

# National News

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## Education Department offers 'model curriculum'

Education Secretary William Bennett released a study on Dec. 29, entitled "James Madison High School," proposing an optimal high school curriculum that would include four years of English, three of social studies, math, and science, two years of a single language, two years of physical education, and one of fine arts.

In a Washington press conference, Bennett identified three "common denominators" of the successful programs reviewed: 1) raising expectations; 2) "it makes a difference what you read—Henry James is not the same as Batman"; and 3) there is a commitment to students and lack of the "bargain between teacher and student, where the teacher says, 'If you don't hassle me, I won't make demands on you.'"

Bennett derided such elective courses as "Current Wellness Issues," "Teen Living," "Baja Whale Watch," and "Rock Poetry."

Asked by *EIR's* Nicholas Benton why the proposed curriculum did not emphasize study of classical languages, which until the 1950s and 1960s were considered essential for college preparatory education, Bennett quoted the report, "There is no reason why local districts should not teach Russian instead of German, Chinese instead of Italian, or Greek instead of Latin. The choice of which languages to offer is clearly a matter of local decision."

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## Rumors persist on death of Harold Washington

Since the death of Chicago Mayor Washington on Nov. 25, 1987, rumors of foul play persist. Some reports have claimed that a mixture of cocaine and strychnine was found in his bloodstream, and Alderman Robert Shaw and others called for the release of toxicology reports.

The *Chicago Defender* newspaper re-

ported on Jan. 5: "None of the persons who have started the rumors that Washington was murdered, have been able to produce any positive information.

"However, Ald. Robert Shaw yesterday called for a preliminary investigation into increasing charges that the late Mayor Harold Washington was allegedly a victim of a political assassination plot.

"Agreeing with Shaw is State Rep. Doug Huff, who said an investigation may be in order, but he has no proof that Washington was killed at this point.

"I think there are rumors floating in the community about this, and I believe that Cook County Medical Examiner Dr. Robert Stein should release the toxicology reports."

"Stein said he ran 30,000 screenings of toxicology tests and said they all showed negative.

"Huff said he talked to Stein and said 'he told me no foreign substances or drugs were found in the mayor's body. He also said there would be no inquest. I am still ill at ease with the way he died.'"

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## Weinberger scores defense budget cuts

Former Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, in an interview published in the *Washington Times* on Jan. 7, warned that ongoing cuts in the U.S. defense budget "take us right back to the days of the '70s. All the things the President campaigned against in 1979 and '80. And all the things that the people repudiated about Carter and the whole decade of the '70s."

When Weinberger resigned in November, he cited his opposition to the Gramm-Rudman budget-cutting as one of his reasons, along with personal concerns involving the health of his wife.

The Pentagon has now announced that it is planning to cut 30,000 people from the armed forces, in order to meet the \$294 billion spending limit in the FY89 budget.

"The action of the Congress in this last session I think was very damaging to America's security," Weinberger said. "The cuts were much deeper than are safe. They will

get into the bone, as we shall see, of the force structure . . . [and will] put a good bit of turbulence into what is a fine morale situation" in the armed forces.

Weinberger refused to criticize President Reagan or Defense Secretary Frank Carlucci, blaming Congress for the budget cuts, and denied that the President's views on the Soviet Union have changed.

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## D.C. court upholds 'wrongful birth' concept

Obstetricians in the District of Columbia can now be sued by parents, for delivering children with birth defects, according to a ruling of the D.C. Court of Appeals on Jan. 3.

The court accepted the concept of "wrongful birth" and ruled that parents can sue if the doctors "deprived the parent of the right to decide whether to avoid the birth through abortion."

The unanimous decision of the three-judge panel reinstated a "wrongful birth" suit brought by the mother of a girl born with Down's syndrome, against obstetrician Dr. Marciana Wilkerson. "If Ms. Haymon proves at trial that Dr. Wilkerson deprived her of the parental right to choose whether to avoid the birth of a child afflicted with Down's syndrome, Dr. Wilkerson can be held liable for the extraordinary medical and other expenses attributable to the care of the child," wrote Judge Judith W. Rogers for the court.

Nellie Gray, president of the March for Life, said that "it's because of these kinds of cases that many doctors are getting out of obstetrics-gynecology," according to the *Washington Times* Jan. 5.

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## Rostow: Go slow on INF treaty ratification

Former arms control negotiator Eugene Rostow, chairman of the executive committee of the Committee on the Present Danger,

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in a commentary in the *New York Times* on Jan. 5, said that ratification of the treaty on intermediate-range nuclear forces should be tied to agreements providing for "Soviet-American equality in offensive intercontinental nuclear weapons and defensive systems. . . . Both at home and abroad, there is a strong dissenting view that sees the INF treaty as a new Munich."

He warned, "The Soviet goal in the arms control negotiations is to denuclearize Western Europe, which would lead inevitably to a neutral Europe . . . [which] has been part of the primary strategic objective of the Soviet Union since the Second World War."

### NASA: safety problems with Space Shuttle

An internal NASA report leaked to the *Atlanta Constitution* maintains that the space agency still lacks the skilled engineers, clear guidelines, and leadership to ensure the safety of manned space flight. "Despite heightened safety concerns after the worst accident in spaceflight history, the agency is falling into a 'safety second' mind-set," the *Constitution* charged Jan. 5, reporting on a three-month safety risk assessment made by an ad hoc committee last August.

"The concern for safety which peaked shortly after the Challenger accident appears to be waning, and in many areas this has been translated by workers, engineers, and supervisors to a 'business as usual' attitude," the *Constitution* reported, citing the report.

### Senator Melcher demands protectionism

Trade legislation, cuts in military aid to U.S. allies, and the buildup of American industry and infrastructure were the three "New Year's resolutions" outlined by Montana Sen. John Melcher, in the Democratic reply

to President Reagan's Jan. 2 address.

"We must stop paying for everyone else's national defense," Melcher demanded. "We must stop running up U.S. deficits by paying for everyone else's armaments, and always sending our men and women and planes and ships to rescue foreign interests. That means Europe and Japan have to pay their way, or at least their fair share for U.S. air and naval support that we provide to protect their land and their air space and the ocean trade lanes for their shipping."

Melcher's economic proposals had a similar cast, calling for taking care of "our problems here at home." He did recognize, however, that the U.S. economy was "bleeding," and said: "Let's help our own basic industries: agriculture and energy and steel and mining."

### Virginia doctors can report AIDS carriers

Virginia Gov. Gerald Baliles signed an emergency order Jan. 4 giving physicians the right to report the names of patients who test positive for the AIDS virus to state medical authorities. The new order replaces one which permitted doctors to report only known cases of AIDS to local health departments.

"It is absolutely important that we intervene as quickly as possible to help curb the spread of this disease," said a new report on AIDS in Virginia, written by Dr. A. Martin Cader, director of the state Division of Communicable Disease Control, and other state health officials. "The sooner we can give physicians the regulatory authority to report HIV antibody test results, the better we can accomplish this."

In a related development, the School Board of Fairfax County, Virginia, just outside Washington, D.C., voted unanimously on Jan. 2 to allow a child with AIDS to attend school, thereby reversing the previous decision of School Superintendent Robert Spillane. The decision will be reviewed weekly, in light of the child's medical condition. Spillane had apparently recommended the change after a suit was filed against the school system by the child's parents.

● **'BUSH JUST CAN'T** cut it," said a senior representative of New York banking interests, explaining why some on Wall Street are moving to back Robert Dole for President. "After all, how can you have a preppie for President during the middle of the upcoming financial dislocation? Bush has no credibility, and will have no credibility to push the economic programs which are necessary. On the other hand, Dole has humble beginnings and is from the farm belt."

● **ANDREW CUOMO**, son of New York Gov. Mario Cuomo, was served with a RICO suit in Florida at the end of December, by a thrift institution which charges that he violated the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act in an attempt to bankrupt Oceanmark Federal Saving and Loan Association.

● **OTIS BOWEN**, Secretary of Health and Human Services, has requested \$1.145 billion for AIDS-related research for FY89, according to confidential budget documents leaked to the *New York Times*. Bowen's figure is 20.5% more than Congress allocated for FY88, and 45% more than what President Reagan requested. There is no indication that Bowen has abandoned his "just give 'em condoms" approach to AIDS.

● **CHARLES WICK'S** U.S. Information Agency has conducted a series of studies purporting to prove that Western Europeans prefer the Soviet Union over the United States. The studies allegedly show that it is "almost impossible" to prevent the Finlandization of Western Europe, according to a report published in *National Review*.

● **BOB DOLE**, if elected President, would likely name Democratic Party honcho Robert Strauss as his top financial adviser, either as Treasury Secretary or chairman of the Federal Reserve, according to the *New York Times*.