

National News

Virginia's Terry seeks new blood victim

Virginia Attorney General Mary Sue Terry has asked the courts to set a July 23, 1992 execution date for death row inmate Edward Fitzgerald. Terry, who is running for governor, is also planning a Sept. 15, 1992 execution for Willie Jones, a black death row inmate.

The execution of Virginian Roger Coleman on May 20 drew international expressions of outrage, the more so as Coleman was not allowed to present overwhelming new evidence of his innocence of the crime of which he was convicted.

The Legal Defense Fund of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) has estimated that by mid-July, the United States will be carrying out multiple executions on most weekdays. Terry wishes to greatly increase the pace of executions in Virginia. The state, which has executed 10 people since Terry took office in 1985, will execute three in four months, if Terry has her way.

Edward Fitzgerald currently has no lawyer, a situation which is not unusual for death row defendants, who must depend upon volunteer counsel for *habeas corpus* proceedings, because in the United States there is no right to representation after the initial appeal is exhausted.

Florida commissioner seeks NAFTA exemption

Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Bob Crawford and leaders of the Florida citrus industry demanded that Florida produce be exempt from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) agreement, at a press conference in Washington on May 27. Crawford said that he expected an announcement of an agreement between the United States and Mexico within two weeks.

Crawford said that thousands of jobs in the vegetable, sugar, and citrus industry are

threatened. "It is hard to imagine, but just look to the north: Canada lost 435,000 manufacturing jobs to the United States in the first year after entering its free trade agreement with this country.

"Florida's fresh tomato industry, the nation's leader, will be slashed by 20%. Our entire nation will pay a price for free trade," Crawford said, in outlining potential revenue losses. "Florida farmers produce half of the fresh fruits and vegetables and 20% of all sugarcane consumed in the United States." During the winter, Florida produces over 50% of the fresh fruits and vegetables for the entire nation. "For six months of the year, Florida feeds the nation." He said that today may mark the end of America's agricultural self-sufficiency. "For the first time in our nation's history, we will be dependent upon a foreign country for a vital portion of our food supply."

'Sole superpower' role downplayed

The Department of Defense has dropped the assertion in its "Defense Planning Guidance" for 1994-99 that the principal goal of U.S. national security policy should be to thwart the emergence of a new rival to American military supremacy, the *Washington Post* and the *New York Times* reported on May 24. A Pentagon report which advocated a one-superpower world dominated by the United States, prepared by Defense Undersecretary for Policy Paul Wolfowitz and circulated on Feb. 18, was leaked by the *New York Times* in March and provoked worldwide consternation.

The strategic outlook propounded in the official guidance, which was signed on May 22 by Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney, is for the preservation of the system of alliances that has built "sustained cooperation among major democratic powers" since World War II.

The new document places emphasis on NATO, and supposedly softens the opposition to emerging security alliances in Europe, such as the French-German Eurocorps.

The first goal of the new guidance, also

drafted under the supervision of Wolfowitz, is to prevent an attack on the United States. The second goal is to "strengthen and extend the system of defense arrangements that binds democratic and like-minded nations together in common defense against aggression. . . . The third goal is to preclude any hostile power from dominating a region critical to our interests."

IRS wielded against political enemies list?

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) audited many of the political opponents of Sen. Chuck Robb (D-Va.), head of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, in the last two years, who suspect that Robb was behind the audits, the May 23 *Richmond Times-Dispatch* reported.

The revelation came as Virginia Gov. L. Douglas Wilder released a letter of complaint to Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-Me.), aimed at having Robb removed from the Senate Democratic Campaign Committee, at the National Press Club in Washington on May 22. The letter charged that Robb had "denigrated" Wilder's reputation and poisoned his presidential campaign.

The evidence of political use of the IRS included a tape recording made by Tai Collins of David McCloud, Robb's former chief of staff who pleaded guilty in May to charges arising from the illegal taping of a Wilder phone call. In the tape, McCloud warns Collins that Billy Franklin, a private detective hired to investigate Robb, will "pay an extraordinary high price. If he wants to take on a U.S. senator, I am going to show him what that's all about. . . . I think you know that he's going to have problems with the IRS all the way through the Justice Department and everything else."

Wilder said that an IRS audit of him "started in 1990 and went on through 1991," lasting over one year. J.T. Shropshire, Wilder's chief of staff, was audited in early 1991. Rose Ellen O'Connor, a producer of the NBC News "Exposé" program that broke the story of Collins's tape of McCloud's threat, was assessed for back taxes in 1991.

O'Connor had written a story in 1988 for the *Virginia Pilot* that linked Robb to several people charged with cocaine use at Virginia Beach. Larry Sabato, author of the book *Feeding Frenzy*, which had a chapter about Robb's personal life, was audited in 1990. Billy Franklin, the investigator hired to find dirt on Robb, was audited in 1988.

David Burnham, author of a book on the IRS, said that an IRS investigation is easy to arrange because "the IRS is driven by quotas, and they are always looking for nice, easy cases" already researched by others.

D.C. death penalty referendum stalled

Superior Court Judge Rufus King III has struck down a capital punishment referendum that would have appeared on the November ballot in the District of Columbia. Judge King ruled that the referendum's wording improperly failed to tell voters about the electric chair and other details of the old death penalty law they could have voted to reinstate.

Sen. Richard Shelby (D-Ala.) plans to push his own bill for a death penalty statute in the District through the U.S. Senate, an aide to the senator told the May 30 *Washington Times*.

Government photos of JFK are fakes, say experts

The photos and X-rays recently released by the government of the autopsy of President John F. Kennedy are fakes, two Navy medical technicians who participated in the autopsy charged at a New York press conference on May 28, Reuters reported. The charges were blacked out by the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and other U.S. news media.

X-ray technician Jerrold Custer and photographer Floyd Riebe said the pictures have been tampered with and falsified to support the "lone assassin" findings of the Warren Commission.

Custer, who took X-rays of Kennedy's

body at Bethesda Naval Hospital following the assassination, said the government has released "fake X-rays" showing a black hole on the right side of Kennedy's face. "There was no damage to his face, and no part of his skull was missing on the forward part of his head." Riebe, who took photographs of the body during the autopsy, said the ones released by the government are "phony and not the photographs we took."

Custer also reported that following the autopsy he was sent to a Navy admiral's office at Bethesda where he was warned to "keep my mouth shut. Nothing was to be said of what I saw, what I did, and that if I were to open my mouth, I would wind up in prison." Custer and Riebe called the press conference to rebut claims by two Navy pathologists, published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* in May, that the autopsy fully confirmed the subsequent conclusions of the Warren Commission.

Perot-approved work rule said to be illegal

"Ross Perot required employees to promise to pay back any training costs up to \$9,000 if they resigned or were fired, a practice Michigan officials say was illegal in that state," the May 25 *Roanoke Times & World News* reported, based on a story that first appeared in the May 24 *Detroit News*.

"They used this as a sword of Damocles hanging over these very young kids in their twenties who couldn't easily come up with \$9,000," Robert Janover, a lawyer who represented one fired employee, told the *Detroit News*, the *Roanoke*, Virginia paper reported. "Morton Meyerson, former EDS president and now Perot campaign adviser, claims the whole thing is legal. The practice was and, as far as this writer can tell, is worldwide. If this story gets out in a big way, it would damage . . . Perot's political reputation."

This looting policy began in the late 1960s at Electronic Data Systems under Perot's approval and continued long after EDS was absorbed by the General Motors Corp. into the late 1980s. Perot was on GM's board of directors from 1984 to 1986.

Briefly

● **AN INQUIRY** into alleged destruction of evidence and witness tampering by police in the murder of Robert F. Kennedy has been declined by a Los Angeles grand jury. The request had been made by Oliver Stone, director of "JFK," and Paul Schrade, who was wounded in the June 1968 shooting. Schrade believes another gunman accompanied Sirhan Sirhan, the May 30 *Washington Times* reported.

● **KATHARINE GRAHAM**, the publisher of the *Washington Post*, encouraged Ross Perot to run for the presidency in 1988, *Texas Monthly* magazine reported.

● **THE VIRGINIA** Supreme Court has refused to allow Rochelle Ascher, an associate of Lyndon LaRouche convicted on concocted "securities fraud" charges, to remain free on bond while she appeals her conviction to the U.S. Supreme Court.

● **PRESIDENT BUSH** promised in hand-written note to Abraham Foxman, the head of the Anti-Defamation League, that he will "set things right" for Israel after the June 23 Israeli elections, the May 29 *Wall Street Journal* reported.

● **N.Y. SUPREME COURT** Judge Stephen Crane ordered a hearing in a case involving charges against associates of Lyndon LaRouche, into the relationship between New York and federal prosecutors. State prosecutors claimed that FBI reports could not be turned over to defendants because the Feds would not turn them over to them. But the same reports were found to have been provided to authorities in California.

● **A TENT CITY** is being sought in Central Park in New York City for protesters at the July 12-16 Democratic National Convention, the May 30 *New York Post* reported. The American Civil Liberties Union is negotiating with the city and the party on behalf of a coalition of groups who estimate that up to 100,000 homeless, AIDS activists, environmentalists, and others might come.