

Congressional Closeup by Barbara Dreyfuss and Susan Kokinda

Bill to end grain embargo introduced

Following the Senate passage March 25 of a resolution urging the President to end the grain embargo to the Soviet Union, Sen. Edward Zorinsky (D-Neb.) introduced legislation which would actually mandate the President to end the embargo. In introducing his bill, S. 802, on March 25, Zorinsky declared that it was necessary for Congress to do more than merely express its concern on the issue, as it had with the resolution. "America's grain producers are tired of hearing speeches," he said. "They are tired of hearing that the Senate has told President Reagan how they feel. America's farmers do not want to hear that the Senate has again told President Reagan where it stands on the embargo." Zorinsky's bill would require the President to end the embargo within 30 days after passage of the measure unless Reagan can show that the embargo is necessary to further U.S. national security and that the continuation of the embargo does not create an undue adverse effect or burden on American farmers.

Republicans set foreign policy task force

Representative E. Thomas Coleman (R-Mo.) announced March 25 that he will chair a 12-member task force on foreign policy of the House Republican Committee. The group "will work closely with the Republican leadership in both Congress and the administration in building a broad base of support for Republican policy positions in the area of international affairs."

The group, which existed last year as well, has taken on added importance because there is a Republican administration. Coleman said the group will be preparing substantive reports and keeping members informed on issues such as trade, foreign aid, international communications, military credit sales, as well as general policy questions in all regions of the globe. Staff members are currently working on a report on El Salvador. "The task force will actively solicit input and comments from individuals and organizations directly involved in international relations and U.S. foreign policy" said Coleman.

Brock runs trade policy, say senators

Two of the Senate's leading supporters of a strong export posture called on the administration to make public assurances that Special Trade Negotiator Bill Brock and not Secretary of State Haig is overseeing U.S. trade policy. In statements on the Senate floor March 27, Russell Long (D-La.) and Lloyd Bentsen (D-Texas) expressed grave concern over Secretary of State Alexander Haig's apparent usurping of U.S. trade policy. Long stated, "What troubles me is a report that the secretary, Mr. Haig, had rather lengthy meetings with the foreign minister of Japan on the subject of trade and automobiles. The automobile question is a trade issue, and if we let it get mixed up in foreign policy I think the situation in that industry is probably going to be made even worse than it already is."

Several days earlier, members of the House Ways and Means

Committee including Dan Rostenkowski (D-Ill.), Barber Conable (R-N.Y.), and Sam Gibbons (D-Fla.), sent letters to President Reagan expressing their concern over reports that Haig was handling trade matters. At the same time a number of staff members of the Senate Finance Committee communicated their concern on the matter to the administration. In response, the President assured Ambassador Brock that he was the primary figure responsible for trade issues.

Senator Long's floor remarks noted, however, that "at this point the matter is still a little vague; Secretary Haig's statements are still on the record and the President's reported conversation with Ambassador Brock is still off the record."

The Senate Finance Committee chairman, Robert Dole (R-Kans.), took the floor following the remarks of Bentsen and Long to state his full agreement.

Committee challenges Pentagon budget 'quick fix'

The Senate Armed Services Committee unanimously rejected the Navy's request for funding to refurbish the mothballed aircraft carrier Oriskany on April 2. John Tower (R-Texas), the committee chairman, said that Armed Services is not "a rubber stamp" for Pentagon requests.

The Navy's estimate for taking the carrier out of mothballs was originally \$305 million, but was upped to \$518 million. Tower emphasized that, cost aside, only small fighter bombers could be used on Oriskany, planes that are

no match for modern enemy aircraft or submarines. The senator also pointed out that the Navy lacked the skilled manpower to run such ships.

The committee has approved a \$2.8 billion supplemental FY 1981 authorization.

Hearings held on farm policy

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Agriculture heard testimony March 30 from various national farm groups and rural associations, demanding that the subcommittee not allow the cuts in the FY 1982 agriculture budget proposed by the OMB. They warned that the cuts would "impose zero growth on the rural sector of America." "There must be some relief from the doubling of interest charges" on agricultural loans, warned one witness, "or there will be devastation."

A National Democratic Policy Committee spokesman told the subcommittee that "I want to begin by saying to you that we have to help defend the Department of Agriculture from the degradations and national disgrace of David Stockman. His cuts are not across the board but are weighted to bring about the postindustrial society which he advocates. . . . Mr. Stockman deliberately intends on dismantling the necessary protective mechanisms of the productive sector."

In response, subcommittee chairman Jamie Whitten (D-Ala.) asked "whether Mr. Stockman just didn't have enough time in deciding on the cuts, which is why they are so bad, or whether, as you are

saying, Mr. Stockman had a pre-conceived plan to make the cuts?"

The NDPC spokesman declared that Stockman's cuts are intended to implement the policies outlined in the Global 2000 report of the Carter administration, that is, population reduction and destruction of the productive economy. He specifically cited proposed cuts in agriculture research and development, the cuts to the Agristar project, cuts in PL 480, raising the cost of borrowing under the FMHA and Rural Electrification Administration programs, and eliminating Federal Financing Bank guarantees.

The following day Senate Agriculture Subcommittee Chairman Thad Cochran (R-Miss.) told another NDPC representative who gave similar testimony that "it's good to stretch our minds sometimes and look at some of the premises and implications of the policies we are implementing. I'm glad you brought this Global 2000 report to our attention."

Hollings proposes renewal of draft

Senator Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.) introduced legislation, S. 756 on March 23 which would "provide for the reinstatement of registration and classification, and reinstate the authority of the President to induct persons into the armed forces." Hollings bill to reinstate the draft was cosponsored by James Cannon (D-Nev.). The proposal is that within 180 days after passage of the legislation, the President would be required to begin "registration and classification of citizens." "In

a nutshell, the all-volunteer approach has been a failure," declared Hollings when he introduced the bill. "It has failed to provide the necessary number of troops. It has failed to provide a quality defense force. We have failed to appropriate for it. And we have failed, as a people, to fairly and equitably distribute the burden of our national defense. Our volunteer forces are sadly unrepresentative of the society they serve."

Senator Mark Hatfield (R-Ore.), an opponent of the draft, welcomed introduction of the bill, saying that Hollings provided the Senate "with a good vehicle upon which to make a rather significant national debate." The bill has been referred to the Armed Services Committee.

Water user fee legislation introduced

Senator Robert Stafford (R-Vt.), chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, introduced S. 809 and S. 810 on March 26, establishing waterway user fees. The legislation, introduced on behalf of the administration, would establish fees for commercial use of ports and certain inland waterways for the first time in American history.

The bill comes at the urging of OMB Director David Stockman nominally as a means to raise revenue. However, Prof. Daniel Bell, author of the book *The Coming of the Post-Industrial Society*, cited Stockman's support of waterway user charges as the best evidence that Stockman is a supporter of postindustrialism. In a recent interview, Bell stated, "It shows industry that the free ride is over."