

National News

Supreme Court denies Billington habeas

The U.S. Supreme Court on Jan. 14 rejected the request of LaRouche associate Michael Billington that they review his case. Billington is currently serving an outrageous sentence of 77 years in Virginia, on frame-up charges of "securities fraud." In responding to his request, the Rehnquist court issued its characteristic one-sentence order that the petition was "denied."

Billington's case is a judicial atrocity. Three times indicted by the "Get LaRouche" prosecutorial task force, he was convicted along with LaRouche and five other co-defendants in the Alexandria, Virginia, Federal railroad of 1988, and received a sentence of three years. While still serving his Federal sentence, he was convicted again of essentially the identical charges in the state of Virginia, and was handed a 77-year sentence by an overtly hostile judge.

In his 1989 state trial, Billington's lawyer, the late Brian Gettings, suddenly turned on him, on the eve of trial. He insisted that Billington was insane, because he had refused a plea bargain or a bench trial (which would have ensured a short sentence). Prosecutor John Russell, Gettings, and Judge Clifford Weckstein ordered two mental evaluations of Billington, who was found to be perfectly sane. But Gettings continued throughout the trial to seek to have him confined to a mental institution. Judge Weckstein refused to allow Billington to fire Gettings, although another lawyer familiar with Billington's case was prepared to enter the case immediately.

Meanwhile, in an extraordinary series of breaches, Gettings conveyed to the judge and prosecutor what Billington was saying to him, refused to prepare Billington to testify in his own defense, or to allow Billington any other meaningful role in presenting his case, and himself made public accusations against Billington.

Although Billington first filed for his *habeas corpus* rights in the U.S. District Court in October 1994, his *habeas* rights were undermined by the procedural bars in the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996. The act practically eliminates the right to *habeas* review in Federal courts except in the most extraordinary circumstances. It substitutes the goals of "comity"

(state's rights) and "finality" for what was the ancient purpose of the Great Writ: ensuring that no one is imprisoned unjustly, as Billington manifestly is.

Hebrew-speakers sought in Greenberg break-in

Three suspects—two Hebrew-speaking men and a woman—are being sought in the Jan. 18 break-in of Stanley Greenberg's Washington office, D.C. police sources told the *Washington Post*. Political consultant Greenberg is working on the election campaign of Israeli Labor Party leader Ehud Barak for Prime Minister. Working with him is James Carville, President and Mrs. Clinton's longtime friend. The first break-in of Greenberg's office was on Jan. 11, and an earlier burglary had taken place at his office in Israel. The burglaries required defeating security systems and motion detectors.

In addition to a witness, police now have physical evidence, including blood and pieces of clothing torn during the suspects' entry through a skylight. The witness is a cabdriver who dropped off the three people on the evening of Jan. 18, in the vicinity of Greenberg's office at 515 Second St., NE. The driver said that they had asked him to drive around the block three times before being let off at different locations; the woman, he said, went into the backyard of the building. During the ride, they were talking about security systems, and alternated between speaking Hebrew and English. While the men had accents, the woman spoke English without an accent.

D.C. Police Executive Assistant Chief Terrance Gainer told *EIR* that the department is working with police in Israel, where the break-in is now being referred to as the "Israeli Watergate."

Roger Winter protégé to coordinate 'Tibet issues'

The State Department announced on Jan. 22 that Julia V. Taft, the Assistant Secretary of State for Refugee Affairs, will also take over the post of Special Coordinator for Tibetan Issues. China has repeatedly objected to the

recently created post, previously held by Clinton attorney Gordon Craig, as demonstrating interference in its internal affairs. A reported objective of the post is "to promote substantive dialogue between the Chinese government and the Dalai Lama and his representatives." Taft will also pay special attention to human rights issues, including "the preservation of the unique religious, cultural, and linguistic heritage of Tibetans."

Julia Taft was president of Inter-Action, which coordinates a group of refugee aid and human rights non-governmental organizations run by Roger Winter, during most of the 1990s. Taft worked directly under Winter, who heads the U.S. Committee for Refugees, in running wars in Congo-Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Uganda, and southern Sudan. In 1998, Taft was appointed to the refugees affairs post, where she continues to work with Winter.

Carvilles victimized by 'family-values' hate radio

On Jan. 21, the American Family Radio network, an arm of the American Family Association, pulled a lying story that James Carville had been arrested for domestic violence, from its air waves and its website. The story was that Carville, a longtime friend of the Clintons who worked on the 1992 and 1996 campaigns, had been arrested and jailed on Jan. 18, in Rockville, Maryland, for firing a gun and wielding a knife, in a fight with his wife, Republican campaign consultant Mary Matalin. The story was false in every respect. The American Family Association is headed by the Rev. Donald Wildmon, a so-called Christian activist, whose website has encouraged the ouster of President Clinton.

Marvin Sanders, the manager of the American Family Radio network, said that he "made an immediate retraction" after finding out that the story "was a hoax."

The story showed up on an anti-Clinton Internet discussion group site, reporting the incident as taking place at Carville's home in Rockville, Md. (the Carvilles live in Virginia), on Jan. 11 (Carville was in Arizona and Tennessee at the time). The article was attributed to the *Montgomery County Ledger* (it doesn't exist). The supposed arresting officer also doesn't exist.