

Congressional Closeup by Barbara Dreyfuss and Susan Kokinda

Senate committee restores some DEA funding

The full Senate will concur with the Senate Judiciary Committee's request to restore some funding to the beleaguered Drug Enforcement Administration, according to sources. In a June 15 floor statement discussing the 1982 Department of Justice authorization, Judiciary Committee Chairman Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.) reported "the [Judiciary] Committee agreed to most of the administration's DEA budget cuts with one exception—the reductions to the state and local task-force program." Defending the state and local task forces (50 percent of which would have been shut down) as "essential" and noting that the cuts are "inappropriate at this time," Thurmond stated that "the committee had included authorization for \$14,779,000 and 200 positions to be specifically used for the state and local task-force program. This represents an increase of \$5.9 million from the administration's request."

The House Judiciary Committee has passed an identical amendment and no opposition is expected on the floor of either the House or the Senate. However, funding for critical areas such as the Southwest Asian heroin task force and augmentation of intelligence functions at DEA are not expected to be restored.

Also on the drug enforcement front, Rep. Charles Bennett (D-Fla.) announced on June 11 that he and Sen. Lawton Chiles (D-Fla.) had introduced legislation to reform the federal bail laws by "authorizing judges to deny bond under certain circumstances to

those implicated in smuggling operations." Those circumstances include: having been previously convicted of a narcotics felony; being on parole or probation for a felonious narcotics offense; being an illegal alien; or being a fugitive from justice.

Emergency Preparedness cover for oil boondoggle

Bill Bradley, the Democratic senator from (Standard of) New Jersey introduced the "Emergency Preparedness Act of 1981," (S. 1354) on June 11, citing it as a necessary preparation for "the disruptions in our oil supply that are virtually inevitable over the next decade." While Bradley makes much of the fact that "relatively small disruptions . . . have had terrible consequences for our standard of living and for economic growth," his legislation, cosponsored by Sen. Charles Percy, the Republican from (Standard of) Illinois, would probably have an even greater consequence. Using the excuse of an oil crisis, the Bradley bill would cause a major redistribution of income in the United States—out of the productive sector and ultimately into the pockets of the multinationals who would rig a crisis in the first place.

In his floor statement, Senator Bradley warned that price controls in an emergency would be ineffective and called for "relying on market forces to distribute scarce supplies and determine prices."

Under the legislation, the government would then use the proceeds from an augmented windfall profits tax, increased transfer payments to low-income individuals,

and reduced income and payroll taxes to recycle money back to the population to pay for massively increased energy prices.

Bradley bluntly stated, "Adoption of this plan would send a clear and true signal to the nation, that signal being: prepare for rising prices during an oil-supply disruption. If Americans get that message, they will have real incentives to make arrangements that are best suited for their individual needs."

Inertial confinement fusion increases pass House

The House of Representatives passed the Department of Energy's national security program authorization (H.R. 3413) on June 11, including a 50 percent increase in funding for inertial confinement fusion energy programs.

In doing so, the House concurred with the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee and its R&D subcommittee that the administration's proposed cuts in the inertial confinement budget would damage long-range U.S. national security interests.

Under the knife of postindustrial society advocate and OMB director David Stockman, the administration had proposed a fiscal 1982 funding level of \$106 million—\$34 million below the fiscal 1981 level and, according to R&D subcommittee chairman Sam Stratton (D-N.Y.), \$51 million below the level needed just to maintain the current level of effort in fiscal 1982.

In a floor statement during discussion of the authorization on June 11, Stratton said, "The sum of \$106 million would almost ap-

pear to be a guarantee of failure of a program that has a really remarkable prospect for the future, so the committee has recommended that \$50.6 million be added to the request to permit an orderly continuation of the research and development programs on glass and gas lasers, and also particle-beam fusion systems."

The Soviet Union has devoted substantial resources to the development of a particle-beam antiballistics missile capability which could significantly alter the strategic balance.

Congress raises questions on Israeli raid

Both Democrats and Republicans have begun to ask serious questions about Israel's raid on an Iraqi nuclear facility June 7. House Republican leader Robert Michel (Ill.), in what his staff characterized as "one of the most carefully worded statements he has ever made," stated on the floor of the House June 16, "I also believe it is in our interest to see to it that nuclear weapons do not proliferate in the Mideast—which, of course, brings up the question of exactly how many nuclear weapons Israel itself has and how it went about building them."

Otherwise, Michel's statement was characterized by a concern about the spread of nuclear weapons generally, and took a hard line both against the Iraqi nuclear facility and against Israel's "preemptive" methods. Michel added that "we, [the U.S.] cannot simply go along when Israel—or any ally—acts in such a way that our own long-range geopolitical goals

might be harmed. And one of our long-range goals is friendship with moderate Arab nations as well as with Israel."

In a related development, Mississippi Democrat and House Foreign Affairs Committee member David Bowen announced the release of a Congressional Research Service finding on aspects of the Israeli raid. Bowen, who had expressed deep concern about the raid the day after it occurred, and others had requested that CRS examine the validity of Prime Minister Begin's claim that Iraq was on the verge of producing nuclear weapons, and further that the Iraqi reactor had to be destroyed before it went "hot," or risk irradiating the population of Baghdad by destroying the reactor after it went operational.

At hearings convened to hear from the administration concerning the raid on June 17, Bowen announced that CRS had generally concluded that it would take Iraq 5 to 15 years to produce a plutonium-based weapon, assuming that all International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards were ignored. CRS also reported that, in the most extreme circumstances, the bombing of a "hot" reactor could release radiation at levels which might prove lethal to a Baghdad resident if such a resident was exposed for 62 million hours. The report concludes that, unless the Iraqi nuclear reactor were hit with a *nuclear weapon itself*, danger to the residents of Baghdad was "most unlikely."

Bowen asked a State Department witness if Prime Minister Begin's claim to be protecting the residents of Baghdad from irradiation could be added to the list of

other Begin-acknowledged "erroneous" statements. The State Department official declined to respond.

GOP senators out to cut FEC

A move is afoot in the Senate to authorize funds for only a 6-month period for the rogue Federal Election Commission, instead of the normal year-long authorization. An amendment to that effect is being sponsored by Senators William Armstrong (R-Colo.) and Roger Jepsen (R-Iowa), who see it as a first step toward abolishing the agency. The proposal, scheduled to come to the floor of the Senate possibly during the week of June 15, is opposed by Senate minority Leader Robert Byrd (D-W. Va.).

Majority Leader Howard Baker (R-Tenn.) is reportedly proposing a compromise which would include holding hearings in late July on the FEC as a springboard to legislation which would end the FEC's enforcement and investigative powers.

A minor furor was caused in Washington recently after the distribution of a leaflet by the Defense Committee for Machita and Mowgli LaRouche. The leaflet featured pictures of Irish setter Mowgli and gray cat Machita, who are the subjects of an FEC investigation concerning property damages they caused during the New Hampshire primary presidential campaign of their owner, Lyndon H. LaRouche. Budget-conscious Republicans apparently think federal tax dollars can be spent in more critical areas.