

National News

Bush denies funds for Polish housing

George Bush has denied a personal request from Polish President Lech Walesa asking the United States to provide loan guarantees to finance housing construction in Poland, columnists Evans and Novak reported April 10.

The request was made in a letter sent to Bush in March, which warned that a \$1 billion loan guarantee was urgently needed to fend off civil unrest. The Polish government pledged a \$200 million escrow account to secure the guarantee, ensuring that there would be no cost to the American taxpayer.

The more venal arguments presented by the Bush administration, according to the columnists, are based on Poland's inability to meet International Monetary Fund austerity targets.

Columnist attacks praise of Aztecs

Columnist Don Feder attacked "multiculturalism" as leading to barbarism, in an April 16 *Richmond Times-Dispatch* commentary entitled "All Cultures Are Not Created Equal."

"The mummery of multicultural shamans notwithstanding, we do have a common culture in this country, based on shared ideas developed first in the civilizations of antiquity, later matured in . . . Europe," wrote Feder. He added, "That certain blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans feel neglected is unfortunate but irrelevant. In a strictly biological sense, it isn't my culture either. My great-grandparents weren't reading Chaucer and listening to Mozart in the pale of settlement."

Feder denounced a new book, *Aztecs*, by British scholar Inga Clendinnen. Feder sarcastically explains its author's intent as to help "us to understand the lives of these 'extraordinary people,' who engaged in such quaint customs as tearing the hearts out of sacrificial victims, by putting their rites in the proper cultural perspective."

Concluded Feder, "Ending human sacri-

ifice was western (Jude-Christian) civilization's first great achievement. Multiculturalism is literally turning the moral clock back 3,600 years. Watch out. There may be an Aztec priest in your future."

Eco-fascist warns: women threatening depopulation

Jessica Mathews, vice president of the genocidalist World Resources Institute, complains that women in the feminist movement are becoming associated with the views of Third World women, and thus threatening depopulation programs, in a commentary in the April 13 *Washington Post*.

The danger, according to this view, is that childbearing is increasingly seen as a woman's right, and the demand for population control is seen as a form of mass murder. Mathews attacks this as "political correctness," and decries this as a "wedge . . . being driven . . . between environmentalists and women's groups" by non-whites.

In the final negotiating session for the June Earth Summit in Brazil, Mathews said, there was "extremely aggressive and effective lobbying by the Holy See. [But the] fate of the population language was sealed, ironically, by representatives of women. Feminist health groups, along with some women's groups in developing countries and representatives of minority women in the United States . . . [oppose] population control because they believe it . . . is disguised genocide."

Parents to be held accountable for schools?

Virginia Secretary of Education James Dyke, Jr. wants to use the threat of levies and fines against parents of students attending the state's public schools in order to improve the school environment.

In a press conference on April 16 held with the Virginia Education Association, in which the state teachers' union revealed proposals to deal with the growing violence in the public schools, Dyke urged that parents should be fined or have their driver's li-

censes taken away if they don't attend parent-teacher conferences or ensure their children will otherwise attend classes. Dyke said he feels punitive methods, while not the best approach to encourage parental participation, should be used. The centerpiece for Dyke's "get tough" approach will be written contracts that one or both parents will sign at the start of each school year.

Virginia Gov. Douglas Wilder has not endorsed the concept, and many state education officials and civil libertarians have yet to respond to it. While the media views this as just the latest trial balloon targeting education reform, Dyke has previously stated that President Bush's plans for education reform have been lifted from Virginia's "Education for the Year 2000" report.

ADL sets up cooperation with Israeli squads

Cooperation between American police forces and Israeli "anti-terror" squads has been arranged by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith (ADL), the April 13 *Jerusalem Post* reported. Despite increasing controversy over Israeli forces' involvement in torture and killings of Arab protesters, "the organizers said the program would lead to increased cooperation between police in the two countries," the paper reported.

"American law enforcement officials have been trained in Israel by elite police anti-terror squad commanders. In return, the Americans . . . gave lectures and hands-on training to Israeli police on drug-enforcement procedures and police administration techniques."

New Jersey Assistant Attorney General James Mulvihill led the 10-member U.S. delegation, all from his state, which included police department heads and state troopers. The anti-terror training was important for the state's policemen, said Mulvihill, "because New Jersey will be the venue for national and international events in the near future, including the world soccer cup competition, that could be the targets for terror attacks."

The article added, "The program, organized by the Anti-Defamation League, lasted over two weeks and included intensive

exercises for the state troopers at the [Israeli] national police anti-terror training base. The New Jersey police have already said they are interested in continuing exchanges with their Israeli counterparts. Other states have also indicated a desire to participate in exchange programs, said Laura Kam, assistant director of the ADL's Israeli office."

UAW declares end to Caterpillar strike

The United Auto Workers (UAW) union has been forced to tell striking workers to go back to work at Caterpillar under the old contract that had been offered by the company. According to the April 15 *New York Times*, this means no gains after a five-month strike by the workers. Negotiations on a new contract will continue while the workers are at work.

After having been locked out for one day, striking Caterpillar workers were told by Caterpillar on April 16 that they would all be permitted to return to work. The company also said that it intended to eliminate approximately 1,300 positions by attrition or early retirement.

The UAW decision is a major blow to pattern contract negotiations within a given industry, and bodes ill for upcoming negotiations between the UAW and the Big Three auto companies, which have traditionally rejected pattern contracts claiming that each company is different.

Led by the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*, the media are trumpeting Caterpillar's victory as the death knell for organized labor.

Polls no longer valid, pollsters fear

Pollsters report an "alarming" drop in the number of people willing to participate in opinion surveys, according to an article in the April 14 *Washington Post*.

The Gallup organization reported that during the 1970s they were able to get 80% cooperation from a targeted audience, while today they are lucky to get a 60% response,

with a sharp increase in the number of people who are simply hanging up the phone. The phenomenon was studied at a recent researcher's conference, where papers to explain it were presented.

The anti-poll phenomenon threatens to make many surveys, especially those involving political opinions or commercial matters, useless. The effects of people lying to pollsters when they do answer, combined with the number of people who are known to refuse to participate (the only thing the pollsters know about this growing segment of the populace is that they consciously refuse to play this game at all), is creating a statistical effect which invalidates most of the polling results.

Census employee on Iraqi war dead reinstated

Beth Osborne Daponte, a U.S. Census Bureau employee assigned last fall to a routine update of U.S. government population figures for Iraq, and who was fired for releasing estimates of Iraqis killed by U.S. forces, has been reinstated.

Daponte assumed she would need to subtract the thousands who had died under U.S. attacks, and estimated that 158,000 Iraqis had been killed, including 39,612 women and 32,195 children; that 70,000 of these deaths were from "poor health conditions" due to the destruction of water and power plants, and that 30,000 died during the post-invasion violence associated with Kurdish and Shiite rebellions. Daponte had compared her 70,000 figure for deaths from infrastructure bombing to *Newsweek's* estimate of 243,000.

Since the Bush administration was discouraging any discussion of the slaughter of Iraqis, Daponte was fired in March. After she contacted the American Civil Liberties Union, hired lawyers, and made a commotion, she has been reinstated and the bureau has retracted its charge that her releases were a "deliberate falsification." The bureau is now quietly making available figures very similar to hers on their official estimates. The Bush administration issued a three-volume report on the war on April 10 which made no mention of Iraqi casualties.

Briefly

● **THE EXECUTION** of Leonel T. Herrera, scheduled for April 15, was stayed on April 13 by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals. In February, the U.S. Supreme Court said that it would use *Herrera* as a test case for whether a convicted defendant's potential innocence should prevent his execution. The U.S. Supreme Court refused to stay Herrera's execution while it decided the case.

● **GEORGE BUSH** will attend the so-called Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June, NBC News reported April 15.

● **FORMER PRESIDENT** Ronald Reagan was accosted by a protester denouncing nuclear testing, while speaking before the National Association of Broadcasters. Media reported on April 13 that the protester was a member of the "100th Monkey," a split-off from the eco-terrorist Earth First! organization.

● **TEENAGERS**, by the time they are 18, have seen 25,000 murders on television, according to statistics cited by columnist Beth Winship, in the April 15 *Los Angeles Times*. Winship also reported that a typical teenager sees nearly 14,000 instances of sexually explicit material in a single season.

● **DRACONIAN FINES** imposed by Judge Robert A. Ward in 1989 on six people who participated in an Operation Rescue anti-abortion protest in defiance of a court injunction, have been upheld by the U.S. Court of Appeals in New York. The fines, amounting to hundreds of thousands of dollars, are the highest ever assessed against non-violent protesters.

● **GEN. JOHN R. GALVIN**, military chief commander of NATO, will be retired and accept a teaching post at West Point, the Bush administration announced April 10. The *Washington Post* speculated that Lt. Gen. John M. Shalikashvili, a Polish-born artilleryman who currently serves as special assistant to Gen. Colin Powell, will replace Galvin.