

National News

George Bush's son said in insider trading scam

George W. Bush, President Bush's oldest son, is involved in an insider trading scam, according to a March issue of *U.S. News and World Report*.

The younger Bush sold \$848,560 of his stock in Harken Energy Co. just before the share prices began to plunge because of a poor earnings report. At the time of the sale last June 22, Bush was a member of a committee formed by the Dallas-based oil company to study the effects of a corporate restructuring. The magazine reported that Bush's stake in Harken, and his insider role, stemmed from Harken's takeover of another oil company that he helped found. As a member of the restructuring committee, Bush had "detailed knowledge of the financial pressure Harken was under and of the demands being placed on the company by its creditors," the magazine reported.

Throughout the 1980s, the Reagan-Bush administration actively protected the interests of corporate raiders, leverage buy-out specialists, and greenmail looters that gutted American industry. Between 1985-86, some 31 pieces of legislation were introduced into Congress to stem what became known as the "Decade of Greed," but were vigorously opposed by the Reagan-Bush administration.

UMW protests loss of health benefits

Hundreds of retired coal miners from the United Mine Workers union from around the nation picketed the Department of Labor in Washington on March 10 to protest the impending loss of the Union's health care benefits.

As many as 120,000 retired miners and their families have been told their health benefits could be cut off in mid-April because of the debts of the two health benefit trusts that pay for the health care, the March 7 *Richmond Times-Dispatch* reported. Life-long health care has long been included in UMW contracts throughout the industry. A

federal judge has scheduled a hearing in Abingdon, Virginia on March 16 that may delay the cutoff.

Bush Secretary of Labor Lynn Martin has opposed a plan that would restore the financial solvency of the funds through an industry-wide tax and a transfer of funds from solvent pension fund trusts. The plan is an initiative of Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D-W.V.) that is part of the Senate Finance Committee's proposed tax legislation. A group of non-union coal companies in Virginia, favored by state Attorney General Mary Sue Terry and the state's right-to-work law, say that the Rockefeller plan could increase the cost of ton of Virginia coal by 15¢ per ton.

CDC guidelines on AIDS under attack

The Atlanta, Georgia Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines on testing health care workers for HIV infection are causing confusion about what preventive measures should be taken to protect patients from exposure.

States have until Oct. 28 to use the vague CDC guidelines, or develop "equivalent" policies to reduce the risk of patients contracting the AIDS virus from infected physicians, dentists, and other health care workers, after which they will not receive federal grants from the Public Health Service. Only seven states have passed laws and 19 have introduced bills related to infected health care workers.

An article in the March 3 *Washington Post* showed the absurdity of the CDC's lack of policy for mandatory testing for all. "The risk of a physician contracting the virus from an infected patient is far greater than the reverse," it read. There are 47 reported such cases, according to CDC.

"Since the CDC has not issued final guidelines, it is difficult to know what would be considered equivalent," a director for HIV-AIDS at the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials told the *Washington Post*.

CDC guidelines recommend that HIV-infected physicians and dentists not perform invasive procedures without a patient's consent. Health workers would be tested, and

all medical personnel who have contact with patients would be urged to take precautions to prevent transmission of HIV and hepatitis B.

Castration approved in molestation plea bargain

Houston, Texas Judge Michael McSpadden of State District Court agreed on March 6 to the request of an accused child molester, 28-year-old Steven Allen Butler, a father of one, to be surgically castrated rather than serve a possible life sentence. In return, the judge said he would sentence Butler to 10 years deferred adjudication, a form of probation.

The decision was harshly criticized by critics who stressed that child molestation has more to do with violence and the need to control, not sex-drive. "This is not the answer," said Cassandra Thomas, president of the National Coalition against Sexual Abuse. "It sounds good. It makes you feel good, but in the long haul it doesn't deal in any way with the basic issues of sexual assault."

Philip Reilly, who wrote a book on the history of involuntary sterilization in the United States, asked: "Would you allow an 18-year-old boy who stole a car three times to say, 'Cut my hands off so I won't do it again?'"

Phone customers to pay for FBI wiretaps?

The Bush Department of Justice has proposed that the nation's telephone companies install expensive equipment designed to facilitate FBI and police wiretaps of citizens, and authorize the phone companies to pass the costs on to customers.

According to an AP story on March 6, the proposal was drafted by the FBI and the Justice Department in response to dramatic advances in telephone technology, which have complicated the practice of installing taps on regular phone lines. New digital transmission and switching systems pass conversations through central stations in a disassembled form, making obsolete the old methods of tapping a residential phone at

the central switch. The FBI has previously demanded, and been denied by Congress, authority to force the phone companies to build electronic "trap doors" which would allow the government unrestricted access to the computer-encrypted digital phone traffic. The proposal would mandate that phone companies cooperate with the FBI, and standardize the necessary equipment.

The proposal would prohibit phone companies and private exchanges from utilizing equipment which doesn't comply with the new standards, which are to be set by the Federal Communications Commission. The phone companies would have 180 days to change their equipment, the specific methods by which the taps would be done would remain secret, and the bill would give the attorney general power to seek court injunctions against companies that violate the regulations and collect civil penalties of \$10,000 a day. The FCC would be authorized to allow phone companies to raise rates to cover the costs of the equipment, which will be many millions of dollars, according to estimates.

Critics of the proposal say that the FBI has never made a clear case why its current methods are not working, and are demanding public hearings on the measure.

U.S. Embassy in Bolivia funded pro-drug study

The U.S. Embassy in Bolivia has funded a study claiming that coca production helps the ecology and the economy, the Feb. 21 German daily *Frankfurter Rundschau* reported. Bolivia is the success model cited by "shock therapy" advocate Jeffrey Sachs, who has admitted that his economic policies have forced Bolivians into coca production.

The article read: "Coca plants contribute to the maintenance of soil fertility on the stony slopes of the Bolivian Andes, and protect the land from erosion. A U.S. Embassy-funded study of the 'Center for Ecological Research and Integrated Development,' located in the Bolivian city La Paz, has come to this result. The researchers thereby express opposition to the reports of the government, which claim that coca leaves extract minerals from the soil and make it infertile. From coca leaves, cocaine is produced.

"According to the scientists, the cultivation methods of the coca farmers are based on traditional agricultural and ecological knowledge. Coca plants would also, evidently, be able to grow without chemical pesticides, because the substance contained within the leaves (alkaloid) repels insects.

"Economically equivalent alternatives to coca cultivation . . . don't exist, the researchers claim. Coca leaves could be harvested up to three times a year and bring in higher prices than other agricultural products. In the Bolivian highlands, the labor-intensive cultivation of coca is the most important factor in the economy. . . .

"In Bolivia, estimates are that 120,000 tons of coca leaves are produced each year. Illegal drug traders buy up 90% of the harvest, and manufacture it into cocaine paste. . . . Experts estimate the proceeds from illegal coca sales to be some 20% of the Bolivian gross national product."

Milk lift a 'crack' in Iraq embargo

The milk lift to feed Iraqi children sponsored by the Food for Peace organization "is one small crack in the deadly embargo," Monsignor S.J. Adamo reported in his regular column in the March 7 *Philadelphia Daily News*.

Entitled "Embargo Is Killing the Children of Iraq: They're Paying the Price for U.S. Policy," Adamo reported that Food for Peace "has managed to convince farmers from eight states to turn surplus milk into milk powder so it can be shipped to Iraq to save the children from starvation."

Farmers are contributing to the milk lift to dramatize their need for higher milk prices, and the severe food shortages throughout the world, and as a way of avoiding dumping milk. The effort is being coordinated by the Committee to Save the Children in Iraq, which was founded in 1991 by His Beatitude Raphael Bidawid, Patriarch of the Chaldean Catholic Church, Helga Zepp-LaRouche, chairman of the Schiller Institute in Germany, and Dr. Hans Koehler of the International Progress Organization.

"The calamity that is descending upon Iraq is the result of the new barbarism," Monsignor Adamo charged.

● **JEWISH** Defense League head Irv Rubin was arrested in Los Angeles and charged in a conspiracy to commit murder, police said, AP reported on March 8. In 1985, Rubin, 46, had succeeded Meir Kahane.

● **VICE PRESIDENT** Dan Quayle was asked at a press conference in South Carolina on Feb. 28 if the United States intended to respond to the U.N. human rights query regarding the persecution of Lyndon LaRouche. When pressed, Quayle finally said, "Yes, we will definitely respond."

● **'NASA** is expected to put out a second ozone report any day now," retracting its initial alarmist position on the "ozone hole" of Feb. 3, a *Wall Street Journal* editorial reported on Feb. 28. The editorial warned that by such political use of NASA, "The administration is, of course, putting the NASA space program in jeopardy."

● **BETH OSBORNE DAPONTE**, who calculated the 1991 Iraqi death tolls for the Census Bureau, has found her work classified, her files destroyed, and has now been informed that she will be fired from the Center for International Research of the Census Bureau. She reported that 89,194 men, 39,612 women, and 32,195 children died as a result of the Gulf war and the sanctions.

● **AN ENVIRONMENTALIST** gathering of religious and scientific leaders will take place in Washington in May, charlatan scientist Carl Sagan revealed in the March 1 issue of *Parade* magazine. A key purpose of the meeting will be to affirm support for radical action on the environment and population control.

● **A LAND** development scheme, as reported in the March 8 *New York Times*, may involve Democratic presidential candidate Gov. William Clinton of Arkansas in a new scandal. Political appointees of the governor implemented proposals suggested by his wife, Hillary Clinton, to keep a savings and loan used to subsidize the scheme from going under.