

National News

Ridge crony wants death for 'corrupt' officials

Pennsylvania's Nazi Gov. Tom Ridge has nominated the former dean of the law school he attended, to fill a vacancy on the state Supreme Court. At a press conference with Ridge announcing his nomination, John A. Maher, the former head of the Dickinson Law School, told the media, "I have formed certain opinions which can be shocking." Prominent among them is his notion that the death penalty should be imposed in cases of political "corruption."

Asked to elaborate, Maher said: "I consider that, to the degree that the death penalty is ethically permissible, we in America tend to award it for the wrong crimes. I think the highest crime is the sale of office, and I am always offended as a citizen when I read about the sale of office being accompanied by a two-year probation."

The son of a commercial banker, Maher said he grew up in a home where "the virtues and vices of . . . state vs. federal supervision were standard dinner-table fare." Maher's first job was on Wall Street. Pennsylvania Democrats are fortunately blocking all of Ridge's appointments until after the Nov. 5 election.

Coverup for Bush drug ring is wearing thin

Speaking at a convention in Sacramento Oct. 12, California State Sen. Diane Watson (D) called for investigating the "criminal activities of former President George Bush" in unleashing the crack cocaine epidemic in the United States. Watson, who represents South Central Los Angeles, was speaking at the plenary session of the Black American Political Association of California.

"In 1981," Watson told the convention delegates, "George Bush was involved in putting together an intelligence operation. Bush set up an enterprise to defeat the Sandanistas. He set up covert operations, and Ollie North was involved. . . . Bush set up

a covert action in our government."

Referring to the people of her district, where the crack cocaine plague has been devastating, Watson said that "We have seen the fabric of our society destroyed." The result has been "a proliferation of black-on-black crime. This destruction came about because of the criminal activities of former President George Bush."

In a speech Oct. 9 at the National Press Club in Washington, former Congressman Bill Alexander (D-Ark.) said that he was "completely stonewalled" by the Reagan-Bush administration in his efforts to investigate drug-trafficking into Arkansas from Central America in the 1980s. Alexander also said that during the early years of the Bush administration, an order went out from the National Security Council to the heads of every federal agency, telling them not to cooperate with Rep. Alexander's investigation. "They were ordered not to cooperate," Alexander said, "So that told me I was on a good trail."

Alexander emphasized that the drug-and-arms trafficking passing through the Intermountain Regional Airport at Mena, Arkansas, was strictly a federal government operation. The most fruitful method of investigating what happened at Mena, he said, is to "follow the money trail." Arms were flown to Central America; then the planes were loaded with drugs and brought back to the U.S. for distribution. The drugs had to be sold, and thus there is a trail of money which can be followed, Alexander said.

ADM is hit with \$100 million fine

Archer Daniels Midland Co. announced Oct. 14 that it had agreed to plead guilty to federal criminal charges on two counts of price-fixing, in the sale of agricultural products. Under the agreement, which is subject to court approval, ADM will pay \$70 million to settle a charge of fixing prices for lysine, a feed additive for livestock; and \$30 million to settle a charge of fixing prices for citric acid, a food and beverage additive. The \$100 million fine will not have much impact on ADM, which has \$1.3 billion in cash and

short-term securities, plus \$1.1 billion in long-term securities.

A grand jury investigation targeting ADM officers, including Dwayne Andreas's son Michael, is still pending. Interestingly, the ADM announcement revealed that the price-fixing settlement resulted from negotiations between Justice Department officials and a special committee of seven independent ADM board members.

During a radio interview with "EIR Talks" Oct. 16, Lyndon LaRouche declared that "the guys who could have been hit hard, were let off by this plea agreement. More importantly, not only would an actual prosecution have gone up the chain—shall we say the food chain, the reverse food chain—to some big fish, but this would have gone into corruption, not only in the private sector of the food cartels; but, this would have gone into corruption in officials of the Agriculture Department itself. There are a lot of ex-farmers, among others, who would certainly *love* to see some of these thieves take a bounce on that one."

Neo-Confederates want breakup of United States

The Columbus Day edition of the *International Herald Tribune* featured a secessionist diatribe, calling for breaking up the United States into various "regional" and ethnic-based micro-states and mini-"republics." Authored by Thomas H. Naylor and William H. Willimon of Duke University, the piece is entitled "E Pluribus Plures: How to Divide Up the United States." Naylor, now a professor emeritus of economics at Duke, was a key figure, in the early to mid-1980s, in a project with the Austria-based International Institute of Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA), targeting the Soviet economy.

"Few words invoke stronger negative feelings among Americans than 'secession,'" the authors begin. "But in Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Quebec, secession is associated with freedom, democracy, and the aspirations of the oppressed—as was the case when the United States was founded in 1776," they lie.

Now they see the final extinction of Western nations: "With the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, secession fever has spread all over Europe. . . . And in this hemisphere, the Québécois seem more determined than ever before, to split with English-speaking Canada."

Parrotting British plans for destroying the U.S., just as their Confederate heroes did, the authors ask: "What if secession fever were spread across the Atlantic, or over the Canadian border into the United States, where some say it originated in the first place?" The United States, they insist, is "an unworkable mega-nation that defies central management and control. The time has come to begin planning the rational downsizing of America."

Various "recommendations" follow, such as Vermont joining with New Hampshire and Maine, "and possibly the Maritime provinces of Canada," to form a country as big as Denmark. Big cities like New York and Los Angeles could break up or "become independent city-states." And for the truly psychotic devotees of the Old South, they propose carving a new "black nation" out of the "predominantly African-American counties in northwest Mississippi known as the Mississippi Delta," or carving "Native American nations" out of parts of Arizona, California, and Oklahoma, and so on, *ad nauseam*.

DOJ stops plan to privatize Jackson, Miss.

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) has overturned an illegal and racist plan to privatize an 84-block area of downtown Jackson, Mississippi. The scheme would have placed public services and taxing authority under the control of a private corporation, Capital Center, Inc. (CCI); and would also have virtually "ethnically cleansed" the city of its black residents. The DOJ action came in response to pressure from a legal and political offensive led by Jackson civil rights advocates Charles Tisdale, publisher of the *Jackson Advocate*, and Stephanie Parker-Weaver, executive secretary of the

Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Jackson.

Tisdale and Parker-Weaver had called on the DOJ to act against CCI, which had held an illegal election to push through its privatization plan, and absconded with \$125,000 of the city's funds to carry it out. In a letter to Mississippi's Assistant Attorney General made public Oct. 2, the DOJ declared the election null and void, because it had not been pre-cleared with the Justice Department, as is required of Mississippi and 10 other states under the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

U.S. Rep. Bennie Thompson, who acted on behalf of the Jackson fighters, declared, "This means monies will have to be returned, and that a lawsuit against the city and county will effectively kill CCI as it presently exists." Thompson also suggested that individual members of CCI's board of directors may well be liable for damages.

AFL-CIO leaders begin pre-election swing

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney, Secretary-Treasurer Rich Trumka, and Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson announced Oct. 15 that they were beginning a three-week cross-country tour "as part of the AFL-CIO's stepped-up effort to raise issues of importance to working families and mobilize union members to get out the vote in the upcoming election."

Sweeney declared, "We have been speaking out for working Americans who are at the heart and soul of our country, and we're making sure that working family issues are front and center in this year's political debate."

Scheduled stops on the tour included an Oct. 15 rally at the Todd Pacific Shipyard in Seattle, Washington, and an Oct. 16 rally in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, against Beverly Enterprises, the nation's largest nursing home provider. The Pennsylvania state AFL-CIO led a sit-in the previous week against Gov. Tom Ridge, for his failure to stop Beverly's anti-labor practices in the state.

Briefly

THE TEXAS STATE Employees Union asked Oct. 9 for an investigation of possible ethics violations by six former state officials, all friends of Gov. George Bush, now set to personally profit from a \$2 billion state welfare contract. A union spokesman pointed to "the growing pattern of high-ranking state officials who are leaving their positions, and going to work for corporations who are seeking billions of dollars worth of contracts for privatized public services in Texas."

LABOR ADS have begun blasting blueblood Gov. William Weld's scheme to privatize the Massachusetts bus system, by contracting out bus routes under competitive bidding, pitting unions against private firms. In the first radio spot Oct. 12, run by Carmen's Union Local 589, a voice asks, "Well, I've never seen Bill Weld waiting for a bus, have you?"

THE IRISH POTATO FAMINE of the 1840s was a case of British genocide, and should be included in the human rights curriculum endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education, says a bill filed in Congress by Rep. Bob Menendez (D-N.J.). Such a curricular requirement is already law in the states of New York and New Jersey, and is being considered in Pennsylvania and Illinois.

THE HISPANIC MARCH on Washington Oct. 12 drew 50-80,000 people, organizers conservatively estimated. The march was supported by more than 1,000 Hispanic organizations nationwide; and was endorsed by the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, the AFL-CIO, and the U.S. Catholic Conference.

MANAGED HEALTH CARE plans will soon cover "non-traditional" treatments, including acupuncture, herbal remedies, relaxation therapies, yoga, etc. "Quite often these things can be less expensive than traditional health care, especially if you can avoid hospitalizations," Randall Huyser, an HMO analyst in San Francisco, told AP Oct. 9.