

## Congressional Closeup by William Jones

### Dems impose conditions on China MFN status

Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell (D-Me.) introduced on June 25 a Democratic proposal that would renew Most Favored Nation (MFN) status for the People's Republic of China only on condition that China improve its human rights and trade practices. The bill mandates termination of that status if the Chinese government exports ballistic missiles to Syria, Iran, or Pakistan.

Although the proposal represents a softening of the Democrats' stance on the issue of China MFN, even this modest proposal would undoubtedly be met by a veto from President Bush, who has bent over backwards to appease the Chinese leadership.

The Senate Finance Committee is scheduled to debate the Mitchell proposal, along with a similar proposal by Sen. Alan Cranston (D-Calif.), on June 27.

### Gray resigns as FBI conducts probe

The sudden resignation of House Majority Whip William H. Gray III (D-Penn.) on June 21 to become the head of the United Negro College Fund, was officially attributed to Gray's frustration with his job. At the same time, it was revealed that despite denials of Attorney General Richard Thornburgh in April that Gray was the subject of a Justice Department investigation, documents were subpoenaed by federal authorities subsequent to the Thornburgh statement to review payments Gray and his wife may have received, according to sources cited by the *Washington Times*.

Thornburgh is resigning as Attorney General to run for the U.S. Senate

in Pennsylvania.

Federal authorities also sought information about honorariums paid to other parties in Gray's name or assigned to other organizations, including the Bright Hope Baptist Church in Philadelphia, where he serves as minister.

Gray has expressed concern that the Justice Department may be selectively investigating blacks. It is estimated that 47% of all black elected officials in the United States are facing indictment.

"I try to think that we don't have this kind of problem in America that's racially motivated and that even our Justice Department is motivated based on justice and not on race," Gray stated in submitting his resignation June 22. "But I've got to be kind of candid with you; I am becoming increasingly concerned."

### Dribbling Bill fouls out on lifting Iraq sanctions

Sen. Bill Bradley (D-N.J.), one of the two congressional guests at the anniversary celebration of the World Summit for Children in Washington, D.C. at the end of June, made clear that his concern for the children of the world was limited to the children of the United States (at least those whose parents can vote).

At a press conference in conjunction with the anniversary, Bradley was asked by an *EIR* correspondent whether he would work to eliminate the State Department restrictions on the shipments of food and medicine to Iraq, and to lift the economic sanctions on Iraq, so that Iraq could import the food and medicine it needs to alleviate the suffering caused by the U.S. bombardment of that country.

First Bradley claimed that the State Department had provided special funds for medical and food aid. When the correspondent referred to the comments by State Department Food Aid administrator Andrew Natsios that they had \$9 million available for aid which they were deliberately withholding, Bradley complained that "we should use these \$9 million for the children of our own country who are in need, rather than for the children of Iraq." The press conference was then quickly ended.

### Burton leads attack against aid for India

A resolution proposed by Rep. Dan Burton (R-Ind.), which would have cut off half of the developmental aid to India until the President reported to Congress that the Indian government was no longer preventing representatives of Amnesty International and other human rights organizations from visiting India to "monitor" human rights conditions, was defeated 271-144 on June 19. Despite the seemingly comfortable margin of defeat, in the wake of the Gulf war the attacks on India are assuming serious dimensions.

The same day, ranting about alleged outrages by the Indian government against the Punjab and Kashmir, Burton introduced a resolution calling for a plebiscite in Kashmir to determine its future political status, a measure which would have represented direct interference in the internal affairs of India. The amendment would have eliminated assistance for certain housing programs, for AIDS prevention and control in India, and other developmental projects.

The aid cutoff was rejected, but an

amendment was added to the Foreign Assistance Authorization Bill which called on India to "take a series of actions to promote adherence to internationally recognized human rights standards." Such measures passed by the U.S. Congress serve to escalate the political unrest in India following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi.

## House votes to cut off aid to Jordan

The House voted overwhelmingly on June 19 to cut off all aid to Jordan for fiscal year 1992. An amendment to the Foreign Assistance Authorization Bill which effectively penalizes Jordan for its refusal to join the U.S.-backed coalition in the war against Iraq, proposed by Rep. Dan Burton (R-Ind.), was passed by a 410-4 vote.

The amendment was amended by Rep. Randy Cunningham (R-Calif.) to allow the allocation of aid if the President certifies that such assistance is "in the national interest." The aid cutoff was in retaliation for Jordan's attempts to mediate peace with Iraq. Burton accused Jordan's King Hussein of "giving aid and comfort to Saddam Hussein."

## Pressure grows for probe of 'October Surprise'

In a floor speech on June 24, Sen. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.) called for a formal inquiry into charges that the Reagan-Bush campaign struck a deal with Iran to delay the release of 52 U.S. hostages until after the 1980 election, the so-called "October Surprise."

The Gore statements build up pressure on House Speaker Tom Fo-

ley (D-Wash.) to launch a formal investigation. Foley called the questions concerning the whereabouts of former CIA chief William Casey in the summer of 1980, during which time the negotiations with the Iranians were said to have taken place, "disconcerting and unresolved."

A House staff inquiry is under way, and senior Democrats decided the week before Gore made his call, to delay making a final decision for a full formal inquiry until after the start of the confirmation hearings of Robert Gates, Bush's nominee as CIA director. Gates, who served as Casey's deputy, will face questions about any knowledge he had regarding the Iran-Contra affair, arms sales to Iraq and South Africa, and, possibly, the "October Surprise."

## Dems point to ruined U.S. manufacturing base

A series of bills was introduced into the U.S. Senate on June 19-20, which purports to be an attempt to redress the rapid disintegration of U.S. manufacturing industry. The four pieces of legislation, "The National Critical Technologies Act," "The Advanced Manufacturing Technology Act," "The Federal Technology Strategy Act," and "The Defense Manufacturing Engineering Act," were worked out in collaboration by Sens. Ernest Hollings (D-S.C.), Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M.), and Albert Gore (D-Tenn.).

The legislation points to the obvious, although up until now generally unadmitted, collapse of the U.S. manufacturing sector. The bills, undoubtedly oriented toward serving as a basis of a Democratic presidential campaign, are also oriented at undermin-

ing the growing technological might of Japan and Germany.

The bills are intended, in the words of Senator Bingaman, to "identify and continually reevaluate our technology priorities, and [as] a mechanism to manage efforts across Federal agencies to promote those priorities," to give "adequate support for the research and development of these critical technologies," and for the commercialization and applications of those technologies.

The bills would also, said Bingaman, create "an enhanced capability to monitor and gain access to foreign sources of technological advantage." Calling for "a partnership between federal agencies," the bills would "link technology development with manufacturing. . . . U.S. industry, long accustomed to a virtual monopoly of world markets, ignored the critical importance of manufacturing in a global economy. . . . We are now paying a heavy price for that neglect."

Under the program instituted by one bill, a "National Manufacturing Extension Program," the federal government would provide matching funds for new and existing state, local, and non-profit programs to help modernize small- and medium-sized manufacturing firms. The legislative package also calls for establishing new programs in manufacturing engineering education at U.S. universities and colleges.

The senators' remarks indicated that they were most concerned about the rise of Japan in the world markets. Sen. Kent Conrad (D-N.D.) noted that "in industry after industry, our competitors are on the move and we are not." Conrad added that it was in the areas indicated in the bill as those of "economic vulnerability" that "the United States must be more aggressive."