

# National News

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## Blood sport banned in New Jersey (for kids)

Under tremendous pressure from constituents, New Jersey Gov. Christine Todd Whitman and the State Assembly were forced to take action banning minors under 16 from "extreme wrestling," a sport where "contenders use chairs, kitchen implements, and other sharp items to draw blood from one another," the *New York Times* reported on March 25.

Whitman, a darling of the Conservative Revolution, whose name has been floated as a possible running mate for George W. Bush, defended the sport for adults. "We don't seek to outlaw it completely," she said, "but we do want to prohibit children from seeing it. It is one thing for consenting adults to attend these events . . . as participants set out to maim and attack each other with objects such as razors and chairs."

Three years ago, Whitman and state authorities deregulated wrestling and removed it from supervision by the State Athletic Commission, because wrestling groups insisted that they are entertainers, not athletes. Then, Bayonne, New Jersey promoter Jeff Schapiro started "extreme wrestling," which is also choreographed. "We do it because the fans want to see blood," Schapiro told the *Times*. "It's the fans' appetite for bloodier matches that drives this." He said that the "fan base" begins at about ten years old, and business will be hurt by the new law.

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## Michigan welfare reform linked to shooting death

The shooting death of a six-year-old girl in a Flint, Michigan elementary school, was linked to Republican Gov. John Engler's "welfare reform," in statements issued by the mother of the boy who did the shooting, the *Houston Chronicle* reported on March 21. The boy's mother, Tamarina Owens, sent her two sons to live with her brother after she was evicted from her home. It was from

her brother that the boy got the gun which was used in the killing.

Owens had been on welfare since her husband, the father of the two boys, was sent to prison. In January 1999, due to the welfare reform bill, Owens went to work, taking two part-time jobs at a mall 35 miles from her home near Flint. Despite working the two jobs, she was evicted eight days before the shooting, when she fell behind on the rent. To enable her boys to continue at the same school, she sent them to live with her brother. She said she feels partly to blame for the incident, because she was not home enough with the boys, but added that she had been told by the state that she had to take the jobs.

Thus, the tragedy was precipitated by the welfare reform, under which single mothers are forced to work, often far from home with little ability to make a living wage.

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## Sir Bush lies to keep General Noriega in jail

Former U.S. President Sir George Bush personally intervened to stop Panama's Gen. Manuel Noriega from obtaining parole from prison, where he has been for ten years. In a highly unusual move, Bush had Assistant U.S. Attorney Pat Sullivan tell a March 21 parole hearing in Miami, that "he [Bush] feared for his life," if Noriega were released.

A source close to the Panamanian leader told *EIR*: "This is the most stupid statement that one could imagine, coming from a former U.S. President, who staged a bloody invasion of Panama. It is absolutely ridiculous for Bush to say that he fears for his life from General Noriega," who has been accorded prisoner-of-war status and is now serving a 30-year prison sentence. "What Bush really fears, are the souls of those thousands of Panamanians killed during the invasion, who are still haunting the common graves where their bodies were dumped, because they have yet to find a final resting place," added the source, referring to the December 1989 invasion that Bush ordered, and during which, according to most credible estimates, 5,000 to 7,000 Panamanian

civilians were killed.

Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., the U.S. Democratic Party Presidential pre-candidate, who himself was made a political prisoner by Bush and the oligarchical forces behind him, commented: "What Bush is really afraid of is what Noriega can say" about the former U.S. President's activities. Bush's numerous dirty dealings include the illegal arms-for-drugs operation that became known as Iran-Contra, which flooded U.S. cities with crack cocaine.

This is not the first time Bush has injected himself into the Noriega legal proceedings. Prosecutor Sullivan said at the parole hearing, according to a source, that he and Bush held several "working meetings" to discuss the prosecution's strategy during Noriega's trial in 1992. That trial was headed for a deadlocked jury and a mistrial, when Bush made a televised—and illegal—appeal to the jury, which moved at least one juror to convince the rest to vote for a conviction. The juror told the press: "I said, 'The whole world is waiting for this verdict. President Bush is waiting for this verdict. How can you say you want to go home?'"

As part of his campaign to crush all who have stood up against his "New World Order," Bush also intervened to prevent the release late last year of jailed Argentine nationalist former Col. Mohamed Ali Seineldín, currently serving a life sentence. According to well-informed sources, Argentine President Carlos Menem sent word to Seineldín that he was planning to pardon him just before he finished his Presidential term, last December. But then Bush met with Menem and other regional leaders to discuss, among other things, the merits of drug legalization. After this episode, there was no further mention of a Presidential pardon for Seineldín.

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## Kissinger, Viguerie back Giuliani in N.Y.

Sir Henry Kissinger invited 25 billionaires, including David Rockefeller, Henry Grunwald, and Bill Simon, to a fundraising

reception for New York City Mayor Rudolf Giuliani at the end of March, in an effort to mobilize national support for Giuliani in his election race against First Lady Hillary Clinton for Senate.

Kissinger called Giuliani "the best mayor we ever had," and stated that Mrs. Clinton should not be running for the Senate, especially not from New York.

Mrs. Clinton, in a fundraising appeal, noted that Giuliani is trying to nationalize the campaign by hiring Richard Viguerie, who has done direct-mail fundraising for Oliver North, Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.), and Rev. Sung Myung Moon's Unification Church, and who even said of KKK leader David Duke, "He has a very good, sound message."

While Giuliani tries to maintain a semblance of moderation within New York State, he has Viguerie seeking to demonize the First Lady in letters going out nationwide, which describe her as a "champion of every left-wing cause you can imagine."

## Pentagon wants more work on laser weapons

A report by the Pentagon that calls for major investment in lasers and other "directed energy" weapons will be released in the near future, according to Dr. Delores Etter, the director of the Pentagon's Defense Research and Engineering Program, who testified before a Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities on March 22.

The report on these technologies was commissioned by Congress over a year ago, and Etter said it "makes a very strong case . . . that the time is very ripe for directed energy systems." She also said that the Defense Department has "made some breakthroughs," and that "this is one of those potentially revolutionary capabilities" that could "fundamentally change weapons technology."

Undersecretary of Defense Jacques Gansler also testified about ensuring that the various branches of the military work on these projects jointly, to eliminate "duplica-

tion and waste." The new report will call for coordination, and, according to Gansler, "development of a master plan for laser weapons." The testimony given by these two was also heavily laced with assurances of budget conservatism, and doing the projects "on the cheap."

Lyndon LaRouche, in his policy for strategic antiballistic-missile defense, elaborated at a Washington conference in February 1982, emphasized the importance of directed-energy technologies—weapons based on "new physical principles." This approach, initially accepted by President Ronald Reagan, was sabotaged by the "High Frontier" crowd around Lt. Gen. Daniel Graham. (See LaRouche, "Congress Revisits the ABM Treaty," *EIR*, Aug. 20, 1999.)

## Baltimore judge speaks out on media violence

Martin P. Welch, a Baltimore Circuit Court Judge in charge of the Family Division, which handles juvenile cases, penned a commentary in the Corpus Christi, Texas *Caller-Times* on March 25, calling on the President to "use his office as a bully pulpit to lead us to a solution to this growing cancer" of youth violence. "Certain segments of the entertainment industry have a stranglehold on the minds and lives of our children," he wrote. "That death grip equates with astronomical corporate profits. Today's popular culture, including commercial and cable TV films, professional wrestling, violent video games, 'gangsta' rap, and heavy metal music, desensitize our children toward violence, sex and drug use."

"Even in the presence of normal parental controls," he wrote, "our children carelessly drink from an intoxicating daily dose of violence and sex presented by the entertainment industry. The corporate conglomerates that profit from the production and distribution of this trash should bear responsibility for the carnage it produces."

"If we really believe that children are our future, then youth violence should be taken no less seriously than some of the other problems that have threatened our nation."

**CONNECTICUT** State Senator Toni Harp (D) is proposing a bill that would prevent anyone under 18 from playing a violent video game in a public place, the *Hartford Courant* reported. "The bill specifically targets games equipped with life-like guns, such as Silent Scope, in which players use a sniper rifle mounted on the control panel to snuff out terrorists who have kidnapped innocent hostages."

**THE CENTERS** for Disease Control released a report ranking the U.S. states on 20 health topics, from obesity, to binge drinking. George W. Bush's Texas led the nation in the percentage of uninsured residents, with 25%. Fully 44.9% of the state's Hispanic residents have no insurance.

**THE AFL-CIO**, joining hands with some of labor's worst enemies in its China-bashing crusade, on March 24 announced a major offensive in April against the legislation, backed by President Clinton, which would grant China permanent normal trade relations with the United States. A rally of at least 10,000 unionists, including an estimated 5,000 Teamsters, is planned for April 12.

**DOCTORS** who participate in Michigan's Wellness Plan HMO have voted to unionize, joining the American Medical Association's Physicians for Responsible Negotiation—the first doctors to do so.

**THE UNITED STATES** is cited as a human rights violator, in a report prepared by the International Helsinki Federation and presented to the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva. The report cites the police killing of African immigrant Amadou Diallo in New York City as an illustration of the pattern, as well as the 1999 U.S. record in executing 98 prisoners. "The U.S. remains one of six countries that are known to have executed juvenile offenders," the report points out. Ten juvenile offenders were killed in America between 1990 and 1999.