

Congressional Closeup by Kathleen Klenetsky

Senate declares trade war on Japan

The U.S. Senate is becoming a forum for bloodthirsty calls for trade war. On March 28, the body voted 92-0 in favor of a resolution calling on President Reagan to retaliate against Japan unless it opens its markets to U.S.-produced goods. Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) put it this way: "If Japan doesn't realize that we too are willing to engage in a trade war, then they don't know what war is."

Sen. John Danforth (R-Mo.) of the resolution's chief sponsors, stated that the measure "is not a message to the Japanese. Rather it is to establish a policy in international trade—that \$37 billion [the deficit with Japan] is too much . . . and that

ment], we'll act in a retaliatory way." Danforth also blasted the Reagan administration's trade policy as a "failure." "The administration has taken a basic position trade that our market is going to be open no matter what."

Although the resolution is non-binding, it reflects the growing sentiment in Congress for punitive action against Japan and other major exporting countries with which the U.S. does business.

Other anti-Japanese measures are either under consideration by Congress, or soon will be. Finance Committee Chairman Bob Packwood (R-Ore.) has disclosed that his panel would consider legislation in early April to restrict Japanese imports. He vowed he would go forward with the bill, even if Japan were to ease its restrictions against U.S. imports. "No matter what Japan does, it's too late," Packwood said. "The rubber band has snapped and broken." He predicted

that both the House and the Senate would pass retaliatory measures against Japan this year.

Two such bills were introduced into the Senate March 27. One, by Trilateral Commission member Sen. John Heinz (R.-20% tariff surcharge solely on Japanese goods.

New tactic against SDI: Test Ban Treaty

A group of congressmen known for their pro-Soviet views has launched a campaign to get the United States to sign a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (C

Leading the effort is Rep. Jim Leach (R-part in Soviet-U.S. parliamentary exchange programs, including the mid-March visit to Washington of Soviet officials led by Politburo member Vladimir Shcherbitskii.

Leach told a Brookings Institution seminar on arms control March 27 that he has "a great degree of optimism that, in the near future, we will see progress" on CTBT. Leach revealed that he has been holding discussions on the issue with administration officials, who have given him assurances that there is strong support within certain strata of the administration for movement on a test-ban accord.

Such an accord would severely hamper the scope and success of the American Strategic Defense Initiative (S

clear explosions in space, a comprehensive test ban would rule out the testing and deployment of the nuclear-propagated x-ray laser (one promising defensive technologies now being developed in U.S. labs), nuclear-powered spacecraft, etc.

Leach took potshots at the SDI in his Brookings presentation: "The implications that there is a defense against nuclear weapons is one of the great myths of our time. If we can't protect our borders from millions of illegal immigrants, we certainly can't defend them against someone carrying a nuclear bomb in a suitcase."

Earlier this year, Leach, together with Iowa Democrat Berkley Bedell, introduced a resolution in the House calling on President Reagan to submit two nuclear testing treaties for Senate ratification and to restart CTBT negotiations. Leach has subsequently recruited some important sponsors for the measure, including House Foreign Affairs Committee chairman Dante Fascell (D-Fla.) and House Intelligence Committee head Lee Hamilton (D-Ind.).

According to a Foreign Affairs Committee staffer assigned to marshal the legislation through, the House is expected to take "quick action" on the bill, which is basically the same as a measure passed by the Senate last year.

The staffer confirmed Leach's remarks about administration officials' support for the resolution: "I can't tell you who they are," he said, but they're in State, ACDA [Arms Control and Disarmament Administration], and a few in Defense."

The committee has already held one set of hearings on the bill, and plans at least one more in April or May.

The CTBT has been taken up as a *cause célèbre* by the arms-control mafia and the peaceniks. A coalition of over 100 groups around the world, including the Washington-based Center for Defense Information, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Greenpeace, International Physicians for the Prevention of

Nuclear War, Tokyo's Niwano Peace Foundation and the Dutch Interchurch Peace Council, has launched an international campaign for a comprehensive test ban. Centrally coordinated by CDI, the coalition has mounted a petition drive in more than 18 countries and set dates for local and international "actions."

On January 30, at the same time that Leach introduced his resolution, the CDI held a conference in New York on the CTBT, which drew representatives from 32 United Nations missions and 80 national groups. The Soviet Union sent a message supporting a comprehensive test ban; the United States sent one opposing it.

Congressmen push heroin legalization

Rep. Henry Waxman (D-Calif.) introduced legislation March 19 to legalize heroin use for cancer patients. Co-sponsored by approximately 20 other congressmen, including Bill Hughes (R-N.J.), Ted Weiss (D-N.Y.), and Mel Levine (D-Calif.), the Compassionate Pain Relief Act (HR 1597) requires the Secretary of Health and Human Services to establish a four-year research program through which heroin would be made available for terminally ill cancer sufferers.

A similar bill, also sponsored by Waxman, was defeated by Congress last year. Spokesman for the congressman contend that the climate this year on the Hill is far more favorable for passage.

Waxman has been one of the prime movers behind the campaign to limit health care costs through such methods as health-maintenance organizations (HMOs) and hospices. These scams do reduce costs—by reducing

the quantity and quality of medical treatment.

Despite the propaganda campaign which is contending that heroin is the only drug capable of relieving intractable pain for victims of certain kinds of cancer, knowledgeable medical authorities have demonstrated that heroin actually decreases the life-span of patients who use it.

Although Waxman et al. argue that their measure would not legalize heroin, the fact remains that the pro-drug lobby has long supported efforts to make heroin available for medical use as a step in the direction toward total decriminalization.

Committee takes up budget for the SDI

The first key formal congressional action on the Strategic Defense Initiative occurred March 28, when the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Strategic and Theater Nuclear Forces began markup on the SDI and MX segments of the FY1986 Pentagon spending request.

The subcommittee has not yet publicly disclosed what action it took, but reliable sources report that it cut significant chunks out of both programs.

Tidbits from the Moscow circuit

House Speaker Tip O'Neill is heading off to Moscow for a round of meetings with Soviet officials. His office has so far refused to provide details of his itinerary. . . . Another recent Kremlin guest, Sen. Gary Hart (D-Colo.),

held meetings in late March with a delegation of Second International representatives headed by Finnish Prime Minister Sorsa. Sorsa detoured to Washington after meetings with top Soviet leaders. . . . Werner Brandt, aide to Rep. Tom Foley (D-Wash.) is the organizer of a Washington, D. C. forum on "Anti-Americanism in Germany," sponsored by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, a think tank close to the German Social Democratic Party. Brandt was also an organizer for the U.S. tour of Soviet Politburo member Vladimir Shcherbitskii.

Senate panel blocks aid to Nicaraguan 'contras'

In a surprise move, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 9-8 on March 28 to prohibit the use of foreign assistance funds for the Nicaraguan "contras."

The vote came on an amendment, sponsored by Sen. Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.), to the administration's \$12.8 billion foreign aid request. Pell said the amendment would not prevent the administration from asking Congress for covert aid to the rebels, which would be funneled through the CIA.

"Our concern," he said, "was that the administration might try to use foreign-aid funds to get around the existent prohibition on aid to the contras."

The amendment would prevent the United States from entering into "any agreement or understanding" under which a recipient of U.S. military aid or economic assistance provides aid to the contras. A related amendment by Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.), which would have prohibited U.S. foreign aid to any country giving aid to the rebels, was defeated.