
National News

Harold Brown: Kissinger is wrong about Clinton

Former Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, who served in Jimmy Carter's administration, defended President Clinton's European policy against recent attacks by Henry Kissinger in a *Washington Post* commentary on Aug. 26. Kissinger, in his internationally syndicated column, had blasted the President's Partnership for Peace program, which encompasses not only the continental European NATO members but also the former Warsaw Pact, and defended the U.S.-British "special relationship."

Brown asserted that the "usually astute" Kissinger was wrong when he wrote on Aug. 16 that Clinton's policies are eroding the Atlantic Alliance and turning NATO into an empty shell. The unspoken theme of Brown's piece is that Clinton's European policy, which encourages infrastructural development and breaks the special relationship with Britain, replacing it with an orientation toward Germany, is a valid one and that Kissinger was attacking exactly that policy in his Aug. 16 piece.

Calif.'s Wilson back on immigration hobby-horse

California Gov. Pete Wilson (R) criticized President Clinton on Aug. 25 for moving quickly to stop the flood of Cubans who are fleeing to Florida while "ignoring" the larger and costlier illegal immigration situation in California, reported the *Los Angeles Times*. Wilson called on Clinton to beef up the Border Patrol and order a blockade of a 17-mile stretch of canyons, hills, and ravines near San Diego, akin to a blockade implemented at El Paso, Texas.

"It's the fault of Washington, the President, and the Congress, and it's time they cure this dereliction of duty," charged Wilson, who also said he would declare a state of emergency in California as soon as the San Diego County Board of Supervisors re-

quests such a declaration. The supervisors are expected to make that request Sept. 20; earlier this year, they sent an invoice to the White House for \$64 million to cover costs of services allegedly incurred as a result of policing illegal immigrants.

Illegal immigration will be a major issue in the November gubernatorial elections and a spokesman for Wilson's opponent Kathleen Brown said, "on the issue of illegal immigration, Pete Wilson is a fraud. This is another case of Rip Van Wilson sleeping while a problem got bigger and then waking up at election time." While he was in the U.S. Senate, Wilson had made speeches about the state's dependency on the labor of illegal immigrants, had authored an amendment making it easier for illegal immigrants to stay in this country, and had intervened with immigration officials on behalf of a hotel manager in trouble for hiring undocumented workers.

Asked if he is afraid that a border blockade in San Diego might be interpreted by the Mexican government as a hostile act, Wilson snapped, "If it is, that's too bad. I've got to tell you something: Our duty is to Americans, our duty is to Californians. I make no apologies about that."

Espy's enemies play games with food safety

Supporters of U.S. Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy have circulated a memo by U.S. Meat Animal Research Center head Dan Lasater which charges that the Food Safety Inspection Services delayed the use of a test for bacteria on meat carcasses. Employees of the FSIS are reportedly working behind the scenes with the FBI and Justice Department to concoct a case against Espy for allegedly showing favoritism to the "chicken monopoly" over the "meat monopoly," because he stepped up meat inspections after the deadly outbreak of *E. coli* bacteria, which struck 500 people in the Northwest last year.

Lasater said that the FSIS refused to allow trials of a test that rapidly detects bacteria in beef, pork, and poultry carcasses.

He said agency officials wanted Espy to look bad, which would be difficult to do if the test worked and were mandated. He said the testing was finally allowed after Espy intervened. Espy and his aides have blamed the FSIS, which, until recently, continued to be run by a Bush appointee, for obstructing reform of meat and poultry inspections.

Biodiversity Treaty takes a hit

Last-minute attempts by the State Department and environmental big guns, headed by the Sierra Club, to push through ratification of the Biodiversity Treaty in August fell through when the Senate recessed on Aug. 25 without any action on the treaty. The treaty, which has few specific provisions, but establishes supranational control over sovereign nations' land use, mandated that any nation that had not signed by Aug. 31 could not vote in the upcoming "Conferences of the Parties" where the treaty provisions will actually be written. The Sierra Club had launched a last-ditch campaign targeting treaty opponent Robert Dole (R-Kan.), because he had called for a postponement on ratification based on the treaty's ambiguities and potential damage to U.S. sovereignty and national interests. The letter was signed by 35 Republican senators.

The postponement is a victory for the "wise use" organizations and trade associations that fought to stop the ratification. The next round will start on Sept. 12 when the Senate returns from its recess.

School privatizers target their foes

The Chicago School Board, the Chicago School Finance Authority, and Illinois legislators are using charges of waste and fraud in the school system to target opponents of schemes to privatize public schools, such as charter schools.

The pro-privatization School Superin-

Briefly

● **PENNSYLVANIA'S** State Supreme Court has approved the sterilization of a retarded 26-year-old Philadelphia woman, for which her mother has fought in the courts for seven years. The girl's attorney said her client is considering an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. She said that the high court might welcome the opportunity to reverse the 1929 *Buck v. Bell* ruling, which allowed the sterilization of Carrie Buck because she was adjudged to be feeble-minded.

● **A FEDERAL JUDGE** has ordered the Pennsylvania Welfare Department to halt its plans to cut the benefits of 29,000 people between the ages of 45 and 64. The state has admitted that about 12,000 of them, including many who are mentally ill or require life-saving prescriptions, are probably eligible for benefits.

● **UNITED AUTO** Workers members struck a key General Motors Corp. subsidiary in Anderson, Indiana on Aug. 23, interrupting the flow of components to the automaker's assembly lines. The walkout reflected long-standing resentments among employees over GM's effort to give more work to non-union workers.

● **THE TEXAS** attorney general's office rendered an opinion on Aug. 23, that casino gambling would be illegal without a change in the state constitution. Such a change would require a two-thirds approval of the legislature and acceptance by the voters in a referendum, which is unlikely. Pro-gambling forces are trying to bypass that process through a federal suit by the Tigua Indian tribe to turn their bingo parlor into a casino.

● **THE NEW YORK TIMES** continued its tradition of attacking U.S. science in an Aug. 26 editorial, "Too Many Nuclear Labs," asserting that the Clinton administration should impose reductions on the nation's three nuclear design facilities: Los Alamos National Laboratory and Sandia National Laboratory in New Mexico; and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California.

tendent Argie Johnson has released results of an internal investigation which exposed alleged mismanagement and wrongdoings. The probe began after Johnson designated himself as top whistle-blower. Now, a special hotline has been set up for citizens to report fraud and waste. The president of the Chicago School Finance Authority, Martin Koldyke, has begun a probe of finances of the schools' facilities department. A year ago, an inspector general was hired by the legislature to investigate fraud.

The legislature convened public hearings Aug. 18 in Chicago to air some of the charges, including allegations of misappropriation of funds by Board of Education President Sharon Grant. State Sen. Frank Watson, who chaired the hearings, called for dividing up the school district, saying that "the vast largeness of the system creates the inability to control."

Virginia's Allen wants \$850 million for prisons

The fiscal conservative, "Jeffersonian" Virginia Gov. George Allen (R), has proposed to finance the construction of all the new prisons that will be needed if his parole abolition plan goes through, by floating \$850 million in government bonds. He drew a quick response from Del. Richard Cranwell (D-Roanoke), who said, "It's easy to talk about bonds, because bonds are passing the cost on to future generations." Some lawmakers have gone Allen one better, proposing to finance the prisons with casino gambling revenues.

Democrats have also challenged Allen's claim that his Proposal X, as the parole abolition plan is called, could prevent 120,000 crimes over the next decade. The Virginia Criminal Justice Research Center released a report in late August showing that only 78 murders out of 1,700 could have been prevented between 1986 and 1993 if the plan had been in effect during those years.

In a debate on CNN's "Larry King Live" on Aug. 18, Allen reiterated his plan to use prison labor to build the new prisons. He was immediately challenged by Nathan

McCall, a young former inmate and author of a best-selling book on prison life, *Makes Me Wanna Holler: A Young Black Man in America*. McCall told the governor, in a measured tone, "That is just reintroducing plantations."

Michael X. Johnson, a 25-year-old inmate in a maximum security facility, is on a hunger strike against Allen's Proposal X, saying he wants to meet with Allen and is prepared to die if he can't have the meeting. Johnson told the Aug. 26 *Richmond Times-Dispatch*: "It's a humane protest against an inhumane government. I could very easily get 100, 200 guys and lead a violent protest. What would that accomplish? Nothing. People might get hurt, and we defeat the cause. But if we sacrifice our lives as [did] Christ Jesus," it might make a difference. "He sacrificed his life and made a world of difference."

Weld, Wampanoags sign Bay State casino pact

Massachusetts Gov. William Weld has signed an agreement with the Wampanoag Indian tribe for the construction of a gigantic gambling casino. Weld called the deal "a sure bet" for the Indians and the state. The proposed \$175 million casino complex would be built in New Bedford, though the tribe's only ancestral land is on Martha's Vineyard island. The deal will require approval from Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt.

Boston Globe David Nyhan analyzed Weld's apparent political transformation from an anti-welfare and anti-gambling conservative, in his column on Aug. 24: "The deal was greased with bigtime gambling money. . . . But where was Weld and his conservative mantra? . . . He's down there in the pit, up to his elbows in chips and complimentary cocktails, singing 'Let the good times roll.' "

Rep. Barney Frank (D), an avowed homosexual whose district includes New Bedford, supported his Republican governor: "This is not compulsory gambling. This is letting adults do what they want in an economically constructive way."