

National News

Philadelphia councilman reports welfare disaster

A report released on Jan. 26 by Philadelphia City Councilman Angel L. Ortiz to the City Council's Joint Committee on Public Health and Human Services demonstrates that "welfare reform" in Philadelphia is a paradigm for national disaster. As of March 3, an estimated 25-35,000 heads of household (with at least one child) in Philadelphia hit the deadline to be cut off from welfare, with thousands more being taken off each month thereafter. This is an "impending catastrophe," the report says, for which there exists no comprehensive contingency plan.

According to the report, at least half of the people on welfare lack the literacy skills to be employed. In Philadelphia, 34% of the adults have no high school diploma, of whom, more than 400,000 have less than a high school education. Over the last 25 years, Philadelphia has lost 250,000 jobs.

Gov. Tom Ridge (R), who, in 1996, cut off medical assistance to the state's working poor, hastily announced on March 1 his plans to create 16,000 six-month, minimum-wage jobs, and offered a temporary delay in welfare cutoffs to recipients who haven't found jobs. The gesture is of little use: Some 35-40,000 more people will be looking for work each month, including thousands who have recently lost their jobs to company closings, mergers, and layoffs, according to Private Industry Council president Ernest Jones.

SEIU joins forces with Doctors Council union

The Service Employees International Union (SEIU), which represents the most health-care workers in the country, joined forces with the Doctors Council, a 2,500-member independent union of post-residency doctors, and announced the formation of the National Doctors Alliance (NDA), on March 1 at the Washington headquarters of the AFL-CIO. "This affiliation marks the beginning

of a major initiative which will spur efforts to organize doctors nationwide," said pediatrician Barry Liebowitz, the president of the Doctors Council. "The NDA will help improve the quality of health care by giving doctors a greater say in how they treat their patients."

He was joined by AFL-CIO President John Sweeney, SEIU President Andrew Stern, and the presidents of the Committee of Interns and Residents (CIR) and the United Salaried Physicians and Dentists (USPD). Sweeney said, "Nearly 50% of practicing physicians in the United States are now in salaried positions. . . . And they need unions because the upheaval in the health-care industry is affecting their work, just as it is affecting other health-care workers." Dr. Ladi Haroona, critical care fellow at Kings County/Downstate Hospital in New York and president of CIR, said, "The problems faced by doctors at all levels are similar—too many patients, too little time and too little control over patient care decisions." With the new union affiliation, the NDA will now represent physicians, interns and residents, and dentists.

AJC, Richard Pipes hail Confederate principles

The lead story in the March 1999 issue of *Commentary*, the monthly of the American Jewish Committee, titled "Life, Liberty, Property," by Richard Pipes, is straight out of the Confederate constitution, which drew its inspiration from John Locke. The article, laced with references to Friedrich von Hayek, appears to be a kick-off for a campaign to overturn the U.S. Constitution, substituting the Confederate constitution's idea of "property," over the American principle of "pursuit of happiness," which encompasses the idea of the "general welfare." *Commentary* reports that Knopf is publishing Pipes's book, *Property and Freedom*, in May.

"The slogans of the day are democracy and privatization," Pipes writes, but "liberty's future . . . is still at peril," because there are governments that believe they should provide equality and security for all citizens.

Pipes demands: "Not only do 'civil' and 'property' rights need to be balanced if we care about freedom, but the whole concept of civil rights requires reexamination." No state should guarantee "entitlements," nor meet "spurious rights" which require some citizens "to work for the support of others," and "interfere with the freedom of contract." Social Security represents such a mistaken policy, he rants, because it makes the young work to pay for the elderly, opening the door to "generational conflict."

Pipes focusses his attack on "special constituencies" (human beings) who make claims for themselves "at society's expense." He asserts that the only economic right of a citizen is a right to property, that "acquisitions are means of self-fulfillment" and "the most important of liberties." For him, "acquiring property is the universal engine of prosperity."

Rep. Vaughn continues fight for Detroit schools

Michigan State Rep. Ed Vaughn (D-Detroit) took his fight to save Detroit's schools to the State Senate on Feb. 24, in an act of civil disobedience against the bill of Gov. John Engler (R) to take control of Detroit's all-black public schools away from the city. Vaughn described how the concert of Bush Republican Engler and Gore Democrat, Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer, is destroying education for Detroit's youth in a Feb. 16 interview with *EIR*.

"I took the gavel from the chairman of the committee, who was about to run this reactionary bill during Black History Month and during our Black History Month celebration," Vaughn told *EIR* on Feb. 25. "We have an annual event, and this was our 13th year, and they were going to run this bill on us during that particular time, so we just took over the meeting. We were just civilly disobedient. Representative Stallworth confronted the chairman, and while he had the chairman confronted, I grabbed his gavel, and I wanted him to know what it feels like to have your rights taken away from you. He got the message.

"They've been going back and forth. I

THE ARREST OF KURDISH terrorist Abdullah Ocalan, which was aided by the United States, may have put a crimp in Congressional efforts to establish an Iraqi "Contra" operation under the Iraq Liberation Act, after 4,000 Iraqi Kurds — some of the would-be Contras — held demonstrations, shouting, "Down, Down, U.S.A.!"

AL GORE AND GEORGE BUSH have their parties' Presidential nominations all sewn up, if you believe Conrad Black's Feb. 25 issue of the London *Daily Telegraph*. No need to vote, implies one of the standard-bearers of London's "Get Clinton" crowd: "Republicans and Democrats have all but picked George Bush and Al Gore as their champions even though the first 'primary' in New Hampshire is not until next January."

SEN. JOHN KERRY (D-Mass.) announced on Feb. 26 he will not run for President in 2000. Kerry said he could not raise money for such a bid. This now leaves Lyndon LaRouche and former Sen. Bill Bradley (N.J.) as the only rivals to Al Gore for the Democratic nomination.

PAT BUCHANAN, a Conservative Revolutionary, announced his third try for the GOP nomination for the Presidency on March 3 in Manchester, New Hampshire. *EIR* has been told that labor Democrats are throwing Buchanan support because of their hatred for Al Gore and his backing of the North American Free Trade Agreement.

VIRGINIA PRISONS are the source of a new scandal, after the *Richmond Times-Dispatch* exposed the fact that inmates are being shot more and more frequently as a form of discipline. On Feb. 21, a maximum security inmate was hit with birdshot, because he allegedly had not left a restricted area. Corrections head Ron Angelone was brought in by then-Gov. George Allen (R) and his Attorney General, now Gov. Jim Gilmore, was notorious for his brutality in Nevada's prison system.

understand the Governor called my name out in a press conference, saying that I must apologize. . . . When you push people up against the wall, they have to be civilly disobedient, if they don't have any other recourse. It's been done since time immemorial. Jesus did it, Thomas Jefferson—a whole bunch of folks did it—Martin Luther King. So, we just said 'enough is enough.' "

The bill passed the Senate committee and will probably go to the full Senate soon. Under the Engler plan, Archer would appoint a new school board for the all-black Detroit schools, replacing the board that was elected only three months ago, and that school board would have to clear its actions at the state level.

Amelia Robinson featured in Connecticut weeklies

Five Connecticut weeklies devoted their Feb. 10 Black History Month issues to civil rights heroine Amelia Boynton Robinson. The headline of the weeklies, whose flagship is the *Hartford Inquirer*, is, "The 'Grandmother' of the Civil Rights Movement," accompanied by a photo of an unconscious Robinson, during the 1965 "Bloody Sunday" demonstration for the right to vote, being dragged out from under the state police horses in Selma, Alabama. The *Inquirer* asks: "Who better for Black History Month than the heroine of the fight for the right to vote, Amelia Boynton Robinson? On Black Sunday, 1965, Amelia was among the leaders of the famous march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. As they crossed the [Edmund Pettus] bridge, state troopers gassed her, clubbed her, and left her for dead. . . . Since the 1930s, she and her husband [Samuel Boynton] had helped black sharecroppers . . . free themselves from virtual slavery, and try to register to vote. Her first husband was hounded to death in 1963, but she ran for Congress, receiving most of her votes from whites who secretly admired her Christian dignity. In 1965 she persuaded the young Dr. Martin Luther King to come to Selma and to use her house as his base. The middle-class blacks cowered in fear of the 'trouble' she was bringing.

"Amelia received the Martin Luther King, Jr. Freedom Medal in 1990. She is vice-chairman of the Schiller Institute, founded by Lyndon LaRouche and his wife Helga, whom she considers to be 'following in the footsteps of Martin Luther King.'

"Amelia's firm belief is that God created each of us for a good reason, for a special mission, which each must discover. Thus, she brings forth optimism wherever she goes, whether to Croatia amidst ethnic violence or to Washington, D.C. schools, amidst drugs and despair. Today, the same bunch of hate-filled Confederates are trying to lynch our President, and, as in Selma, many are cowering in fear.

"If you could use a dose of wisdom, courage, and optimism, call on Amelia; and don't wait. She's pushing 90, and is very busy. Let her little light shine!"

DeLay under fire for campaign funding abuses

House Majority Whip Tom DeLay (R-Tex.) has come under scrutiny for campaign money laundering and other ethics violations, reported Associated Press on Feb. 22. The wire says that House Democrats were given an affidavit last year by a Republican donor, businessman Peter F. Cloeren, who said that DeLay urged him to evade campaign finance laws and funnel more money to GOP Congressional candidate Brian Babin. Cloeren pleaded guilty to funneling \$37,000 in corporate contributions to Babin, and he and his company paid \$400,000 in fines. DeLay denied the allegations. AP also reported that DeLay was investigated by the House Ethics Committee, which dismissed charges against him in 1997; the charges related to his demanding contributions from lobbyists, and granting favors to his brother, who is a lobbyist.

As for the current stories about DeLay's misstatements on his financial disclosure forms, which conflict with statements he made under oath in a lawsuit, the Whip complained: "I am the most investigated man in America. They're out to get me." DeLay loyalists blame the bad press on the hard line that he took in favor of impeaching Clinton.