

National News

Congressman exonerated; charges DOJ misconduct

Seventeen-term Republican U.S. Rep. Joseph McDade, of northeast Pennsylvania, was acquitted Aug. 1 by a federal jury, of multiple charges of conspiracy, bribery, and racketeering. McDade and his attorney immediately called for a Congressional investigation of Justice Department misconduct in the case. McDade is running for an 18th term this fall.

The charges against McDade involved alleged bribes from defense contractors. McDade has fought to attract defense jobs to his economically depressed district, which includes the strongly Democratic city of Scranton; but the Democrats rarely ran anyone against the popular incumbent. McDade was in line to become chairman of the House Appropriations Committee after the 1994 election, but declined to seek the position because of the indictment.

The FBI regularly "leaked" damaging allegations about McDade after opening an investigation of him in 1982. According to Associated Press, "McDade, 64, and his attorney, Sal Cognetti, Jr., questioned the Justice Department motivation in the case, even though the indictment was returned in 1992, during fellow Republican George Bush's administration."

Cognetti, a former Assistant U.S. Attorney, told AP, "I don't know what it was motivated by. It wasn't motivated by the evidence, nor was it motivated by any criminal acts by Joseph McDade." McDade has reportedly attacked the prosecution's key witnesses as "all admitted felons, liars." One juror said, "The government failed to prove in court the man was guilty of anything."

'Dr. Death II' now to kill in Massachusetts

According to the Aug. 6 *Boston Globe*, Rev. Ralph Mero, the initiator of a defeated ballot effort in Washington State to legalize physician-assisted suicide, has now moved to

Massachusetts, where he intends to continue to commit murder.

While in Washington, the *Globe* reports, Mero put together an organization called "Compassion in Dying," and was present at seven of the 25 "suicides" the group has administered. His challenge to a Washington statute, defining assisted suicide as a crime, led to a barbaric federal court decision in March, claiming "constitutional protection" for the "right to die."

Mero told the *Globe* that he plans to challenge Massachusetts' laws and medical practices regarding the "terminally ill," either legislatively, or by "helping the dying to die." In an interview given in Seattle two years ago, Mero said, "There is nothing like a little applesauce and barbs [barbiturates]—it's calm, peaceful. You take the pills in the applesauce, have a sip of Chivas Regal, Jack Daniels, whatever. Say your goodbye, have a final kiss, and you lie back and sleep. . . . Within minutes you are gone. It's something to see."

Mero is a Unitarian Universalist "minister" and will work out of the "denominational" headquarters in Boston. The office has responsibility for overseeing pension plans, insurance programs, and counseling for the denomination's ministers. Fellow right-to-die ghoul Nancy Dorfman, chairwoman of the Hemlock Society of Greater Boston, expressed her delight by Mero's arrival in Boston. According to the *Globe*, a "model statute" to legalize assisted suicide, drafted by the Hemlock Society, is expected to be introduced into the state legislature by the end of 1996.

GOP platform committee attacks 14th Amendment

The Republican Party's national convention platform committee has made a mockery of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The platform committee decided that citizenship rights, constitutionally guaranteed following the Civil War, should apply to the unborn, but not to those already born.

The Fourteenth Amendment, which was ratified on July 28, 1868, declares: "All per-

sons born or naturalized in the United States . . . are citizens of the United States. . . . No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States. . . ." The amendment ensured citizenship to freed slaves and to the nation's immigrants; both such populations had made absolutely essential contributions to the salvation of the Union during the rebellion.

Pro-slavery Democrats fought against the amendment's ratification. Racists and British-run demagogues have attacked its validity ever since. The pro-British "revisionist" historian Charles Beard claimed it was a plot by "corporations."

The platform committee of the 1996 Republican Party convention has embraced the treasonous enemies of Abraham Lincoln. The committee adopted the following language regarding the Fourteenth Amendment: "We endorse legislation to make clear that the Fourteenth Amendment's protections apply to unborn children. . . . We support a constitutional amendment or constitutionally valid legislation declaring that children born in the United States of alien parents who are not long-term residents are not automatically citizens."

Ollie North caught lying to the government again

According to the Aug. 10 *New York Times*, Oliver North's company, Guardian Technologies, may also be suffering from delusions of grandeur—in the pursuit of further loot. The issue under scrutiny is Guardian Technologies' initial filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), for permission to issue public stock.

North made something of a killing running George Bush's Contra operation, trading arms for drugs. North's current stock was floated upon the public in May, by a Long Island brokerage firm, Landmark International Equities, which itself is reportedly under investigation by the National Association of Securities Dealers. When Guardian Technologies sought SEC permission to make public stock issues, the company asserted that it had a contract with the

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General Services Administration (GSA), the purchasing agency of the U.S. government.

According to the *Times*, North's Virginia-based company claimed it thus had "inroads to potential business with federal agencies." But "a check with the GSA showed that no such contract existed." Herbert M. Jacobi, a lawyer representing Guardian, told the *Times* that the false report of a contract with the GSA was "a typographical error." For the record, Guardian makes and sells armored vests for police and military personnel.

Western power outages traced to deregulation

One of the most severe power failures in U.S. history affected nine western states from Oregon to Texas on Aug. 10 and 11. Officials for the Western System Coordinating Council (WSCC), an industry-created agency of 88 western power companies, confirmed that the outage began in the Pacific Northwest, and spread all the way south to the Mexican border.

At one point, roughly 40% of Los Angeles was without power. A ten-mile stretch of Pacific beach had to be closed, due to a 6-million-gallon release of sewage caused by the outage. The San Francisco airport was placed on emergency generator support, leaving no power for security checkpoints, computer systems, and lighting in the building.

The blackouts were triggered by an unusually heavy demand for electricity during a heat wave; but the problem did not lie even in the lack of power to meet the temporary crisis. Instead, the required surge of power overwhelmed the inadequate transmission grids. The power lines were designed merely as local feeders to homes and businesses, without major "highways" for bulk transmission of electricity.

The "post-industrial society" has already consigned cheap nuclear power and increased energy-density to the scrapheap, overseen by environmentalist junkmen. Now, the nation's utility companies are scrambling to meet the imminent deregulation of the industry.

According to the WSCC, California utilities reacted to the unusually high demand by importing the cheapest available power—from hydroelectric supplies in Washington State. In the face of deregulation, the utility companies are covering their shortages in power generation, by importing electricity at the lowest rate they can. Under "free-market" notions, *producing* more power is out. That, said a WSCC spokesman, "costs more money."

Two health plans warn doctors to limit care

Two major insurers of managed health-care plans have warned their participating doctors to limit the care they provide to the plans' subscribers. On July 12, Mid Atlantic Medical Services Inc. (MAMSI), which serves 1.7 million patients, sent a letter to all 16,000 doctors with MAMSI contracts, warning them that it will "terminate the contracts" of doctors who fail to limit referrals to specialists. The Harvard Community Health Plan of Boston has also warned its doctors, that they would not receive a scheduled pay raise, unless they hospitalized fewer patients.

The MAMSI letter linked the new restriction of patient referrals to a 33% increase in claims this year over last year. According to the July 25 *Washington Post*, primary care physicians were blamed for "not actively managing the care of their patients." Peter Sherer, president of Maryland's Montgomery County Medical Society, said that MAMSI is engaging in "scare tactics" to save money at the expense of both patients and physicians. "If a patient comes in with chest pains, he is less likely now to be referred to see a cardiologist," because "primary care physicians are afraid to refer patients to specialists," said Sherer.

Managed health-care plans have been touted by budget-cutters and the major insurance companies as the best way to control costs. Dissatisfaction among both patients and providers, however, has led 33 state legislatures to pass laws this year, restricting the authority of such plans to curtail treatment, including access to specialists.

MICHIGAN'S Oakland County Prosecutor Richard Thompson, who twice tried Jack "Dr. Death" Kevorkian during his six-year campaign of "assisted suicide," lost his bid for reelection Aug. 6. To "celebrate" Thompson's defeat, Kevorkian administered a lethal injection to a 59-year-old woman in the early stages of Lou Gehrig's disease.

GOV. WILLIAM WELD of Massachusetts signed a \$40 million tax cut for mutual-fund companies Aug. 8. "Mutual funds here are like cars in Detroit, like coffee in Seattle, and computer chips in Silicon Valley," said Weld. His tax dodge will free mutual-fund companies from any excise tax, except on sales made to Massachusetts residents, and eliminate related taxes on their property.

THE GOP'S homosexual Log Cabin Club also met in San Diego Aug. 10-11, keynoted by the "Dairy Queen," Rep. Steve Gunderson (Wisc.), with his "spouse," Rob Morris, at his side. Gunderson announced he was leaving the House—and his shot at heading the Agriculture Committee under a Republican majority. Even Newt Gingrich, he said, and a number of other GOP leaders, "don't want an openly gay person to be chairman of a major committee."

PENNSYLVANIA Gov. Tom Ridge barely found the television lights during the GOP's Hollywood soap-opera in San Diego. Touted as a top candidate for vice president, until the LaRouche campaign targeted him for his Nazi-like policies, Ridge had only 3½ minutes to rave about "unspeakable crimes" requiring tougher penalties and death sentences.

THE AFL-CIO is urging union leaders to invest workers' pension funds "in plants, equipment modernizing, new products, innovation, [and] training," instead of "mindless corporate downsizing, exorbitant executive salaries, stagnant wages . . . and management tactics to defeat organizing campaigns or even destroy existing unions."