



**U.S. POLITICAL NEWSLETTER**

# **NEW SOLIDARITY**

## **International Press Service**

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## **Terror On Congress**

WASHINGTON, March 6 (IPS) — A cowed Congress this week continued its capitulation to attacks on its independence by the Rockefeller-Harriman financier faction. While the House — in an atmosphere reminiscent of Hitler's Reichstag — overwhelmingly granted a just-retired FBI agent blanket subpoena powers for an investigation of its members for alleged security leaks, the cabal put it through a series of burlesque proceedings designed to prove Congress' willingness to rubber-stamp their efforts to enforce payment by bankrupt Third World and Western European nations on some \$800 billion in international dollar-denominated debt. The terror operation being directed against Congress is aimed at creating an environment that will force it to pass Secretary Kissinger's revived proposal for a \$25 billion safety net — an international "Big MAC" as some observers have called it — which will perform austerity and debt refinancing operations on West European nations similar to those performed by the New York financiers on New York City.

This terror operation is producing a controlled aversive environment on the Hill. Discussion with Congressmen and aides and examination of House and Senate votes reveals that Congressmen are voting and taking positions for legislation that they don't support and in some cases bitterly oppose. Several Congressmen who have been regularly bombarded with calls from their constituencies supporting debt moratoria, are now mouthing pro-debt statements.

Similarly, Congressmen could be nervously seen passing around the latest Gallup and Harris polls that "prove" that the American working class opinion has undergone a rightward shift, that they no longer support detente and some have begun to make hedging statements on the question of detente with the constituents. While many Congressmen, aware of widespread support for the U.S. Labor Party and its program, will privately admit that the rightward shift is a "Big Lie" concocted by Wall Street, in public some of these same gentlemen will be quoted as demanding that "we must make detente a two-way street...we've made too many concessions to the Russians." The press picks up on each one of these comments and then feeds it back to both the public and the Congress itself as further proof that it has been shifted to the right. "There is a growing 'jingoism' in the Halls of Congress, a reflection of a new 'get-tough with the Soviets attitude among the electorate," a CBS commentator said this week.

Congress is progressively isolating itself from its actual constituents and thus making it more vulnerable to the witch-hunt operation that is now underway.

This process is clearly visible from the following developments this week.

In proceedings that were hushed up in most of the press, the House overwhelmingly voted 321 to 85 March 3 to authorize far-reaching subpoena powers to the Ethics Committee investigation into alleged security "leaks" emanating from Rep. Otis Pike's Select Committee on Intelligence. House rightists, led by Rep. John Young (D-Texas) and notorious defense maniac Rep. F. Edward Hébert (D-La.) steamrolled the timid opposition to the bill — cutting off any debate. While the cabal's New York Times politely maintained that debate was quashed "by a misunderstanding of the parliamentary procedure," liberal Congressmen who opposed the subpoena resolution report that they were rudely told to "shut up" as they attempted to be heard. Even the Times admitted that "liberal Democrats angrily swarmed around the floor manager of the resolution, Rep. Young, demanding that he give them time for debate."

Describing the dragnet scope of the resolution, Rep. Phil Burton (D-Cal), an opponent of the subpoena power, said afterwards that the Ethics Committee could subpoena "each and every staff member whether or not he had anything to do with the affair, and I think this is an outrage."

The cabal sniffed out Congress' spinelessness in the face of their offensive as the original mandate to investigate the House was rammed through by a vote of 269 to 115 Feb. 19. When only 13 Representatives could be found to sign a letter authored by Rep. Bella Abzug (D-NY) attacking the investigation and defending CBS reporter Daniel Schorr, the cabal escalated and on March 2, one day prior to the steamroller passage of the subpoena resolution, assigned FBI agent David Bowers to head the investigation. Bowers retired from the Bureau on Feb. 28, after 25 years of active duty "assigned to Capitol Hill," where he was part of the FBI dragnet which has compiled massive informational files on Senators' and Congressmen's private lives. On the same day, the Ethics Committee asked for \$350,000 and a staff of 20 to conduct its witchhunt investigation.

While many Capitol Hill sources professed to be unable to account for the overwhelming vote in favor of the resolution, it is clear that many Congressmen are recalling Wilbur Mills' well-publicized indiscretions with a Washington strip teaser, and the late Rep. Hale Boggs' fatal plane crash just after he discovered the existence of the FBI's sex and scandal files on Congressmen. Asked if he thought the appointment of Bowers, who had spent 25 years ferretting for dirt in Congressional garbage cans, was connected with the massive liberal defections in support of the resolution, an

embittered opponent of the measure, Rep. John Burton (D-Cal), shouted: "Why don't you ask the people who voted for it? I don't know! I voted against it!" While aide to a Congressman representing a heavily minority East Coast district mumbled that House members "were voting their constituencies," an aide to a Midwest Congressman admitted that he was "getting a lot of heat in the field" against Bowers, the Ethics Committee investigation, and the Government Accounting Office report approving FBI "preventive action" against alleged subversives."

The Ethics Committee itself is composed of right-wingers led by Rep. Floyd Spence (R-SC), who proudly lists his "anti-communist activities" in his biography. Committee staffers themselves made no bones about the fact that they intend to focus a witchhunt against Congress itself. "No one really is interested in Schorr anymore, we really want to know where in Congress the report came from," one committee staffer said. Another aide, when asked why the committee needed \$350,000 for its investigation, replied, "Well, there are so many people to investigate — on and off the Pike Committee staff — and unfortunately the person who leaked the report won't just stand up and plead guilty."

#### **Pike: The First Victim?**

The bizarre announcement by Rep. Otis G. Pike on March 4, the day after the vote for subpoena powers, that the CIA had found that 232 documents, some of them classified, which had been temporarily on loan to his Intelligence Committee, had "mysteriously disappeared," and was insinuating that the Committee was responsible, raises the prospect that Pike himself may be the first victim. Despite the fact that the documents disappeared from files at CIA headquarters, Pike sent a letter to CIA Director George Bush promising his full cooperation in trying to locate the documents. Pike later termed the CIA "suspicious," and said that "they're really out to get me."

Pike is doing little to stop them. The New York Congressman has been extremely quiet since the leak of his Committee's report to the Village Voice, and since two shots were fired at him while he was driving his car on his way to a meeting in his Long Island district in January. While Pike denied in an interview March 3 that there was any terror operation against Congress — "If the Ethics Committee investigation is a terror operation, I'm the one who's supposed to be terrified and I'm not," he blustered — he was nonetheless one of the many liberal defectors who voted for the blanket subpoena powers to former FBI agent Bowers. A source close to Pike admitted: "They are throwing the FBI against us. Not only did we fail, but the FBI and domestic operations are stronger than ever."

It is likely that the House Ethics Committee will next week get its \$350,000, as well as jurisdiction over the incredible new set-up of Pike.

#### **House Marches to Collect Debt**

With Congress in headlong retreat before Wall Street's secret police apparatus, Messrs. Harriman, Ball, and Rockefeller are now moving to ensure that the lawmakers rubber stamp their debt collection policies as well. Immediately on the agenda for Congress is passage of the \$25 billion "safety net" proposal that has been stalled in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for a year. Now the proposal has

suddenly come alive, and the State Department expects "rapid and positive" action on it by the Committee within the next two weeks. In deference to Congressional opposition that has kept the bill bottled up for a year, the State Department is keeping the emergence of the proposal extremely quiet, but it is clear that Secretary Kissinger views the Congressional capitulation to his Intelligence apparatus as an indication that he will not meet with significant opposition.

While this hyperinflationary idiocy is being wheeled in the back door, the Wall Street faction is orchestrating a series of burlesque performances which will underscore Congress' purported resolve to have every penny on the dollar of Rockefeller's debt paid.

Yesterday Rep. Jack Brooks (D-Texas), Chairman of the House Government Operations Committee, held hearings on the collection of some \$59 billion in defaulted debt owed to the United States by foreign countries. Most of the debt stems from the World War II Lend Lease program. Puffing on a cigar and punctuating his questions by pounding his fist on a table, Rep. Brooks interrogated officials from the Departments of State, Treasury and Defense on what was being done to collect debts which government officials concede are uncollectable. There is no legislation pending on the subject, and the particular subcommittee under whose auspices the hearings were held — the Legislation and National Security Subcommittee — has no direct jurisdiction over foreign debt.

The hearings concentrated on debt accumulated during the Lend Lease program, but also touched on Czarist debt dating from before 1917 and Cuban debt dating from before 1959. Of the last two categories, Brooks admitted: "Well, I guess we're not gonna get them back. We know what happened there." At another point in the hearings, Brooks turned to the State Department representative and declared: "Now, Iran says they don't have to pay us the money because we destroyed their railroads when we were in their country during the war. What are we doing about it? Are we negotiating?" he demanded, pounding his fist.

The soft line at the hearings was represented by Rep. Joel Pritchard (R-Wash). Speaking on unpaid World War I debt, Pritchard said: "Well, I guess we're gonna have to write that off."

In similar clown proceedings yesterday, the entire House passed an amendment to its Security Assistance that would cut off aid to foreign countries "in default for a year or more on any payment of principle or interest on a debt to the United States." The amendment, which was proposed by Rep. William Alexander (D-Ark) and passed by a vote of 214 to 152, would immediately cut off all military assistance to Israel and Egypt. Admitting that the performance was just for show, Rep. Otto Passman, the Assistance Bill's floor manager, commented: "It will be deleted in conference...It was an emotional thing...It was a good idea to demagogue on."

With the world economy unravelling, such clown shows are an intolerable waste of time and Congress is running out of time. If its members continue to ignore their responsibilities and to cower before the cabal's terror operation, there is little question that Congress will, like Hitler's Reichstag, effectively legislate itself out of existence. At that point the fact that its members are privately "outraged" at the proceedings will be of no consequence whatsoever.