

National News

SAC chief challenges Cheney budget rationale

Gen. John T. Chain Jr., commander of the Strategic Air Command, told reporters that the decision to reduce by 50% the purchase of B-2 strategic bombers was motivated by fiscal, not strategic considerations, and reflected the actions of Pentagon civilian budget cutters and not the military views of the Air Force.

Chain directly contradicted the argument that "a reduced target base in Europe" limits demand for the strategic weapon, an assertion made by Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney during a budget hearing in late April.

Chain emphasized that the weapons carried aboard the B-2 are not designed for use in Eastern Europe, and added that if further reductions in the size of the fleet are proposed, he will not support the administration's arms control package for the upcoming summit. Chain's remarks reflect a growing fear among military leaders that the defense cuts of the Bush administration will accelerate as the economic collapse wipes out revenue projections. Chain has actively lobbied for Air Force programs in defiance of the secretary of defense.

Judge orders government to list Noriega assets

U.S. District Judge William M. Hoehveler on May 5 ordered U.S. government prosecutors to provide a list of \$20 million in assets seized from Panamanian Gen. Manuel A. Noriega.

In issuing the order, Judge Hoehveler said that while General Noriega clearly could not use "ill-gotten gains" to pay his lawyers, the government could not arbitrarily seize money without proving that he had earned it through drug trafficking or other illegal means.

At the May 5 hearing, chief defense lawyer Frank Rubino contended that American intelligence agencies had paid \$11 million

to General Noriega, and that other foreign governments had paid him \$6 million more. "I don't know if you can call money from the CIA tainted or not," Rubino said, "but it's certainly not drug money."

The government insists that Rubino has been already paid \$1 million or more and insists it is under no obligation to turn over drug-tainted funds to the jailed suspect. But Judge Hoehveler, noting that Noriega had been a military officer for more than 20 years, said he must have acquired some money legitimately.

Gen. Fred Woerner, former head of the Southern Command in Panama, told an audience at the Florida International University that the prospects of convicting General Noriega are slim. Fired from his command position over his opposition to the Bush administration invasion plans, Woerner said he had "very little confidence in the veracity" of statements made to the U.S. Congress by Noriega oppositionist José Blandón, in particular, and said that he had made an intensive intelligence investigation into rumors of Cuban infiltration of the Panamanian Defense Forces throughout his tenure, and found "no evidence of Cuban troops in Panama" during that time.

Loggers protest against environmentalist insanity

On April 28 more than 1,500 loggers, mill workers, and their families demonstrated in Hoquiem, Washington against the environmentalist destruction of their livelihoods. With signs calling for an end to taking more and more forests out of production to save the spotted owl, demonstrators for an hour blocked the main north-south highway on the coast of Washington.

The demonstration was organized by contractors and workers outraged over the recent recommendation that 25% more of the old growth forests of Washington, Oregon, and northern California be set aside to protect the spotted owl. In the Olympic Peninsula area of Washington State alone, more than 10,000 jobs will be lost if this recommendation is acted on, as is likely, by

the federal government.

In late April, more than 8,500 loggers and mill workers drove their logging trucks into Portland, Oregon in protest against the expansion of land taken out of production to save the spotted owl. Another demonstration will be held in Kelso, Washington on May 19.

On May 9, Ed Christie, the "Free LaRouche" candidate for governor of Oregon, held a press conference and rally at the University of Oregon in Eugene, calling for economic impact hearings before any environmental bill can be enacted.

Eco-fascist insanity on California ballot

Over 800,000 signatures were filed in California by environmentalists on April 25 in an attempt to put the most draconian environmental policies yet into law through a voter referendum.

Leading eco-fascists told the press they expect to win in November. "There's no way we can lose. . . . This is a done deal," Bob Mulholland, the "Big Green" initiative's campaign manager told the *New York Times*.

Policies which the referendum would mandate include a complete ban on all pesticides judged by a panel of environmentalists to have the slightest possibility of causing cancer or reproductive damage, a ban on foods produced out-of-state if a trace residue of such chemicals is detected, and a cut in the emissions of carbon dioxide of 20% by the year 2000 and 40% by 2010. Oil drilling within three miles of the coast would be forbidden unless the President declared a national emergency.

According to a preliminary study by Spectrum Economics, Inc., of San Francisco, the initiative would increase gasoline prices by 25-50¢ a gallon, raise electricity rates by more than 20%, force food processors, supermarkets, restaurants, and shippers to spend millions of dollars to replace refrigeration units, and would cost the state 1 million jobs by the year 2000.

Briefly

Americans dropping out of 'the system'

A study on "The Media and the Electorate" released by the Markle Commission reported that nearly two-thirds of the American electorate no longer participate in elections, according to May 6 press accounts.

A large percentage of people surveyed could not name the vice presidential candidates in the 1988 race; 33 million households have not sent in their census forms—a rate of non-compliance 12% higher than expected by the Census Bureau; and for every \$5 in taxes owed, \$1 is being evaded.

"A dangerous disconnection is widening between the American electorate and its own political process," according to Eugene Patterson, editor emeritus of the *St. Petersburg Times* and a member of the private foundation which released the study.

This latest report comes on the heels of an upheaval in the television industry which was caused by a Nielsen survey which discovered that over 4% of television viewers have "dropped out" in the last several years and are just not watching the tube. Burton Yale Pines, director of the Heritage Foundation, claimed this is a "happy apathy" of a population satisfied with the performance of its government.

OSI 'Nazi-hunters' under investigation

The U.S. Justice Department has begun a probe of alleged misconduct on the part of the leading officials within the Office of Special Investigations, according to the May 8 *Washington Post*.

Two congressmen, Reps. William Danemeyer (R-Calif.) and David Dreier (R-Calif.), have received letters from the DoJ stating that the department's Office of Professional Responsibility has "initiated an inquiry" into the extradition of Andrija Artukovic, a former minister of the wartime gov-

ernment of Croatia, now part of Yugoslavia.

Artukovic, a longtime California resident, was charged by OSI with having supervised the mass murder of Jews and Serbs. He was extradited by the OSI in 1986, subsequently convicted of murder in a Yugoslav court, and died in prison in 1988 while appealing his conviction and death sentence.

The *Post* said his son Radoslav Artukovic, had caught the attention of officials in Congress with documents that suggest OSI officials may have withheld evidence of contradictory testimony by two key witnesses; misled a federal magistrate about OSI's role in organizing the extradition, by claiming, falsely, that it was the Yugoslavians who initiated the extradition, when it was the OSI; and relied upon the testimony of a discredited witness.

LaRouche seven prepare Supreme Court appeal

Lyndon LaRouche and six associates, who were railroaded to jail last year, will file their appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court on May 17. The brief will highlight facts showing that every due process requirement was sacrificed to efficiency or the "rocket docket" known as Judge Albert Bryan's court.

The high court will be asked to take this case because of what occurred—a 35-day rush to trial, the selection of a jury in less than two hours in the face of massive hostile pre-trial publicity, and the court's issuing an order which prevented the defendants from putting their defense before the jury—procedures which, if accepted as standard, will mean there is no justice to be had in the United States today. The LaRouche case will be the test case to determine whether the U.S. will fully succumb to judicial fascism.

The U.S. government will have until mid-June to respond to the brief. The Supreme Court will then decide if it will take the LaRouche appeal for briefing and argument, or whether it will condone the Fourth Circuit's rubberstamping of Judge Bryan's railroad.

● **THE TASK FORCE** for Black Empowerment plans to file a petition with the U.N. Human Rights Commission in Geneva, Switzerland on human rights violations against black politicians in the U.S., its attorney, Mr. Knox, said May 7 on WGCI-AM radio in Chicago.

● **THE LEADERSHIP** of the Washington, D.C. Democratic Party was defeated May 3 in its attempt to force through a resolution calling on Mayor Marion Barry not to seek reelection. Committeeman Richard Clark called it "unfair, undemocratic," and "an execution order."

● **FAY YAGER**, who faces charges of child abuse stemming from her efforts to help child victims of satanic abuse, told the May 7 *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* that she's being persecuted by authorities because she knows too much. Yager said, referring to organized rings of child abusers, "I've got the goods on them. The bottom is going to fall out."

● **HARVEY VAN FOSSAN** of Springfield, Illinois, was fined \$450 and sentenced to three years probation after fulfilling a city order to rid his lot of pigeons. Van Fossan was prosecuted under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act after the poison he laid out for the pigeons also killed two doves and two grackles.

● **THE NATION** of Islam has announced its first foray into electoral politics, fielding Abdul Alim Muhammad, spokesman for Louis Farakhan, for Maryland's 5th Congressional District; George X. Cure, for U.S. Delegate from D.C.; and Shawn Brakeen for a D.C. school board seat.

● **PRESIDENT BUSH** has set up an emergency board to try to head off a nationwide rail strike. "The national mediation board has concluded that the situation is extremely critical," the White House said May 4.