

# National News

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## Pope praises American constitutional republic

Pope John Paul II, in the course of accepting the diplomatic credentials of Lindy Boggs, the new U.S. ambassador to the Holy See, expanded on the importance of "American democratic experiment." Thanking Ambassador Boggs for the greetings she delivered from President Clinton, the Pope said: "The Founding Fathers of the United States asserted their claim to freedom and independence on the basis of certain 'self-evident' truths about the human person: truths which could be discerned in human nature, built into it by 'nature's God.' . . .

"Millions of people around the world look to the United States as a model, in their search for freedom, dignity, and prosperity. But the continuing success of American democracy depends on the degree to which each new generation, native-born and immigrant, makes its own the moral truths on which the Founding Fathers staked the future of your Republic. Their commitment to build a free society with liberty and justice for all must be constantly renewed if the United States is to fulfill the destiny to which the Founders pledged their 'lives . . . fortunes . . . and sacred honor. . . .'"

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## Court dismisses some counts against Espy

A Federal judge threw out 4 of the 39 felony counts in December, that had been brought against former Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy by independent counsel Donald Smaltz last August. Judge Ricardo Urbina also held open the possibility that he may dismiss other counts, pending an appellate court ruling in a related case.

Espy's lawyers argued that Smaltz stretched the law to obtain the indictment of Espy, all counts of which revolved around about \$35,000 of allegedly illegal gratuities. At the time Espy was indicted, his attorney stressed: "In an effort to justify three years and countless millions spent on this investigation, the special prosecutor has stretched

criminal statutes beyond recognition and taken trivial, personal, and entirely benign activities, and attempted to distort them into criminal acts."

The real target of Smaltz's probe is, of course, President Clinton, not Espy. Soon after his 1994 appointment, and over Justice Department protests, Smaltz expanded his investigation to encompass the relationship between Tyson Foods, Inc. of Arkansas and Bill Clinton. Smaltz, testifying on Dec. 10 before the House Government Oversight and Reform Committee, said the Tyson aspect of his investigation is still ongoing.

One angry Democrat read into the record some choice media comments about Smaltz's investigatory techniques, including by the *Legal Times*: "Smaltz has seized the opportunity to muckrake widely through Arkansas while improperly blabbing to the press about his interest in unsubstantiated allegations"; and by the *Chicago Tribune*, that "Smaltz has spent more time investigating Espy than Espy spent as agriculture secretary."

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## Scaife blasted for Brown murder rumors

White House spokesman Mike McCurry bristled over the rumor- and conspiracy-mongering that Commerce Secretary Ron Brown had been shot in the head, before his plane crashed in Croatia in April 1996. Asked on Dec. 16 by a reporter whether the administration gives "any credence to the allegations that Ron Brown might have been shot?" McCurry retorted sharply: "Absolutely none. And credence is only given to those reports by entities associated with Richard Mellon Scaife. And we are right back into another one of these, chasing a story that's been ginned up by people who, no doubt, for whatever reason, hate the President of the United States." McCurry added that the Pentagon "has very thoroughly and in very gruesome detail—and no doubt it was painful to the Brown family—addressed this issue. And it's time to knock this stuff off."

Undeterred by reality, the Moon-owned *Washington Times* gave front-page coverage to ill-advised calls by Rep. Maxine Wa-

ters (D-Calif.) and Dick Gregory for an investigation into the line that Brown had been shot to death. The story was first promoted by Christopher Ruddy, a hireling of "Get Clinton" moneybags Richard Mellon Scaife, at Scaife's *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, and has been universally acclaimed by the Clinton-bashing circuit, who incorporate the alleged murder of Brown, and the alleged cover-up, into the long list of murders they attribute to Bill Clinton. Among those championing the story are Scaife publicist Joseph Farah of the Western Journalism Center, Lord William Rees-Mogg's partner James Dale Davidson in their *Strategic Investment* newsletter, and talk show airbags, such as Rush Limbaugh and G. Gordon Liddy.

Buried deep in the *Times* article, the medical examiner at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology is quoted that full X-rays of Brown's body had ruled out the possibility of a gunshot wound.

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## CIA, DOJ sidestep Bush role in crack plague

The reports by the CIA and the Department of Justice (DOJ) into allegations that the CIA was responsible for introducing crack cocaine into Los Angeles in the 1980s have been completed, but release of the two reports has been delayed at the request of the Justice Department, both the *Los Angeles Times* and the *San Jose Mercury News* reported on Dec. 18. The allegations, first aired in the San Jose daily in 1996, blamed the CIA for introducing the cheap, highly addictive form of cocaine into Los Angeles' ghettos in order to fund the Nicaraguan Contras.

From the scanty leaks concerning the reports, it appears that their focus was almost as narrow as the original *San Jose Mercury News* articles: that is, centering on the CIA, rather than on the private intelligence networks run by Vice President George Bush, and that they restricted scrutiny only to Los Angeles. *EIR* has repeatedly warned that any investigation which limited itself to the "CIA" would quickly run into a dead end, because the Contra drug operation was run out of the White House/National Security Council by Bush,

using “privatized” networks.

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, one key player, Robert Owen, described as “a conservative activist” involved in the Contra operation in the mid-1980s, was never questioned. As *EIR*’s *Special Report* on “Drug Super-Kingpin George Bush” shows, Owen functioned as Oliver North’s “eyes and ears” at the Costa Rica ranch of John Hull, a transshipment point for illegal drugs, whose airstrip was built by covert U.S. Army units. Oliver North’s notebooks contained a number of references to Owen and drug trafficking. Owen was involved in meetings with Bush’s top drug trafficker, Felix Rodriguez, and had frequent contact with other Contra drug-traffickers.

## Clinton: NATO needs to stay in Bosnia

President Bill Clinton announced on Dec. 18 that the United States is committed to maintaining a NATO military force in Bosnia past June, when the mission of the Stabilization Forces (SFOR) is concluded. The new mission, he said, was subject to six criteria: “First, the mission must be achievable and tied to concrete benchmarks, not a deadline. We should have clear objectives that when met, will create a self-sustaining secure environment and allow us to remove our troops. . . . Second, the force must be able to protect itself. . . . I hope the follow-on force will be smaller, but I will insist it be sufficient in number and in equipment to achieve its mission and to protect itself in safety.” Third, the United States must retain command. Fourth, the European allies must assume their share of responsibility. “While Bosnia is a challenge to American interests and values, the longer-term and fundamental challenge is to make Bosnia a genuine part of Europe. . . . Fifth, the cost must be manageable. And sixth and finally, the plan must have substantial support from Congress and the American people.”

The President made a 30-hour trip to Bosnia, just before Christmas, to visit U.S. troops. And, speaking to the Bosnian people at the National Theater in Sarajevo on Dec. 22, he said: “I was thrilled that the Sarajevo Symphony played before I was introduced to

speak. Its violinist and cellist, percussionist and flutist, played together before the war, stayed together during the war, answered the mortars and shells with the sounds of music. Seven of the members were killed—Muslims, Croats, and Serbs. Well, they’re still here, and they’re still Muslims, Croats, and Serbs. And to tell you the truth, I know the tuba players from the violinists, but I can’t tell the Muslims from the Croats from the Serbs. The harmony of their disparate voices—the harmony of their disparate voices—is what I hear. It reminds me of Bosnia’s best past, and it should be the clarion call to your future.”

## U.S. officials urge anti-terror solidarity

On Dec. 15, Gordon Gray, the director for regional affairs of the State Department’s Office of Counterterrorism, told a WorldNet television audience in Lima, Peru and Buenos Aires, Argentina that a key element in the U.S. government’s counter-terrorism strategy is to “disregard political motivations . . . and treat terrorism as what it is: a common crime. We encourage other countries to do the same.”

Gray cited ten treaties now in force, and an eleventh treaty that is being developed at the United Nations, that will focus on actions against terrorist bombings. “Most of these treaties contain ‘extradite or prosecute’ provisions,” Dana Biehl of the Justice Department’s Office of Terrorism told the audience. The U.S. 1996 anti-terrorism law, he said, specifically made it a felony for anyone in the United States or under its jurisdiction to provide material support for foreign terrorist organizations. Federal prosecutor Richard Shine added that the 1996 law also bars members of terrorist organizations from entering the United States, and allows the government to block any of their assets in the United States.

All three speakers emphasized the importance of global cooperation. “We very much need worldwide solidarity,” Biehl told the audience, emphasizing that the ability to deny terrorists a hiding place, and the ability to assure severe punishment when caught, would be a powerful disincentive.

**PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON** ridiculed the professional Clinton-bashers, in comments on Dec. 13 to visiting Arkansas Democrats, referring to them as being “almost pathologically obsessed with personal destruction. . . . You all always say, ‘Gosh, I don’t know how you put up with it.’ How do you put up with mosquitoes in summertime in Arkansas? You just swat them and go on, it’s a part of living.”

**PAT ROBERTSON’S** Christian Coalition is laying off almost one-fifth of its employees, and its magazine, *Christian American*, is going to shut down. The Coalition is also severing its outreach to blacks, the Samaritan Project, which will now be “independent.” Rev. Earl Jackson, who runs the project out of Boston, says it will be easier to be credible, without the direct connection to the Christian Coalition.

**NINA SHEA**, of Leo Cherne’s Freedom House, is credited as the founder of the neo-conservative movement against “religious persecution,” in the *New York Times Sunday Magazine* of Dec. 21, which targets important potential U.S. allies, especially Sudan and China, for destabilization. However, the *Times* points out, the movement is driving a wedge between the GOP’s “social conservatives,” and the “business conservatives.”

**THE INDICTMENT** of former Housing Secretary Henry Cisneros was compared to “swatting a fly with a sledgehammer,” by political columnist Jack Germond on CNN’s “Inside Washington,” on Dec. 13. NPR legal reporter Nina Totenberg said that the \$4 million, two-and-a-half-year investigation ended with the “kinds of charges they throw in when they’re throwing the kitchen sink at somebody.”

**THE IRISH PRESS**, reporting on Irish Prime Minister Bertie Ahern’s mid-December meetings with President Clinton, surmised that he may make a trip to Ireland next year.