

Congressional Calendar by Barbara Dreyfuss and Susan Kokinda

Under Way

● **THE MAJOR ITEM** on the congressional agenda in the lame duck session that begins Nov. 12 is the passage of the remaining ten appropriations bills. Administration sources think that there is so much controversy surrounding the foreign aid appropriation that Congress may not even review it, merely passing a continuing resolution for the 1981 fiscal year, keeping the measure similar to the 1980 bill. Included in this appropriation bill is an amendment passed by the Senate in the last days before the recess to prohibit the State, Treasury and Justice Departments from spending money to enforce the grain embargo to the Soviet Union.

● **TAX CUT LEGISLATION** is definitely on the agenda for the lame duck congressional session. The Senate Task Force headed by Texas Democrat Lloyd Bentsen, appointed to study the issue when the Republicans first came out with their tax cut proposals early this summer, will present their tax cut program for congressional review. Sen. Robert Byrd (D-W. Va.), bowing to administration sentiment, had refused to consider a tax cut plan on the Senate floor before the election. The administration, which does not want a tax cut this year, did not want to be publicly forced into opposing a tax cut before the election.

● **THE PACIFIC Northwest Power** planning bill (S. 885) is on the House agenda for the first week of the lame

duck session. It would give the Bonneville Power Authority in Washington State authority to purchase power from utilities. This would then be mixed with existing Bonneville supplies and sold more cheaply than the utilities could alone. This added authority for Bonneville is a necessity to meet the region's energy needs.

● **THE HOUSE** has already scheduled action on the Agent Identity Disclosure Bill (H.R. 5615, S. 2216) while the Senate leadership has pledged to consider it in the session starting Nov. 12. The bill imposes a jail sentence and fines on those who disclose the identities of intelligence agents.

● **THE HOUSE FOREIGN Affairs** Subcommittee on Asian Affairs will hold hearings on Oct. 16 and 17 on U.S.-Japanese relations. They will focus on the effects of Japanese imports into the U.S.

● **REVENUE SHARING** funds are in question for 39 localities. The General Revenue Sharing legislation (H.R. 7112), which details the funding for regions, expired the last week in September, although areas will not feel the effect until January when the first payment is due. However, localities cannot plan for the money they will receive in the new year until Congress returns and passes the measure.

● **JACOB JAVITS** on Sept. 30 introduced Senate Resolution 532, calling on the Secretary of Energy to "immediately establish an Office of the Assistant Secretary of Emergency Energy Preparedness, responsible for planning,

coordination, and implementation of the emergency energy response programs of the Department of Energy."

● **HARRISON WILLIAMS** (D-N.J.), another target of the Justice Department's Abscam entrapment scheme, will be the focus of hearings by the Senate Ethics Committee some time in early November. Williams is the powerful chairman of the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, and is closely tied to the trade union movement.

● **THE CRIMINAL CODE** Reform bill (H.R. 6915, S. 1722) will come up on the floor of the House right after the election, according to House speaker Tip O'Neill (D-Mass.). The Senate will probably move on the measure if the House is responsive. The Senate bill, authored by Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.), reduces penalties for marijuana possession and use almost to the point of decriminalization, and includes a section on labor racketeering that could be the basis for major attacks on labor leaders. If the bill does not pass this Congress, its supporters fear it will be lost as a new Congress will not take up the controversial and detailed matter.

● **DEMOCRATIC** leadership posts will be chosen at meetings of the House Democratic Caucus Dec. 8-12. On Dec. 8 the House Steering and Policy Committee will meet to choose prospective committee chairmen, who then have to be accepted by the full House.

● **THE HOUSE REPUBLICAN** Conference will meet to elect their party caucus chairman and consider leadership posts on Dec. 8 and 9.

On the Agenda

● **NUCLEAR POWER** plant liability was the subject of hearings held by the Energy Subcommittee of the House Interior Committee Oct. 1. The subcommittee decided to send to the full committee without amendment H.R. 8179, a bill cosponsored by Congressmen Morris Udall (D-Ariz.) and Jonathan Bingham (D-N.Y.), that raises the liability for nuclear facilities from \$560 million per accident to \$5 billion. It also drastically increases the charges paid by a nuclear power plant for insurance and increases from \$5 million to \$20 million the lump sum fee of a plant in the event of a crisis. The bill would seriously hurt an already crippled nuclear energy industry.

● **THE NOMINATION** of John Sawhill as chairman of the Synfuels Corporation was taken off the Senate floor Oct. 1 when Sen. Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.) started to filibuster it. Hatfield wanted to put off the appointment of three of the board's members until after the election, in case Ronald Reagan becomes President. If Carter is re-elected, Hatfield will let the appointment go through in November.

● **THE READINESS** of U.S. military forces was the topic of House Budget Committee hearings Oct. 1 and Sept. 30. Among those testifying was Lt. Gen. P. X. Kelley, commander of the Rapid Deployment Force, who told the Committee, "The strategic airlift is not sufficient to put a capital R in rapid. It would take three to four weeks before

any ship would be in southwest Asia by the time of a crisis. The problem is moving equipment and supplies."

● **THE HOUSE** voted Oct. 3 to expel Cong. Michael Myers (D-Pa.) from the chamber, the first expulsion of a congressman from the Hill since the Civil War. Myers was a victim of the Abscam entrapment scheme of the Justice Department.

● **SERVICE INDUSTRY** competitiveness was the topic of the Senate Commerce Committee hearings Sept. 25. Hearings revolved around legislation introduced by Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) which would establish a special division of the Commerce Department to promote service industries, including banking, transportation, communications, and computers. These are the industries slated for growth by the Carter administration while basic industries such as steel and auto are left to "sunset."

● **WINDFALL PROFITS** Tax repeal legislation was finally introduced into the House on Sept. 24 by Cong. Hickey Edwards (D-Okla.) It would repeal the tax, which is aimed at wiping out small independent oil producers.

● **THE "IRAN DOCUMENTS"** of the State Department, which reportedly detail administration relations with Iran starting with the fall of the Shah, would be made public immediately, according to a resolution (H.R. 790) of Cong. Pete Stark (D-Calif.). The House Foreign Affairs Committee under pressure from the White House decided not to take any action on the

proposal until the Nov. 12 session. The release of the documents could have sparked investigation into the foreign policies of the Carter administration, perhaps bringing to light some of the details of how this administration installed the Khomeini regime in Iran.

● **ALASKA LANDS** bill (H.R. 39) amendments were offered Oct. 2 by Cong. Morris Udall (D-Ariz.). The bill, which keeps millions of acres of Alaska lands from development by mining, oil and forest industries, has been passed in different versions by the House and Senate. Opponents of the much more restrictive House version of the bill wanted to avoid a conference committee, hoping that through private negotiations they could eliminate some of the more extreme House provisions. Udall's amendments represent the start of that private negotiation, Udall being the House leader of the bill. Environmentalists who support the bill hope to see it pass during the lame duck session because they fear a new Congress will hesitate to deal with such a controversial subject.

● **INTELLIGENCE AGENCIES'** budget legislation passed the House late in the session with several important provisions. The bill (S. 2597) reduces from eight to two the number of committees the intelligence agencies have to report to on the Hill. The bill, which passed the House 385 to 18, also says that under extraordinary circumstances the President can limit prior notification on covert intelligence activities to eight ranking people in each house. It also says that the President can order action without telling Congress, but he must send them a briefing on the activities after ordering them. The House voted on a Senate bill and it is now before the President for signing.