

ical complexes in the south work with primitive environmental protection technology or almost none at all," says Beletis. *Der Spiegel* reported that the Buna plant alone dumps around 20 kilograms a day of mercury into the Saale River.

East German soil and ground-water also suffer from pesticides and

animal waste from the country's heavily industrialized large-unit agriculture, Beletis says.

Unchecked pollution has reached the point where cities like Leipzig sit in almost permanent smog, and *Der Spiegel* reported that these cities show a corresponding increase in respiratory problems and cancer.

meister said when he submitted the bill for consideration last August. "Let us help our teenagers recognize the importance of a high school education by connecting it to the privilege they deem necessary and important: a license to drive a car."

The U.S. Department of Education estimates that about one-quarter of all 18- and 19-year-olds nationwide have not completed high school.

Some educators call Sangmeister's plan a "quick fix" that addresses only the symptoms of the problem, and they warn that the measure will not be effective unless it is part of a larger package. Sangmeister, however, says he is "not in a position of coming up with some entirely big package here that's going to solve all of the educational problems in this country."

An additional problem seen with Sangmeister's bill is that typical inner-city dropouts won't be swayed by the measure because they either don't have a license or don't drive. In addition, much of the management of the measure may be left to school administrations, putting a bureaucratic strain on school principals.

Civil libertarians see it as an encroachment on rights traditionally granted to 16-year-olds, saying that teenagers' driver's licenses should not be hostage to their attendance

The consequences are also clear in East Germany's murky water. *Der Spiegel* cited state hydrological charts, previously kept secret, that mark most of the industrial region's rivers in the color red—meaning "of only 'limited use' even as cooling water."

—Marcus Kabel

in school.

"They need to not simply revoke students' driver's licenses," says Jan Smink, executive director of the National Dropout Prevention Center at Clemson University. "They need to say, 'We want to give you an alternative learning process.'"

Education experts point to such academic alternatives as mentoring, where potential dropouts are counseled by older volunteers who have been successful academically. They also suggest programs designed to boost students' self-esteem, parent counseling that trains parents how to encourage their children academically and drug-abuse counseling.

Smink says that half of the West Virginia dropouts who returned to school have dropped out a second time and that some principals, wanting to keep some dropouts from re-enrolling, reportedly have not been informing state officials of truancy.

"When you take their driver's licenses away and force them to sit in classrooms, they'll continue to cut classes and continue to have discipline problems," says Susan Barto, spokeswoman for the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education. "Just because they can't drive doesn't mean they can read and write."

—Jon Gardner

Driving teens away from education

CHAMPAIGN, ILL.—U.S. Rep. George Sangmeister is concerned about the nation's dropout rate. But instead of devoting elusive national resources to education, the Illinois Democrat is seeking a more severe way to keep teenagers in school.

Sangmeister is sponsor of a House resolution calling on states to revoke the driver's license of any high-school dropout under 18. States not complying would lose 5 percent of their federal highway funds. The proposal is expected to face hearings in the House Subcommittee on Surface Transportation in early February.

Sangmeister's plan is modeled after a West Virginia law that reduced the state's dropout rate from 17 percent to 16 percent in its first year, and the first-term congressman often points to West Virginia's success when he argues in favor of the measure.

Sangmeister suggests that support for such national legislation is growing, noting that eight states have adopted similar measures and 25 states are now considering such legislation.

"It is a modest proposal with targeted incentives for teens," Sang-

Cambodian guerrillas bring children to battle

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA—Ten boys in dark brown smocks with white trim marched from the prison to the reception center. These children, all aged 12 to 15, are among the latest victims of Cambodia's continuing civil war.

They are but a few of the 561 POWs being held by the Hun Sen government's Ministry of Correction. Nearly all of these young prisoners were captured by government forces late last year following a bitter battle between the Cambodian army and three guerrilla factions under the nominal leadership of Prince Norodom Sihanouk. Many of these boys had no aspirations to become soldiers but were inducted into guerrilla armies with no other choice.

The boys were given a packet of cigarettes to share, which they handled nervously during the interview. Although there was no evidence of maltreatment, all the boys appeared rather tense. The guard said they would be sent home "in the near future."

The youngest prisoner, 12-year-old Neth Sarith, said he was tending his cattle when Sihanouk soldiers arrested him and 10 others and forced them to carry ammunition to the front line. He said the commander often beat him and threatened to kill him and his parents if he tried to escape.

Chay Beay, a 13-year-old student, said he also was tending cattle when Sihanouk soldiers forced him and 13 others to carry ammunition and bury it in a stockpile. He said he was given a gun and also was told he would be killed if he did not fight. Chay lost both parents during the Pol Pot regime.

Fourteen-year-old Thiet Nem said Sihanouk soldiers forced villagers in Tavao to attend a meeting at which several children were inducted into the armed forces. "I was frightened and sent to Phnum Srok to fight," he said. Others were taught how to sow mines. Both of Thiet's parents had been killed by the Khmer Rouge.

Pep Siv, 14, said he and other children were given education classes in which Sihanouk soldiers said they must force the Vietnamese out of Cambodia. He said they were told the enemy is a person with "a Vietnamese head on a Khmer body."

According to aid officials in the

Khmer refugee camps on the Thai-Cambodian border, it is common practice to induct children into the coalition army. In Site 2, a Khmer People's National Liberation Front camp, all boys over the age of 10 own guns and know how to use them. Officials in Site 2 also confirmed that camp children are being used as porters for guerrilla soldiers and some have taken part in the fighting.

In Site B, a Sihanouk camp, some 600 students were recently taken for paramilitary training, according to aid officials, and their whereabouts were unknown. When questioned by aid officials, camp authorities assured them that the students were not involved in military activities or being used as porters. The camp authorities said they were being given "civil-defense-like instruction," according to the officials.

But after decades of bitter conflict, Cambodia's children have known nothing but war. Said one father who recently lost a six-year-old son to a land mine, "Pol Pot killed my wife and five children—now the Khmer Rouge have killed my only son. Is Cambodia never to have a future without killing?"

—Larry Jagan

martial air. But that hasn't stopped Father George Clements of Chicago's Holy Angels Church. Clements has made a national name for himself by declaring war on drug paraphernalia and its retailers. On the anniversary of King's birth, Clements proclaimed, "If Dr. King were alive today, he would be leading the crusade against drug abuse." Clements' statement was immediately parroted by Illinois Attorney General Neil Hartigan. In addition to promoting his own campaign for governor, Hartigan is pushing legislation that would outlaw the sale of drug paraphernalia. The law also would allow for the creation of statewide grand juries empowered to seize the profits and properties of anyone indicted for drug dealing. Hartigan estimates that this new law could reap Illinois \$20 million a year. That money, says Hartigan, "will go to law enforcement, where it is desperately needed and will be available right away without lengthy and needless delays before conviction." Anyone for summary execution?

Perils of the papal pulpit

Father Clements' just-say-no-to-drug-paraphernalia campaign has its corollary in the Catholic Church's just-say-no-to-sex contraceptive technique. Neither works. In fact, the Church's anti-contraception stance appears to have quite an unintended effect. According to a study by the Alan Guttmacher Institute, Catholic women are 30 percent more likely than Protestant women to become pregnant and to remedy those pregnancies with abortions.

Roll over. Play dead. Good boy.

George Bush has just celebrated his first year in office. And what a pleasant year it has been. Never mind the policies—what a difference it makes having a nice guy for president. Terry Eastland reports in *The American Spectator* that Bush has become his own press secretary—a president for all journalists. Eastland writes, "During the transition, [press secretary Marlin] Fitzwater drafted a press strategy for Bush that urged him to employ his personal ability to make people—in this case, reporters—feel comfortable and to meet with the press in a variety of ways, and often. ... The press conference is a time when Bush can be Bush. He is relaxed. He rambles. He is good-natured. ... Bush does plenty of other things to strengthen his relations with the reporters who cover him. The low-key interview is one. Last spring, for example, Bush invited Jack Nelson of the *Los Angeles Times*, Paul Duke of the Public Broadcasting System, R.W. Apple of the *New York Times* and columnist Georgie Anne Geyer to the White House for barbecue sandwiches and iced tea. 'We learned quite a bit about him,' says Nelson, 'and got a couple of good stories.' Bush also will seek out reporters to offer some on-the-spot remarks. He'll jog with those who jog and invite reporters to watch movies. And journalists are among the many Americans who receive his handwritten notes. ... Bush does not make the cardinal error politicians often make—of viewing reporters as one undifferentiated mass. ... When Bush heard NBC's Tom Pettit was getting married, he invited Pettit and his fiancée and a group of their friends to the residence to lift a toast. Bush knows that reporters are human beings, too. As for how reporters view Bush, the answer—not surprisingly—is that they rather like him." Down boy.

Words of wisdom

One of the cardinal rules of politics is to remember that there is a big difference between being a nice guy and a good man. More than 25 years ago the *Texas Observer* wrote an editorial endorsing Sen. Ralph Yarborough (D-TX) over his youthful challenger George Bush. It read in part: "Let us look steadily on this man George Bush, outwardly so graceful and amiable, who is asking to be our senator. ... Presenting himself as 'responsible,' he says his conservatism is 'compassionate,' yet he has so little sensitivity for the feelings of the needy aged he wittily compares medical care for the aged with a federal program to air-condition shipholds for apes and baboons, a program which he has dubbed 'medical air for the caged.' ... However nice a guy Bush is, however much he sends out young matrons who are not well-informed on issues, this is no responsible politician; this is a product and creature of the extremist-infected atmosphere of the Texas Republican Party."

News clips, memos, press releases, reports, anecdotes, raw gossip—send them all to "In Short," c/o *In These Times*, 2040 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60647. Please include your address and phone number.



Despite pressure from leading Democrats, Jesse Jackson says no to D.C. mayoral race.

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Drug war politics smokes Marion Barry

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

THE SAME EVENING THAT WASHINGTON MAYOR Marion Barry was being busted for smoking crack, neighboring Prince George County Council Chairman James M. Herl, a white Italian-American, allegedly gave a half-gram of cocaine to an undercover policewoman. The next day Herl's fellow council members unseated him.

But media headlines aside, Barry's undoing was far more significant than Herl's. Barry, first elected in 1978, was a major civil-rights leader and a widely acknowledged success during his first term as mayor. Since 1984, his administration had been mired in scandal and corruption, and Barry himself had increasingly ceded actual operations to the city administrator. His arrest revealed the extent to which he had fallen.

Barry's arrest also has raised questions about the role of the U.S. attorney, appointed by a Republican administration, in policing the affairs of a mostly black, Democratic city. Even if one thinks that Barry deserved to be driven out of office, it must still be asked whether he deserved to be driven out by local voters or by the U.S. attorney.

Selective prosecution: The FBI's interest in the Barry administration dates back to 1983, when former President Ronald Reagan appointed Joseph diGenova U.S. attorney for the district. Since then, at least 10 FBI agents have been assigned to investigate the Barry administration. Up to Barry's arrest, the results of the investigation clearly warranted the FBI's attention.

Eleven Barry administration officials, including two deputy mayors, were convicted of corruption, and at least 11 others were forced to resign. One major official is facing trial this May. But Barry himself eluded diGenova and diGenova's successor, Jay

Stephens. And when Stephens finally nabbed Barry last week it was not for political corruption but for cocaine possession—a misdemeanor not usually the target of a large-scale FBI sting operation.

The U.S. attorney and the FBI justify their action on the grounds that Barry's arrest was part of an ongoing corruption investigation that would result in more serious charges down the road. By arresting the mayor they expected that other city officials who had refused to testify against him in the past would now come forward.

But the mayor's arrest may be a reflection of frustration rather than guile. They couldn't get Barry on a felony corruption charge so they got him on a minor charge that would create a major public furor because of the Bush administration's war on drugs and Barry's own professed militancy on the issue. Barry would be tried and convicted in the press—not a proper use of the U.S. attorney's office.

The plan: If Barry had not been caught by the FBI, he would have run for re-election—his announcement was expected on January 21—and probably would have won. He faced a divided field and had already raised more than \$300,000. Around City Hall, district employees are still speculating that Barry might return home from West Palm Beach and announce his campaign. But the U.S. attorney can probably prevent that by threatening Barry with a perjury prosecution for testifying before a grand jury last year that he had never used drugs with former official Charles Lewis—a contention Lewis has contradicted.

Barry's popularity stemmed partly from his sterling past and some initial successes as mayor. But it also depended on several less-wholesome factors. Beginning in the early '80s, Barry and his lieutenants attempt-

ed to construct the same kind of political machine in Washington that the late Mayor Richard J. Daley built in Chicago. (Ironically, Barry's political adviser Ivanhoe Donaldson began pressing this strategy after he returned in November 1983 from advising Chicago's anti-machine mayoral candidate

WASHINGTON

Harold Washington.) Like Daley, Barry courted corruption by using city contracts to reward friends and punish enemies. Two Barry associates will go to trial this year for promising city contracts to a Washington consulting firm set up secretly by the FBI in exchange for contributions to Barry's 1986 mayoral campaign.

The mayor also built a loyal army of 60,000 city workers, who constitute a sixth of the district's electorate. This constituency performed its political duties well, ensuring loyalty to Barry. But as the years passed, it performed its primary function—government service—with increasing ineptitude. The district's public housing became a continu-

They couldn't get Barry on a felony corruption charge, so they got him on a minor charge that would create a major public furor because of Bush's war on drugs and Barry's own professed militancy on the issue.

ous scandal, its top-heavy school system was a travesty and its ambulance and police services were constantly under attack. Barry's machine had become an obstacle to, rather than a vehicle for, public service.

Barry did his best to exploit Washington blacks' fear of a white takeover. Many blacks believed that whites, working primarily through the *Washington Post*, had a "plan" to restore white rule to the city. After the Ramada Inn incident, the *Washington Afro-American* editorialized, "The game plan seems to be to push Barry to the brink, where he either resigns before the end of his term or he can't run again. Haven't you heard? D.C. is going to have a white mayor the next time around and Barry is in the way."

The mayor fanned the flames of paranoia, constantly reminding his followers that if he were forced to resign, white City Council Chairman David Clarke, a civil-rights veteran himself, would automatically become mayor. And Barry benefited from its corollary—a blind overestimation of his own standing and integrity, even after there were substantial grounds to harbor doubts about both.

Barry's arrest has understandably reinforced fears of "the plan." On a black talk-radio show the day after Barry's arrest, the host and listeners talked seriously about the prospect of whites sending blacks to concentration camps in the near future. Eventually these more exaggerated fears of white conspiracy will abate, but the conditions that created them may not.

Jackson for mayor? With Barry seemingly out of the race, Jesse Jackson is being pressured to run. Many of Barry's key backers now want to latch onto a new winner who can protect their own standing in the city government. Several important Democratic Party officials, including Democratic Party Chairman Ron Brown, want Jackson to run—they don't want him to play the role of spoiler in the 1992 presidential primary. And they argue persuasively that if Jackson wants one day to be president, he has to prove that he can govern as well as orate.

Most opinion polls indicate that Jackson, who denies any intent to run but lately with less conviction, could easily defeat other Democratic opponents and former policy chief Maurice Turner, whom Republican Party Chairman Lee Atwater helped recruit as the Republican nominee.

Would Jackson make a good mayor? As a leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Operation PUSH, Jackson was never highly praised for his administrative skills, but he clearly has the ability to inspire. He could also do more than any other politician to restore the city's tarnished image—a serious problem given the city's dependence on Congress for part of its operating budget.

But if Jackson were to become mayor, he might be unwilling to dismantle the political machine Barry created. Jackson spent a decade fighting Chicago's Daley, but as suggested by his famous "it's our turn" statement during Harold Washington's 1983 mayoral campaign, he may have been less interested in destroying the machine than in replacing Daley and his ethnic cronies.

Jackson has never been averse to a politics based on hero worship. He encourages not merely loyalty but devotion as well—not necessarily what the district needs. At this point Washington needs not only inspiration but serious reform. □