

# National News

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## Another environmental hoax bites the dust

The California Supreme Court has issued a landmark decision, concluding that cases alleging health effects from the electrical fields near power transmission lines do not belong in court, reports the Washington newsletter of the American Physical Society's Robert Park on Aug. 22. The 67-page ruling quotes from the American Physical Society's statement on Power Line Fields and Public Health, which says, "Conjectures relating cancer to power line fields have not been scientifically substantiated." The court also made use of a similar statement by the American Medical Association, and by 17 prominent scientists, who filed an *amicus* brief.

Over the past decade, court cases alleging connections between people living or playing near power lines, and cancer and other diseases, have paralyzed the ability of electric utility companies to build new transmission lines. In Florida and other states, transmission projects have been stalled for years, as utilities find they have one more environmental hoax to battle out in court.

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## Biologist notes rise in Nazi eugenics

An article in the August/September 1996 edition of the journal *Technology Review* warns that the United States might be headed down the same path as Nazi Germany, through the revival of the field of eugenics.

The article, by biologist Garland E. Allen of Washington University, in St. Louis, Missouri, cites Nazi textbooks for schoolchildren, comparing the costs of keeping "normal" people and the sick alive. It then reviews the way in which eugenics—which it admits was widely popular in the United States and other nations, as well as Germany, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries—turned into Nazi policy against "useless eaters" under conditions of economic hardship.

"How close are we today to embracing a

modern form of eugenics?" the author asks. "Will we in the United States someday soon re-walk those paths of trying to solve our social problems with scientific panaceas? I am sorry to say that I think the answer might be yes." Allen points to the Genome Project, the "cutback" atmosphere in society at large, and policies which lend themselves to the concept of "useless eaters."

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## Richardson sent on mission to Nigeria

President Clinton sent Rep. Bill Richardson (D-N.M.) to Nigeria over Aug. 18-20 as a White House envoy. Richardson has undertaken similar missions to other countries on the President's behalf, including to North Korea and Iraq. During his stay, Richardson spent two hours on Aug. 19 with head of state Gen. Sani Abacha. As *EIR* has documented, Nigeria has been a major destabilization target of the British, both because it is one of the largest countries in sub-Saharan Africa, and because of its staunch rejection of International Monetary Fund dictates.

State Department spokesman Glyn Davies said that "the Nigerian government has shown some slight signs of an interest in a dialogue with the United States, and so we thought it was important to have somebody go out." Another, unidentified, official told the press that Richardson's mission was "to explore the possibilities for starting a meaningful dialogue with Nigeria. The Nigerians claim to be serious about human rights. We're trying to see how serious they are. . . . They've taken some good first steps but there's a lot still to be done."

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## DOJ advocates private prison labor policy

In a new publication titled "Work in American Prisons: Joint Ventures with the Private Sector," the U.S. Department of Justice issues a blanket endorsement of private firms' opening up industry in America's booming prisons.

The 15-page pamphlet reads like a glossy promotional, encouraging companies to use prison labor because "inmates represent a readily available and dependable source of entry-level labor that is a cost-effective alternative to work forces found in Mexico, the Caribbean Basin, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Rim countries." It quotes a business executive saying that "keeping the jobs in the country helped line workers in our other plants accept the idea of a prison-based workforce."

An example of the "dependability" of prison labor is given from Los Angeles. California Youth Authority's Ventura Training School for youthful offenders currently takes reservations for TWA Airlines. This is a "win-win" situation, the pamphlet comments. "The 1992 civil disturbances in Los Angeles [i.e., riots] highlighted the dependability of the Ventura center for TWA when the company was forced to close its Los Angeles reservations office. Over a 2-day period, 61 youthful offenders worked 718 hours processing calls from travelers who would have otherwise been lost to TWA's competitors."

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## Gingrich: Bomb first, ask questions later

House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) said on Aug. 20 that the United States should be ready to carry out military strikes against groups or nations that are suspected of planning terrorist attacks against American targets. Calling for a "doctrine of pre-emption," Gingrich said, in a speech to business leaders reported by wire services, that suspected potential terrorists should be given 24 hours to prove they are innocent, or else face military action.

Gingrich said attacks on terrorist cells could be carried out covertly by the CIA, or overtly by military means, in the style of Israel's 1981 attack on an Iraqi nuclear power plant.

"We don't wait around until after they take out the World Trade towers, with nuclear weapons next time. We go ahead and say: We have a reason to believe you're not behaving correctly. You should convince us

in the next 24 hours that we're wrong or we will take you out," he said.

"If we would be very aggressive in saying to Libya, Syria, Iran, and Sudan that we will not tolerate your supporting terrorists, we could have a big effect on the resources available to terrorists around the world."

## Los Angeles seeks probe of CIA drug trafficking

The Los Angeles City Council on Aug. 23 unanimously passed a resolution, calling for U. S. Attorney General Janet Reno to investigate allegations of CIA involvement in the illegal drug trade. The resolution followed upon revelations published in the *San Jose Mercury* and other newspapers (see article, p. 69).

The resolution, introduced by Councilman Nate Holden, reads in part:

"Today it was revealed in the news media that serious and credible allegations have surfaced as to the ongoing sale of illegal street drugs to American citizens of African-American descent, with the apparent approval of the United States Government, on behalf of and to support the efforts of the Nicaraguan Contra army.

"These reports further allege that as far back as the 1980s, the United States Government has allowed the sale of illegal drugs in this country to citizens of African-American descent. The reports document how drugs were funneled into the inner city to be sold to American citizens through gangs such as the Crips and Bloods in order to finance the activities of the Nicaraguan Contra army.

"These allegations, even if unproven, raise serious and very disturbing questions which further support long-standing suspicions that there is a connection between drugs in the inner city and our CIA and foreign policy activities.

"These allegations must be thoroughly investigated in order, on the one hand, to correct any damage which may have resulted if the allegations are found to be true, and on the other hand, to allay community suspicions and fears, if the allegations are

found to be without merit. . . .

"I further move that the Council of the City of Los Angeles request the United States Attorney General to immediately conduct a complete, thorough and independent investigation of serious and credible allegations as to the ongoing sale of illegal street drugs to American citizens of African-American descent, with the apparent approval, of the United States Government, on behalf of and to support the efforts of the Nicaraguan Contra army."

## Economist sees return of 'Kennedy mystique'

The pro-government-intervention policies of Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) likely represent the wave of the future for the Democratic Party, in the medium term, even if the party is not now listening to his warnings about becoming "pale carbon copies" of the Republicans, the London *Economist* commented in its issue of Aug. 24-30.

In its weekly "Lexington" column, the magazine writes that the senator "has not been doing badly recently." He scored two recent victories, with the passage of the minimum wage and health-insurance bills. Furthermore, Senator Kennedy "opposed welfare reform in the belief (which Mr. Clinton now admits he shares) that reform would hurt the poor. Unfashionably, [Kennedy] remains convinced that one of the things that politics is about, is helping disadvantaged people."

"Lexington" continues: "At the start of last year, when Mr. Clinton began his slide towards the centre at the behest of focus groups, Senator Kennedy let loose a canonade: 'If we become pale carbon copies of the opposition, and try to act like Republicans, we will lose and we will deserve to lose,' he thundered. Next week, in Chicago, the Democrats will sound as Republican as they can. . . . But in another four years, the Democrats may swing back the senator's way. For government activism, deeply discredited though it now is, could yet experience a revival."

## Briefly

**FOURTEEN INMATES** and two guards were injured in a 15-hour riot on Aug. 22 in a prison in Texas run by Corrections Corp. of America, the largest private prison company in the world. The prison is located about 45 miles southeast of San Angelo. This was the second such incident at a CCA facility in Texas in one month.

**ATTORNEY GENERAL** Janet Reno affirmed the administration's opposition to drug legalization, in response to a question from *EIR* at a press briefing on Aug. 22. "I feel very strongly that attempts to legalize it are wrong," she said. ". . . I think it's important that we continue enforcement efforts, combining them, when it's nonviolent first offenders, with proper opportunities, such as drug courts, to get treatment and to get off on the right foot."

**TEAMSTER PRESIDENT** Ron Carey, acting on recommendations of a three-man court-supervised investigative panel including former FBI Director William Webster, has placed three large Teamsters locals under trusteeship—all of them strongholds of his opponent for the union's presidency, Jimmy Hoffa, Jr. The locals are in Philadelphia, Chicago, and Houston.

**THE UAW'S** *Washington Report* on Aug. 2 blasted the provisions of the welfare bill that reduce payments to the elderly and disabled, make deep cuts in the food stamp program, and deny assistance to legal immigrants. "There is a serious danger that the welfare legislation could undermine good-paying jobs . . . and erode the standard of living for working men and women," the union said.

**ROBERT VESCO**, the U.S. fugitive and Medellín Cartel financier, was sentenced to 13 years in a Cuban jail on Aug. 26, for economic crimes and fraud. When arrested in May 1995, after years of living in Cuba in Fidel Castro's good graces, he was charged with being a foreign spy. No explanation has been offered for the change in the charges.