James Watkins. This signals "the incipient collapse of the nuclear industrial infrastructure," one specialist told the Jan. 13 *Washington Post*.

● **HENRY KISSINGER** argues that the West must get out in front of the issue of German reunification in order to keep Germany in line, in a commentary in the Jan. 14 *Washington Post*. "I would have suffered no sense of deprivation had the issue of German unification remained in limbo for a while longer," he said.

● **PETITIONS** for a statewide referendum to allow gambling in eight Ohio cities have been filed. On a six-city tour to promote gambling, Lorraine Mayor Alex Olejko said the proposal would make his city "a phoenix rising out of the ashes."

● **JOHN POINDEXTER'S** lawyers urged a federal judge on Jan. 9 to compel Ronald Reagan to appear as a witness in Poindexter's upcoming Iran-Contra trial. "Mr. Reagan alone possesses evidence which is pertinent to the central issues of the case," they said.