

National News

NASA wants manned lunar base by 2004

NASA Administrator James Fletcher has recommended a manned lunar outpost by 2004, as a staging area for a Martian landing. In a speech to the National Press Club Oct. 18, Fletcher referred to the report of a task force headed up by Dr. Sally Ride, which had outlined three possible projects for the future space program:

- 1) A four-person expedition to one of the Martian moons, Phobos or Deimos, by the year 2003.
- 2) An expedition to Mars, landing by 2007.
- 3) The establishment of a scientific base on the Moon, landing by 2004.
- 4) Establishment of a lunar outpost by 2004, which could serve as a staging area for a Martian landing by the year 2014.

"But if the next President were to ask me the day after election day to name the most promising of the options NASA is exploring," said Fletcher, "I'd name the fourth option: a manned lunar outpost.

"We could test the machinery for 'closed loop' ecological systems that would be essential for future planetary voyages. A permanent scientific observatory on the Moon would be an indispensable tool for studying the Solar System, the galaxies, and the universe. And the resources of the Moon, the lunar rocks, could be mined to make liquid oxygen, and perhaps, liquid hydrogen, for propellants to fuel future spaceships to Mars. Finally, the experience and inheritance of equipment, laboratories, and habitats of a manned lunar outpost could be transferred, if we so chose, to Mars missions. Thus, they would go a long way to help reduce the risks and costs of building a Mars outpost."

Fletcher also stressed the strong support the space program is receiving from the public. Two recent polls found that two-thirds to three-quarters of the American people support an expanded space program.

Fletcher said that the space station "is the key to human capability to live and work in space longer than we do now—much longer. . . . Without it, I can assure you,

this nation will not have the place to test the technologies and systems needed for people to live in space for periods of long duration."

He also stressed that, from the space program came "not only new knowledge, but also new industries, new products, new jobs, and greater innovation and productivity . . . to benefit the American economy and raise Americans' standard of living."

Dole questions funding for Philippines pact

Senate Republican leader Robert Dole, in a Senate speech Oct. 18, questioned how the money would be found to implement the military basing accord signed between the United States and the Philippines.

The pact will allow the United States to continue to use Subic Bay Naval Station and Clark Air Base until 1991, in return for more than \$1 billion in U.S. aid.

"Just how that money is going to be found in a foreign operations budget already carved to the bone to meet other base rights and peacekeeping commitments is not readily apparent to this senator," Dole said.

He suggested that Congress and the President set a goal "to ensure that our allies and friends—who have been getting a free ride—bear their fair share of this enormous burden of projecting American power around the world to protect freedom."

Manila and Washington officially signed a new agreement on the bases in the Philippines on Oct. 17, and a day later, in Washington. The agreement will give the Philippines \$1.46 billion in U.S. aid in 1990-91, the State Department said.

Philippine presidential spokesman Teodoro Benigno noted that the agreement "will help to create an atmosphere of stability in the Philippines," and "will help the Philippines cope with problems of economic recovery and help businessmen plan for the future."

The agreement specifies that "the executive branch of government will make its best efforts to obtain from the Congress \$962 million in U.S. assistance for 1990-91." Additionally, the United States will target

\$500 million of Overseas Private Investment Corporation and Export-Import Bank assistance for the Philippines through 1991.

Court rejects murder of patient

The New York State Court of Appeals rejected medical murder in a ruling Oct. 14, which prevented the family of a conscious elderly woman from removing her feeding tubes and starving her to death. A four-judge majority made the ruling, which is counter to the pro-euthanasia direction of state courts throughout the country.

The court made the decision despite statements by the daughters of Mary O'Connor, both nurses, that their mother had often said that she found people kept alive by artificial means to have "a pitiful existence." Chief Judge Wachtler noted that emotional statements in response to seeing someone die, could not be taken as a binding statement of intent to be taken off life support.

The pertinent part of the ruling read:

"Every person has a right to life, and no one should be denied essential medical care unless the evidence clearly and convincingly shows that the patient intended to decline the treatment under some particular circumstances. . . . If an error occurs, it should be made on the side of life. . . ."

"Although Mrs. O'Connor's statements about her desire to decline life-saving treatments were repeated over a number of years, there is nothing, other than speculation, to persuade the factfinder that her expressions were more than immediate reactions to the unsettling experience of seeing or hearing of another's unnecessarily prolonged death. . . . Her statements to the effect that she would not want to be a burden to anyone are the type of statements that older people frequently, almost invariably make. If such statements were routinely held to be clear and convincing proof of a general intent to decline all medical treatment once incompetency sets in, few nursing home patients would ever receive life sustaining medical treatment in the future. . . ."

Briefly

● **THE FEED** Materials Production Center near Cincinnati, Ohio, which processes uranium for nuclear warheads, could be shut down over charges of "ecological mismanagement." A class-action suit seeking \$300 million in damages has been filed. The government is now admitting that the private operators (first, National Lead, and then, Westinghouse) have discharged at least tens of thousands of tons of uranium into both the air and the water.

● **ALABAMA** health authorities are reporting a sharp rise in sexually transmitted diseases. Health authorities have reported a 300% increase in drug resistant gonorrhea, and a statewide 20% increase in syphilis. There were 922 cases of syphilis, versus 756 for the same period last year.

● **600,000** people have registered to vote in 1988 in New York City since Jan. 1, the Long Island daily *Newsday* reports. That is at least 100,000 more than in past presidential years, an official at the Board of Elections said.

● **NUCLEAR** Regulatory Commission guards had to drag out Gov. Michael Dukakis's chief energy aide, after he disrupted their Oct. 14 meeting. Peter Agnes, chief aide to Dukakis on nuclear energy, started shouting down at the commissioners as they prepared to vote in favor of reopening Massachusetts's Pilgrim Nuclear Power Plant.

● **GEORGE BUSH**, at a Michigan campaign appearance Oct. 18, pledged that he would never unilaterally withdraw troops from Western Europe and challenged Democrat Michael Dukakis to pledge the same.

● **HENRY KISSINGER**, campaigning for George Bush in Seattle, Washington, said "Dukakis, in my view, represents a radical orientation in his views on national security and foreign policy. Bush represents the mainstream in foreign policy in the postwar period."

Du Pont Co. disputes DOE on Savannah River

The Du Pont Company, operator of the shutdown Savannah River, South Carolina nuclear plant, says that the Department of Energy is overstating problems with the plant. The plant's three reactors generate tritium for America's nuclear warheads, and have been beset by various alleged safety problems.

Tritium is an essential element in nuclear explosives. It is highly radioactive, decaying at a rate of 6% per year. Therefore, it must be continually replaced in order to maintain the country's nuclear deterrent. Were Savannah River to remain closed much longer, defense spokesmen say that they may have to let many warheads in the arsenal decay, to service priority warheads.

But Richard E. Heckert, chairman and CEO of Du Pont, said the reactor could be started up at any point, and that the Department of Energy was overstating the problems for political reasons. Heckert said he thought the department wants to get money from Congress for new reactors, and therefore, is overstating problems with the old ones.

Washington's mayor on 'checks and balances'

Washington, D.C. Mayor Marion Barry was interviewed by the *Washington Times*, which interview was published on Oct. 19. He was asked if he thought he was "making too many concessions to Congress, to [Washington Redskins] owner Jack Kent Cooke, the D.C. City Council, the courts. It seems as though you're always having to wrestle." The good mayor replied: "I'm not wrestling. . . . That's the normal flow of politics, checks and balances. That's why you have a council and a mayor and a judiciary.

"I don't mind being checked. When I'm checked, I'm checked. . . . But when it happens, people can't understand that. It's

like going into a house of ill repute and being surprised to find people of ill repute there. 'Oh, what are they doing here!' I mean, what do they expect to find in a house of ill repute? So, don't be surprised to find checks and balances in a government."

Unquote.

U.S. network credited for Chile's troubles

Abraham Lowenthal, executive director of the Inter-American Dialogue, a front group for the Aspen Institute, wrote in the *Los Angeles Times* Oct. 13 that even anti-Reagan liberals can "applaud [the Reagan administration's] skillful approach in Chile since 1986."

The Inter-American Dialogue became notorious for advocating "selective legalization" of dangerous drugs in a report issued in May 1988.

He said that top honors for the operation in Chile go to Ambassador Harry Barnes, who was appointed in 1986 and carefully used diplomacy, "not so blatant as to provoke nationalist reaction," to set up Gen. Augusto Pinochet's recent defeat in a presidential plebiscite.

Lowenthal also singled out for accolades "U.S. AID, the National Endowment for Democracy, and related Democratic and Republican party institutes," collectively termed Project Democracy, the subject of a widely circulated *EIR* special report, *Project Democracy: The Secret Government Behind the Iran-Contra Affair*.

This network in Chile, said Lowenthal, "actively helped to facilitate the registration process, supported opinion polls that enabled the opposition to design its campaign, provided valuable technical and political advice, and helped to make possible the establishment of an independent press. . . . Chilean political leaders, some of whom used to denounce Yankee intervention in Chile, worked closely with American consultants to expand political space in Chile."

Military sources in Chile confirm Lowenthal's version, saying they were defeated not by Moscow, but by Washington.