

## National News

### 'Municipal derivatives' fest ruined by reality

The campaign of Mark Calney for California governor intervened into a Santa Monica seminar on "municipal derivatives" sponsored by the Lehman Brothers brokerage on April 21. The sponsors charged municipal officials and others \$295 each to be brainwashed into the insane practice of having cash-strapped local communities invest their funds in financial derivatives. Nearby Orange County has already been made one such victim.

Two campaign organizers presented seminar attendees with information packets that included a statement from Calney denouncing derivatives as a "ticking time-bomb." "Major financial institutions, such as Cr dit Lyonnais of France, have already collapsed as a result of such practices," said Calney. The derivatives-based speculative bubble has grown from \$1-2 trillion in 1988 to \$16 trillion today.

A distraught organizer for the seminar confronted the Calney volunteers, screaming, "I can't believe you did that! You ruined everything!"

In a related development, the Riverside County Coalition for Family Values has officially endorsed Calney, who is a LaRouche Democrat. The coalition, comprised of Catholics, Jews, Mormons, and Protestants, will be including their endorsement in a 200,000-run pamphlet for distribution to county voters.

### Gary Graham wins right to seek new trial

In a breakthrough on April 20, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, in a ruling in the case of death-row inmate Gary Graham, voided the so-called "30-day rule." The law, variants of which exist in several states, prevented new evidence of innocence from being used to win a new trial in capital cases more than 30 days after sentencing. It was this rule which was implicitly held up by the

U.S. Supreme Court in its 1993 *Herrera* ruling, and which sent Leonel Torres Herrera, who was probably innocent, to his death.

However, the 5-4 Texas ruling set an extremely high standard for ordering a new trial: "The *habeas* judge must hold a hearing to determine whether the newly discovered evidence, when considered in light of the entire record before the jury that convicted him, shows that no rational trier of fact could find proof of guilt beyond a reasonable doubt."

Graham, still under death sentence, can now apply for a new trial, based on the fact that several witnesses to the slaying for which he was convicted came forward after the trial to say that Graham was innocent.

### Religious scholars meet one year after Waco

Sixteen religious scholars met near Waco, Texas on April 17 and announced the formation of a "Religion-Crisis Task Force" prior to commemorative activities on the first anniversary of the FBI assault against the Branch Davidians that killed 86 people in a firestorm. Leaders of the group included Dr. J. Phillip Arnold of Houston and Dr. James Tabor of the University of North Carolina-Charlotte, who were involved in attempting to arrange a peaceful conclusion to the standoff between the FBI and the Branch Davidians.

In their press release, the organizing committee said, "In the pursuit of objective, even-handed reporting and analysis of the facts by the media and government agencies, the Religion-Crisis Task Force urges a moratorium on the use of the word(s) 'cult,' 'cultists,' or 'heretic' in reference to the Branch Davidians, specifically, and non-mainstream religions generally. . . ."

Referring specifically to the Branch Davidians, the scholars continued, "Although their faith differs from traditional Judaism and Christianity, their beliefs and practices possess all the characteristics of a church community. For this reason, and others, the Branch Davidians must be recognized as a religious community—a church—and a moratorium on the use of the word 'cult'

must be declared."

Self-proclaimed experts from the Cult Awareness Network played a major role in inflaming the month-long standoff between the FBI and the Branch Davidians.

### 'American gulag' proposed in Virginia

In Virginia, the Governor's Commission on Parole Abolition and Sentencing Reform presented its "Proposal X" on April 19, the most comprehensive revision of the state justice system ever attempted. The plan intends to make criminals serve an average of 85% of their sentences (they now serve an average of 30%), and ends parole for violent criminals. The roughly half of the state's 20,000 prisoners who are non-violent will be housed in "cost-efficient, secure facilities with job/work requirements" for which they will be made to pay themselves.

States which have already moved in this direction have found that more prisons simply make for more prisoners, but not less crime, according to studies published recently in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*. In Texas, where more people are imprisoned and put to death per capita than any other state, it is estimated that by the year 2000, one in every 21 adults will be under the control of the criminal justice system.

In Florida, where parole has been abolished, violent criminals are being released early from overcrowded facilities, because the state has been under federal court order since 1980 not to allow overcrowding. Even with the toughest criminal justice system, in Florida today 12% of the population is involved in illegal drugs.

### Census study shows lack of health care coverage

A study by the U.S. Census shows that, in addition to the estimated 40 million Americans who lack any health insurance, 25% of Americans or 60 million people had lapses in their coverage some time between February 1990 to September 1992. The study found that those most likely to lose their

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health coverage were living at or near the poverty line, worked part-time, or were between the ages of 18 and 24. Those who lose coverage and later regain it are usually forced to pay higher premiums and to comply with new six-month waiting periods before the coverage becomes active, making the possibility of regaining coverage slimmer with each successive lapse in insurance.

The Clinton administration estimates that there are 81 million families in which members have preexisting medical conditions, making them very vulnerable to loss of coverage.

The Census Bureau survey found that 52% of those living in poverty for just one month during the 32-month period studied lost health coverage; 47% of those who participated even briefly in assistance programs such as welfare, general assistance, Social Security, food stamps, or housing assistance, lacked continuous coverage; and 46% of those whose income was between the poverty level and twice that amount also lacked continuous coverage.

The study, based on the monthly Survey of Income and Program Participation, found that 48% of Hispanics lacked coverage, as compared to 37% of African-Americans and 24% of whites.

### Kansas wants 'bidding for beds' for Medicaid

The Kansas Department of Social Rehabilitation Services (SRS) has asked the federal government to waive certain Medicaid rules so the state can open competitive bidding among the state's nursing facilities for contracts to serve elderly Medicaid patients. About half the nursing home patients in Kansas depend on Medicaid, the federal-state plan that finances health care for the poor.

Families of patients are alarmed that their relatives can be shipped off to the lowest bidder anywhere in the state, and maybe even out of the state, if the waiver is approved. The Kansas Health Care Association that represents the state's 300 nursing home facilities, says the "bidding for beds" scheme will create immeasurable suffering

for chronically ill and infirm patients if they are bounced yearly from one facility to next year's lowest bidder. SRS calculates it will save up to one-half of 1% in Medicaid expenditures.

With the waiver, SRS plans to limit the number of nursing home beds designated for Medicaid. Yet, SRS, the University of Kansas, and other groups that produced the Kansas Long-Term Care Action Committee Report, estimate that the number of Kansans who are at least 85 years old will grow by 50% by 1995.

### Midwest hit by new round of flooding

Spring flooding, fed by heavy rains and snowmelt, is revisiting some areas of the Midwest ravaged last year, as well as new areas this year. While not as bad as last year's massive flooding, the spring floods of 1994 are aggravated by the fact that critical infrastructure damaged in 1993 has not been repaired. Flooding was blamed for four deaths in Missouri, and one each in Illinois and Oklahoma.

The Merrimac River in Missouri crested at 38 feet, 22 feet above flood stage. In southern Illinois, several families were taken to safety by helicopter after the Mississippi River pushed through a levee near Miller City. In Oklahoma, the Neosho River crested more than 10 feet above flood stage on April 14. In St. Louis, the Mississippi crested at 6.5 feet over flood stage.

The United States is even less prepared to handle a flood this year than it was last. Many levees, destroyed last year, have still not been rebuilt.

Last year, the Midwest suffered \$15-25 billion in damage to farm crops, homes, infrastructure, and industry, as a result of lack of flood control infrastructure on the Mississippi above Cairo, Illinois. After the floods, the Army Corps of Engineers was prevented by budget-cutting insanity from rebuilding what infrastructure existed. Now, the Federal Emergency Management Agency is pushing for programs that will not repair last year's damage, but allow the Mississippi to run free.

● **THE AMERICAN** Cusanus Society recommended to its members the collection of English translations of Cardinal Nicolaus of Cusa's works that was published by the Schiller Institute in 1993. According to the society, the book contains the only available English translation of *De Coniecturis*, which will be the subject of an Oct. 5 biennial conference.

● **THE ROSEMONT-APPLE** Valley School district in Minnesota, which pioneered the brainwashing curriculum known as "outcome-based education" in the state, has decided to drop the program. School "reformers" from the Humphrey Institute have been quoted in the press fearing that other districts will now also be encouraged to scrutinize OBE.

● **THE ANTI-DEFAMATION** League "expressed disappointment that the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals denied an appeal for the entire court to determine whether the U.S. Justice Department's Office of Special Investigations acted improperly in the Demjanjuk case. The League reaffirmed its support for OSI's efforts to have Demjanjuk deported," in the latest issue of its newsletter. The ADL colluded with the Justice Department and the Soviet KGB in the frameup of Demjanjuk.

● **160 JEWISH** "writers, intellectuals, rabbis, [and] community activists" published a full-page ad in the *New York Times* on April 17 calling for Israel to dismantle the settlements in the Occupied Territories. The signers said they "were outraged at the massacre of Palestinians at a mosque in Hebron by an American Jewish settler and at the subsequent glorification of that carnage by other Israeli settlers."

● **LAROCHE** Democratic candidate for Senator from Virginia Nancy Spannaus will top the June 14 Democratic primary ballot, because she was the first in the field of four to turn in her petition signatures.