

National News

D.C. Methodist pastor seeks to legalize drugs

Rev. Andrew Leigh Gunn, senior pastor of the Mount Vernon United Methodist Church in Washington, on May 26 called for legalization of mind-altering drugs. "We are not winning the war against drugs, and the crime, violence, corruption, and death which drugs are producing make it imperative that other solutions to drugs be found. . . . Simply being opposed to drugs is not good enough in dealing with this costly, tragic problem," he said.

Gunn called for the government or the medical establishment "to dispense drugs to users at very low costs, to legalize drugs on a controlled basis." He said he would take his proposal to his 9.4 million-member denomination's General Board on Church and Society, as well as to other denominational agencies, and challenge other church bodies to rethink and change their position on drugs.

Weinberger: Congress did what Moscow wanted

In a press conference at the Pentagon May 30, Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger denounced the vote by the House and Senate to reject President Reagan's proposed budget increase and instead to freeze the defense budget. Weinberger pointed in particular to the disastrous consequences this will have for the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).

Weinberger emphasized that the budget freeze goes a long way toward implementing what the Soviet Union is demanding at Geneva: "One of the things that most disturbs me about the cuts . . . have the effect of slowing down in a very marked way the research on the Strategic Defense Program, and would be, I think, rather consistent with some of the things that the Soviet negotiators have insisted upon at Geneva."

"President Reagan and I still believe that a 5.9% real increase in defense spending is what America's security requires," the Secretary declared.

Discussing the effect of the cuts on the SDI, Weinberger explained: "[The Soviets] have talked about slowing down the research. . . . There have also been some suggestions that what they would also like would be first of all to stop research completely . . . and secondly, to slow it down so that we wouldn't really work on anything very effective, but we would be able to work along, perhaps, in a way that wasn't going to ever be conclusive or prove anything."

In response to claims by SDI critic Richard Garwin that the Pentagon does not really believe that the Soviet Union is pursuing its own equivalent of the SDI, Weinberger replied: "We perceive without the slightest equivocation and without the slightest hesitancy or doubt, that the Soviets have been pursuing very vigorously, quietly, and in the way they're able to do in a closed society, active research, looking towards the development and deployment of a Strategic Defense Initiative that would have the effect of making our missiles impotent and useless. . . . The Soviets are very busy, very active, spending a lot of money—about as much on defensive activities as on offensive—and that's a very large amount of money in the Soviet Union."

U.S. support for PAN in Mexico under fire

Arizona Gov. Bruce Babbitt indicted the current U.S. role in destabilizing the government of Mexico, through support for the National Action Party (PAN), in an article in the *Los Angeles Times* on May 26. "The real question in Central America is Mexico," he wrote. "It is the last domino."

"The PAN, historically a token opposition, is now a real threat to the PRI [the ruling Revolutionary Institutional Party—ed.]. The challenge will reach its climax in

July with the elections. . . . If the U.S. right yields to the temptation of affiliating itself even more with the PAN, Mexicans will see it as a struggle between pro-American imperialists and anti-American revolutionaries. The result would be tragic for both countries."

Since 1980 when Mexico refused to sign the GATT trade agreement, Babbitt explained, the U.S. government and private circles—including Jimmy Carter's National Security Council and Republican Party conservatives—have subjected Mexico to "messianic pressures which are ruining our national policy towards Mexico," by trying to "undo 50 years of *modus vivendi* between the U.S. and Mexico."

Schiller Institute exposes Burt's treason

Schiller Institute organizer Alan Ogden, of Baltimore, Md., created a national sensation on May 28, when he publicly indicted Assistant Secretary of State for European Affairs Richard Burt, for his role in paving the way for a Soviet-backed socialist-communist takeover in Greece. Burt was speaking at a forum sponsored by the World Affairs Council in Washington.

Ogden rose from the audience, pointed at Burt, and shouted: "You're a traitor, Burt! You're a Soviet agent! You're selling out Greece to the Soviets. I'm with LaRouche, and we're the people who are going to save Greece."

The audience of elite policymakers and diplomats (including the ambassadors to Washington from Greece and Bulgaria) went wild, and one man hurled a glass of water at Ogden, who ducked, drenching the finely-dressed woman behind him. Finally, a man identified as Joseph A. Powell, a federal government employee, leapt up, and, screaming wildly, socked Ogden twice in the face. Ogden was shoved from the room.

Ogden, who suffered head contusions, had to go to the hospital for x-rays. When

he attempted to press charges against his assailant, no one would accept the complaint.

The incident was filmed by C-SPAN, CNN, and ABC television, and received widespread national press coverage. UPI issued two wires on the event—the first erroneously stating that it was Lyndon LaRouche personally who had intervened to accuse Burt of being a Soviet agent.

State Department spokesman Marvin Kalb, asked by *EIR*'s correspondent at a press briefing on May 29 whether there was any State Department response to "charges made by a supporter of Lyndon LaRouche yesterday that Richard Burt is working in collusion with efforts toward a coup d'état in Greece," replied, "No comment."

Kissinger to get top Mideast post?

"The Reagan administration will ask Henry Kissinger to be top mediator between Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinians," an Israeli source told *EIR* on May 31, citing a "secret report" being circulated by the Israeli foreign ministry and the Israeli embassy in Washington.

"According to the embassy's report, Kissinger was recommended for the job by the Jimmy Carter people, either by Carter himself, or by one of Carter's men, who talked with officials in the Reagan administration, probably including [Secretary of State George] Shultz.

"It's seen by Israeli sources as part of new discussions for some kind of U.S.-Soviet global deal, the kind that Kissinger always talks about," the source declared.

IMF surveillance set for the U.S. economy

Treasury Secretary James Baker III confirmed that International Monetary Fund (IMF) surveillance of the U.S. economy will be on the agenda of the June meeting of the

Group of 10, the finance ministers of the leading Western industrial nations.

At a press conference on May 29 to unveil the Reagan administration's tax reform plan, *EIR* asked Baker whether the tax proposals cohered with the International Monetary Fund's demand for austerity conditionalities in the United States, as demanded by the Fund at its annual meeting in Washington, D.C. in April. "I can't pinpoint a direct correlation," he replied. The tax package has as much relationship to IMF surveillance "as any other fiscal or economic policy the United States might follow. . . .

"The question of the extent to which the United States is going to go along with additional or enhanced surveillance, is a matter which we'll be discussing in Tokyo on the 21st of June."

Senator Nunn takes aim at U.S. agriculture

Senator Sam Nunn, the Georgia Democrat who is demanding the dismantling of U.S. military capabilities in Western Europe, has now also targeted U.S. agriculture for a wrecking job. Nunn has come up with a plan to encourage bankrupt farmers to amortize their debt by taking their land out of farming and turning it over to pine tree cultivation. Under the plan, reports the *Atlanta Constitution*, "farmers agreeing to convert their land to pine trees would give the FmHA a lien on future revenues from the trees in exchange for the federal agency agreeing to amortize their delinquent loans over a 40-year period."

Nunn wrote a letter to Agriculture Secretary John Block at the end of May urging immediate implementation of the proposal, claiming it is "a common-sense program which would aid many hard-pressed farmers in the southeast and . . . increase the long-term return to the federal government and the American taxpayer on existing FmHA loans."

What it would do to the U.S. food supply, the senator did not say.

Briefly

● **GEORGE BUSH** will brief Europe on the Strategic Defense Initiative, during a tour through several West European capitals in the first half of June. According to sources in Bonn, Bush will give a more updated briefing on the political aspect of the project, and renew the American call for the Europeans to participate in the SDI. Bush is scheduled to visit Bonn, Paris, London, Rome, The Hague, and Brussels.

● **ARMS NEGOTIATOR** Paul Nitze told a Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies audience May 30 that the focus of the Strategic Defense Initiative is "research," and that the constraints will be in the areas of development, testing, and deployment of space weapons. Nitze emphasized that the 1972 U.S.-Soviet ABM Treaty, "allows each party to engage freely in research."

● **RICHARD BURT'S** mooted nomination as U.S. ambassador to West Germany may be running into trouble. A congressional insider points to reports in the *Washington Post* of increasing anger among U.S. conservatives over "foreign service elitists" dictating ambassadorial appointments, and mentioning the "scheduled" Burt appointment in that context. "This is a sign that some people are beginning to raise questions," the source said. Despite rumors of Burt's imminent appointment, and the fact that his successor at the State Department has been chosen, no official nomination has yet been forthcoming.

● **EDWIN MEESE**, the U.S. attorney-general, on May 20 announced the formation of an 11-member committee on pornography, which will hold hearings to help the Congress pass legislation on the subject. Heading the committee will be Henry Hudson, a Virginia prosecutor who banned pornography in Arlington County.