

Elephants & Donkeys by Kathleen Klenetsky

Selective leaks from the Cuomo dossier

In a sure sign that Mario Cuomo's protestations that he is *not* running for the Democratic presidential nomination are a fraud, portions of the "Cuomo dossier," the mass of material documenting the New York governor's links to organized crime, have begun to surface in the press. The leaks come more than a year after *EIR* published its own exposé of "'Don' Mario Cuomo and the dope mob" (*EIR*, Aug. 1, 1986).

Rupert Murdoch's *New York Post*, no friend of Cuomo, let loose on Oct. 27, reporting (as *EIR* had detailed previously) that before he entered government service in 1975, Cuomo had been part-owner of a concrete company that later figured in a construction scandal. Cuomo served as part-owner and director of Grand Prestressed, along with Vincent DeLillo, who was convicted in federal court in 1979 of conspiring to supply standard concrete pipe to Suffolk County.

According to the *Post*, FBI and New York Police Department sources said that DeLillo was an associate of the Colombo crime family, and that his father, Andrew, was an associate of the Gambino organized crime syndicate.

Cuomo's connections to the company were not included in a *New York Magazine* article which hit the stands one day before the *Post* story. Written by "mafia expert" Nicholas Pileggi, a close personal friend of Cuomo, the article sought to preempt the expected attacks on Cuomo's unsavory associations by itemizing the various allegations against him, and "proving"

them to be unfounded.

"The most prevalent rumors about the 'mob' skeletons in Cuomo's family closet turn out to be misleading or false," Pileggi claimed. But he was also forced to concede, "Of course, no one can scrub anyone completely clean."

Pileggi reported that rumors of mafia ties to Cuomo or his family are so common that "several major news organizations have hired private detectives and former city cops to help investigative reporters sort out stories."

According to Pileggi's account, the most widespread rumors about Cuomo and his relatives are these:

- The May 22, 1984 mugging of Cuomo's father-in-law, Charles Raffia, "was a mob beating that grew out of a dispute over arson."

- Cuomo "interfered with the police investigation of the beating."

- Raffia was arrested for arson, but the record has been erased from the state crime computer.

- As a young lawyer, Cuomo represented organized crime hoodlums in Queens.

- Mobster Michael Franzese, stepson of Sonny Franzese, contributed \$30,000 to Cuomo's 1982 gubernatorial campaign.

- Cuomo's former law firm used an escrow account to pay money to a mobster who was later acquitted of murdering an undercover detective.

Pileggi claimed to have found no substantiation for any of these stories.

Cuomo aides hailed the Pileggi piece, saying that the governor was relieved. But they blew a gasket over the *New York Post* article. Meyer Frucher, a top adviser to the governor, scored the article as "another example of . . . this absurd McCarthyistic process. . . . This is ludicrous—beyond anything I've seen in my life." But the *Post's* executive editor, Frank De-

vine, retorted that the story was a "public service and possibly even a service to the governor," since the "rumors do exist and I think that by bringing them out into the open we are probably contributing to a kind of exorcism."

Cuomo still has lots of fans, though, including among the terrorists of the Jewish Defense League. A "Draft Cuomo" committee has been set up in New York by the JDL's Victor Vancier, who was recently convicted of firebombings in New York.

Bush defends INF accord

George Bush defended the INF Treaty during the Republican candidates' first televised debate Oct. 28. Earlier in the month, the vice president had challenged his Republican rivals to support the treaty.

During the debate, Bush claimed that, on a recent trip to Europe, he had found that all of the allied leaders support the accord. This statement was challenged by former NATO commander Al Haig, who said that he had just been in Europe, and "they are unsettled by this treaty." Haig said Europe's professed support for the accord was a result of "unprecedented armtwisting" by Washington.

But Haig undermined this carefully cultivated pro-defense position in the next breath, when he decried the Strategic Defense Initiative as "pie-in-the sky."

None of the candidates had anything intelligent to say on the stock market collapse, purveying the standard idiocies about cutting spending. Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kan.) demanded that West Germany and Japan hyper-inflate their economies "dollar for dollar," for every dollar cut from the U.S. budget deficit.