

National News

Thurmond bill would end unanimous verdict rule

Sen. Strom Thurmond (R-N.C.) filed legislation on Nov. 27 to end the judicial requirement that jurors' verdicts must be unanimous. His bill would allow jury decisions to be made on a 10-2 vote in federal criminal and civil trials. Thurmond argued that there is no literal Constitutional requirement for a unanimous verdict, despite the fact that Constitutional practice has maintained it to safeguard the principle of "reasonable doubt."

Thurmond offered the unsubstantiated claim that "today the entire trial process is heavily tilted toward the accused, with many, many safeguards in place to ensure that the defendant receives a fair trial. . . . This change for jury verdicts in the Federal courts will reduce the likelihood of a single juror corrupting an otherwise thoughtful and reasonable deliberation of the evidence."

Newt's White House bid folds early in London

When House Speaker Newt Gingrich told a press conference Nov. 27 that he would not run for President in 1996, the news was already five days old in Britain. The *Times* of London, the favorite rag of the imperial-nostalgia set, angrily reported the death of Newt's campaign Nov. 22, and even announced that he would formally withdraw on Nov. 27. The *Times* bluntly attributed Newt's fall to his "extremism," his "megalomaniacal philandering," and his "bad mishandling" of the budget showdown with President Clinton.

Gingrich began his own announcement by saying, "So, there's no more speculation. I will not run next year for President. My intent is to run for reelection to the House and hopefully be Speaker again." When asked whether his decision was based on the fact that his "personal popularity in the national polls has taken a nosedive," Newt cut off his questioner and shot back, "That's about where Goldwater's was when he got

the nomination." Newt failed to mention that Barry Goldwater, the 1964 Republican nominee, lost the election to Democrat Lyndon Johnson in a landslide.

Asked if he would endorse Republican front-runner Bob Dole for President, Gingrich replied, "No, I won't endorse any candidate. I would hope that I would be asked to be chairman of the [party] convention. And you could still well have a contest going on at that stage, so I would be neutral." As for any Republican hopes of winning the White House, Newt offered the wild speculation that there would be five major candidates on the Presidential ballot in November 1996, and that the entire election would be thrown into chaos.

Even before he folded his own collapsed tent, Gingrich had become such a political liability that Democrats were eagerly looking for ways to tie their opponents to Newt's tail. California Democrat Jerry Estruth—preparing to face Republican Tom Campbell in a special election on Dec. 12 to fill the seat vacated by Rep. Norman Mineta (D)—sent Gingrich an airplane ticket inviting Newt to campaign for Campbell.

The chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, Rep. Martin Frost (Tex.), said, "I hope Newt comes to my district. . . . And I hope Newt goes to every district in the country, quite frankly." Frost said he had called for Democratic candidates to make "your opponent's middle name Gingrich, and that's exactly what's going to happen in this election."

DOJ cleanout moving ahead under Clinton

A recently released report by the Justice Department's internal affairs unit, the Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR), reveals that 20 Federal prosecutors quit the department during fiscal year 1993, while they were under internal investigation for alleged misconduct. By comparison, during the previous eight years, only 22 attorneys quit while under OPR probe, according to the Nov. 24 *Washington Post*.

The OPR's report also indicated a 78% increase from 1992 to 1993 in complaints

of misconduct against department officials. Some DOJ officials have tried to play down the increase in allegations of prosecutorial misconduct, suggesting it was simply the result of defense attorneys using the claim as a "trial tactic." According to the OPR study, however, only 10% of the complaints came from defense lawyers, whereas 49% of the complaints originated from within the Justice Department itself.

According to the *Post*, Attorney General Janet Reno instituted new procedures in December 1993, which gave OPR more authority to probe official misconduct. Reno ordered that all OPR complaints be immediately investigated—even when they involved ongoing litigations—and that OPR probes continue even after the targeted DOJ officials left the department. Under her predecessor in the Bush administration, William Barr, complaints against federal prosecutors were often not even reported to OPR for centralized investigation.

Sources in Washington indicate that there is strong White House support for cleaning out what amounts to a rogue element long entrenched in the DOJ bureaucracy. This may be reflected in the increased clout given to Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick, known to be on close personal terms with both President Clinton and his wife Hillary.

Gingrich is deadliest disease threat to U.S.

A leading health expert told *EIR* Nov. 28 that the most serious infectious disease threat now facing the United States "is the Republican Congress." Dr. Robert Black, chairman of the International Health Department of Johns Hopkins University's School of Hygiene and Public Health, said that Newt Gingrich and his budget-cutting policies were going to severely damage public health in the United States.

Dr. Black, who formerly worked for the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta, Georgia, was attending a NASA-sponsored International Symposium on Remote Sensing and Vector-Borne Disease Monitoring and Control, in Baltimore. He

Briefly

● **LYNDON LAROUCHE** is among the 15 Presidential candidates selected to appear on California's March 26 primary election ballot, as announced by California Secretary of State Bill Jones Nov. 27. LaRouche is the only Democratic contender listed other than President Clinton. The LaRouche campaign plans to be on the primary ballot in 37 states.

● **GOV. WILLIAM WELD**, the Massachusetts blueblood who recently demanded that the state privatize what little remains of its vital functions, announced Nov. 29 that he is running for U.S. Senate in 1996 against Democratic incumbent John Kerry. "We've succeeded in changing the political culture of Massachusetts," he said. "Now it's time to change the political culture of Washington, D.C."

● **A COLORADO** state legislator wants to eliminate compulsory education, or at least terminate it at age 12 instead of 16, the *Washington Times* reported Nov. 28. Under the guise of eliminating truants who disrupt class when compelled to stay in school, Rep. Russ George (R), from the rural town of Rifle, plans to introduce his ignorant bill in January.

● **PRIVATE PRISONS** may be full of "pitfalls," the *New York Times* admitted Nov. 24. Payments to private companies, to run low-security federal prisons, have exceeded the costs the government would have paid to maintain them itself. The *Times* also noted that private prison companies frequently ignore federal guidelines on treatment of inmates, and often are headed by former government officials who can exert influence over government contracts.

● **THE LABOR** Department is investigating some 300 U.S. companies for diverting funds from their employees' 401(k) pension plans. The caseload has tripled since last year, when Labor Department investigators began to scrutinize the drain of 401(k) pension funds by small and medium-sized companies.

told *EIR* that public health "experts are very scared," and that Americans had no idea of the threats that they are facing. Budget cuts during the past several years, he said, have decimated the CDC and the U.S. infectious disease surveillance network; and Gingrich's policies were likely to wreck what was left.

U.S. DEA investigating Ritalin lobbying group

The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has been looking into the lobbying organization pushing Ritalin, a drug manufactured by the pharmaceutical giant Ciba-Geigy. CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention Deficit Disorder) receives close to half its budget from Ciba-Geigy, and has been actively lobbying the DEA to reclassify methylphenidate, the stimulant marketed as Ritalin, used to treat the disorder. It is currently classified as a highly addictive drug, along with cocaine and various amphetamines, even though it is prescribed to millions of Americans, most of them children.

According to a Nov. 16 article in *USA Today*, recent DEA documents cite "agency fears" that "the financial relationship" between CHADD and the Ritalin manufacturer is "not well-known by the public, including CHADD members that have relied upon CHADD for guidance." Reclassifying Ritalin, as CHADD is proposing, would make the drug cheaper and even more widely available.

The article claimed: "Gene Haislip, DEA's head of diversion control, says he found parents abusing their kids' prescriptions, kids selling to kids, illegal drug rings, illicit trafficking. Mexican smuggling rings, even."

According to Haislip, one study in Texas shows more high school seniors were using Ritalin "non-medically" than those who actually had prescriptions. Two deaths in March were also reported of youngsters who had crushed the tablets and "snorted" the drug, i.e., inhaled it nasally, as a means of inducing the rapid onset of euphoria.

Haislip says CHADD "misleads" members about Ritalin's safety. The U.S. De-

partment of Education recently withdrew a \$100,000 CHADD-produced video that was distributed to educators in February, after learning about the CHADD connection to Ciba-Geigy.

Several recent national television features have also reported growing abuse of Ritalin among teenagers and adults to "get high." It has reportedly become one of the drugs most frequently stolen from pharmacies, and high school athletics coaches and other personnel have been frequently found stealing doses prescribed for students from school medicine cabinets. A recent *Newsweek* article described Ritalin "snorting" parties among high school students, and claimed that use of the drug has risen nearly sixfold in the last five years.

None of these exposés, however, actually questions the use of Ritalin for treating children with so-called attention deficit disorder (much less those who are misdiagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder and end up being "treated" with it), or the fact that widespread administering of the drug by school officials has created a climate of acceptance for its use.

Gambling casinos are a flop in New Orleans

Harrah's Jazz Co. filed Nov. 22 for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection from its creditors, after its temporary gaming hall in New Orleans' municipal auditorium brought in only half the revenues expected. Harrah's Jazz opened its temporary quarters on May 1, while it was building the city's only land-based casino, at a cost now projected at more than double the original estimate of \$425 million. Bank lenders cut off lines of credit following Harrah's announcement that it would close the hall.

Two riverboat casinos also declared bankruptcy in early June after only two months of operation, and are now in liquidation. Hilton Hotels Corp. has also cooled on New Orleans, and reportedly wants to sell its gambling hall there. Showboat Inc.'s casino left last year, and Circus Circus Enterprises abandoned a suburban casino development that never opened.