

Elephants and Donkeys by Kathleen Klenetsky

Cuomo in the wings

With Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton's campaign foundering on the shoals of extramarital shenanigans, speculation is once again rife that New York Gov. Mario Cuomo might enter the fray.

Despite protestations to the contrary, Cuomo continues to act like a candidate. For instance, he appeared on the ABC News program "Nightline" in mid-January, after having repeatedly refused to do so. He also went on the nationally televised Larry King show Jan. 29. And supporters are trying to arrange a speech for the governor at Harvard during the week before the Feb. 18 primary in neighboring New Hampshire.

Death penalty becomes campaign issue

The death penalty has emerged as a major issue in the Democratic presidential race, following the execution in Arkansas of a brain-damaged prisoner.

On Jan. 24, Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton rushed back home to personally oversee the execution of convicted murderer Rickey Ray Rector.

Rector had been lobotomized by doctors while being treated for a self-inflicted gunshot. His lawyers and others, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Legal Defense Fund, argued that Rector's brain damage was so severe that he could not participate in his own defense, as required by Arkansas law. But the courts rejected the argument, leaving Clinton as Rector's only hope of avoiding death. Clinton refused to commute Rector's sentence, and Rector was killed by lethal injection on the evening of Jan. 24.

Clinton's role in executing a men-

tally incompetent individual—an act far more immoral than any womanizing the candidate may have indulged in—was immediately attacked by Democratic presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche, who, in a Jan. 24 campaign statement, demanded Clinton's withdrawal from the race.

Clinton "ought to resign from the race, although he is presently an acknowledged front-runner, because of his association with this kind of disgusting, grisly, gruesome campaign publicity stunt," said LaRouche.

"Most of us ought to recognize that there's something deadly wrong with our American legal system, which is merely symptomized by the fact that at a time that all civilized nations generally are dumping the death penalty as a barbaric relic of the past, the United States has plunged full steam ahead into such executions," LaRouche added.

"The disturbing thing is that, not only are we going back to human sacrifice in this form, like some ancient pagan set of barbarians, but at the same time, our criminal justice system has decayed."

LaRouche accused Clinton of "presiding in the fashion of an Aztec priest over the disgusting ritual human sacrifice of a death-row victim."

Clinton's stand on the death penalty has clearly been motivated by political expediency. His press spokesman admits that Clinton changed his policies on the death penalty over the last decade. In his first gubernatorial term, in the 1970s, Clinton commuted the sentences of 70 inmates. Since his reelection in 1983, he has commuted only seven.

According to Rector's lawyer, Jeffrey Rosenzweig, Clinton was depicted as being soft on crime during his 1980 gubernatorial reelection campaign, which he lost. "My personal opinion is that in his heart of hearts

he's against the death penalty," he says. "In my opinion this is a very easy way to show you're tough on crime."

This is the third execution that has taken place on Clinton's watch. Thirty-five more Arkansas prisoners are currently on death row; of these, Clinton has already set execution dates for 25.

Democratic presidential candidates Paul Tsongas and Sen. Bob Kerrey of Nebraska are also in favor of capital punishment.

Moynihan signs on with Kerrey

Sen. Daniel "Fat Pat" Moynihan (D-N.Y.) has formally endorsed Nebraska Sen. Bob Kerrey for the Democratic presidential nomination on the ludicrous grounds that Kerrey reminds him of John F. Kennedy.

Moynihan has not only agreed to serve as Kerrey's senior adviser on both domestic and foreign policy, but will also personally line up campaign contributions for him—no small commitment, since Moynihan has a pipeline into such organized crime-linked money sources as Robert Vesco's former lawyer and Anti-Defamation League bigwig, Kenneth Bialkin.

Kerrey may be younger and prettier but, policy-wise, he and Moynihan are two peas in a pod, especially when it comes to population control.

Kerrey's pro-genocide Senate record reportedly is one of the key reasons why shadowy Omaha billionaire Warren Buffet has backed Kerrey's political career.

Moynihan, of course, was the author of the Nixon administration's notorious "benign neglect" policy, and one of the government insiders who campaigned in the 1960s for the U.S. government to get involved in population control.