

National News

Single-Payer Health Bill Now Before U.S. Senate

The challenge to the parasitic role of private medical insurance corporations took another step forward March 26, when a bill for a single-payer, Medicare-for-All bill was introduced in the U.S. Senate. The bill complements H.R. 1200 in the House.

The Senate bill (S. 703), introduced by Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), includes funds for community health centers, and for support of the National Health Service Corps, health professionals education, including education of clinical nurse practitioners, certified registered nurse anesthetists, certified nurse midwives, and physician assistants.

Soros Pot Bill Busted In California Assembly

George Soros's California drug legalizers had cause to throw down their bongos in disgust in late March. For now, their drive to legalize marijuana in the state is dead. Assembly Bill 390, which had been scheduled for a March 31 hearing before the Committee on Public Safety, has been pulled from the agenda by its sponsor, who will not bring it back until next January. If it doesn't get out of the committee by the third week of January 2010, the bill will be irrevocably dead.

How did this happen, in a state renowned for its "medical" marijuana dens, and where some boast that marijuana is the state's largest cash crop?

On March 23, the law enforcement associations sent letters to each member of the Committee, laying out their reasons for their unconditional opposition.

The letter noted, "The bill ... also encourages continued expansion of the illegal marijuana market.... And since AB 390 makes any penalties for illegal marijuana and hashish trafficking virtually meaningless, consumers will be

drawn to a more economical illegal market, rather than paying the \$50.00 per ounce surcharge for so-called legal marijuana...."

EIR has been probing the background of the bill's actual sponsors, and circulating among activists and police groups our explosive Feb. 27 package exposing the British Empire/Soros global Dope, Inc., while pressing establishment lawyers and politicians to account for their association with the legislative staffers offering the bill—thus, perhaps, helping to cause the decision to withdraw it.

An informed source close to the legislative battle told *EIR* that AB 390 was written by the organized-crime-tied National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws (NORML), and had been reworked through the George Soros group, the Marijuana Policy Project.

McCaffrey Opposes More Troops to Afghanistan

Gen. Barry McCaffrey (ret.) pointed out, on NBC's Nightly News March 26, that sending 4,000 additional troops to Afghanistan this year, as announced by President Obama, with the intent of training the Afghan national army and police, means "We are going in for a long time, we are not coming out." Just days earlier, 17,000 more had been announced.

Responding to McCaffrey's summing up of the anticipated outcome of the President's new surge policy, Lyndon LaRouche said: "Gen. McCaffrey is right. The President's crowd is wrong. They are not thinking. We've told them exactly what to do [dismantle the narcotics trafficking operations], and it is right."

Fifteen members of the House of Representatives have sent President Obama a letter urging him to "reconsider" his decision to send more troops. "If the intent is to leave behind a stable Afghanistan capable of governing itself, this military escalation may well be counterproductive." It quotes a recent Carnegie Endowment report which concluded that,

"the only meaningful way to halt the insurgency's momentum is to start withdrawing troops."

Among the signers is Walter Jones (R-N.C.), whose district includes three military bases including the Marines' Camp Lejeune, and Ed Whitfield (R-Ky.), whose district includes Fort Campbell, the home of the 101st Airborne Division and 5th Special Forces Group. Other Republicans are Roscoe Bartlett (Md.), Howard Coble (N.C.), John Duncan (Tenn.), and Ron Paul (Tex.). Democrats are Bob Filner and Michael Honda (Calif.), Neil Abercrombie (Ha.), Jim McGovern (Mass.), John Conyers (Mich.), Marcy Kaptur, Dennis Kucinich (Ohio), and Daniel Kagen (Wisc.).

Russian Missile Pact: A Strategic Game-Changer

Addressing a conference organized by the Missile Defense Agency and the American Institute of Astronautics and Aeronautics, entitled "Gaining System Confidence Through Testing," Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.), Armed Services Committee chairman, underlined the strategic significance of a possible agreement with Russia on missile defense. "At the start of a new administration we have a chance to cooperate on missile defense. Even if we could begin discussions with Russia, this would send an important signal to Iran and change the geopolitical dynamic," he said.

Levin admitted that there would be difficulties with Poland and the Czech Republic, but he felt these could be resolved, since "this is a situation in which both countries' security could be enhanced." He noted that the Russians had again offered to use their facility at Garbala, Azerbaijan, as a part of such a system, and had also indicated that they would be willing to host a control center in Moscow, both of which he felt would be worth consideration. He also indicated that cooperation could bring down the costs of missile defense.