

## Congressional Calendar

### **S****A****L****T**, energy top congressional agenda

Congress returned from its Independence Day holiday on July 9 with two major topics on its agenda—SALT and energy.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee opened hearings on the SALT II treaty that same day, receiving testimony from Carter administration witnesses first. The Senate Armed Services Committee and the Select Committee on Intelligence intend to review the issue as well, with floor action not expected to begin until October.

Meanwhile, with President Carter sequestered at Camp David with his advisors, spiritual and otherwise, congressional activity is accelerating around the potpourri of energy legislation before it.

- The Senate Finance Committee began its hearings on the House passed windfall profits tax and its Title III, the energy security fund which could create a Synthetic Fuels Development Corporation.

- The Senate Energy Committee continued hearings on Chairman Henry Jackson's S. 1308—to accelerate and increase funding for selected energy projects, including synthetic fuels. The hearings will span the middle two weeks in July. One day of hearings, July 16, is set for S. 730, the Energy Corporation of the Northeast (Encono), a proposal supported by Lazard Frères' Felix Rohatyn, and one for the legislation introduced by Senator Pete Dominici (R-N. Mex.) modeled on the old "Rockefeller Plan" to create a \$75 billion energy corporation.

- The Dominici bill has also

been referred to the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee for a hearing on July 17 and the Senate Banking Committee for hearings on July 25 and 26. The Banking Committee will also review and act on the "Moorehead Amendment" to the Defense Production Act, creating a synthetic fuels industry.

- The Energy Subcommittee of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee continued its hearings during the week of July 9 on formulating a stand-by gasoline rationing plan.

What may reasonably be expected to see floor action and congressional approval this session remains up in the air until President Carter decides what he will and will not support on the energy front. With the onset of the SALT debate in October and a recess scheduled for August, the Senate has only three weeks in July and the month of September to act on any matters.

### **W****a****g****e****-****p****r****i****c****e****c****o****n****t****r****o****l****p****u****s****h** **b****e****h****i****n****d****W****h****i****t****e****H****o****u****s****e** **c****o****n****g****r****e****s****s****i****o****n****a****l****t****a****s****k****f****o****r** **o****n****i****n****f****l****a****t****i****o****n**

A close examination of the make-up of the newly announced White House-congressional task force on inflation reveals that, Jimmy Carter's opposition notwithstanding, the end result of the task force may indeed be a recommendation for wage-price controls.

So far, only the "liberal" nexus in Washington has openly expressed support for mandatory wage-price controls: several weeks ago, George McGovern (D-S.

Dak.) in the Senate and Ted Weiss (D-N.Y.) along with 11 liberal co-sponsors in the House introduced legislation to implement mandatory wage-price controls, but the legislation has thus far gone nowhere. In fact, a resolution to the House Democratic Caucus by Weiss calling on the caucus to go on record in favor of wage-price controls was tabled without

But the word is circulating among sections of the administration's "anti-inflation" machinery that "something radical" must be done soon on the wage-price front. Recent contract settlements, beginning with the Teamsters pact in April and including the just concluded pact between General Electric and the electrical workers unions, have totally shattered the administration's "7 per cent guidelines." Treasury Secretary Blumenthal has stated publicly that the program "needs a major overhaul." This view is shared by members of his staff as well as in circles around chief inflation-fighter Alfred Kahn, and they are emphatic in stating that the recent court decision upholding the President's power to use government procurement to enforce the guidelines doesn't make the program workable. "The program is dead, period," said one Kahn aide. These individuals want some form of wage-price controls program in place before the United Autoworkers contract comes up in September; if they don't get one before then, they are certain that one will come after.

Key members of the White House-congressional task force,

which held its first meeting in the White House on June 28 and its second at Camp David on July 9, are already on record as supporting controls or leaning heavily toward them. Perhaps the most significant member is Illinois Democrat Paul Simon, who is also chairman of the House Budget Committee's own task force on inflation. Simon, who cosponsored Weiss's legislation (H.R. 786), is expected to throw the weight of the Budget Committee task force (and its 14 days of testimony) in support of wage-price controls at the end of July. Representative Parren Mitchell (D-Md.), another White House-congressional task force member, supports Weiss.

### **Tsongas plans bill for mandatory national youth service**

In addition to the legislation we reported already introduced in the House by Rep. Pete McCloskey (R-Calif.) calling for a national youth service, Senator Paul Tsongas (D-Mass.) is currently working on a more comprehensive bill to establish a mandatory national youth service which would provide a pool of free, unskilled labor.

According to an aide to the Senator, Tsongas is already active in propounding the idea of a national "service," using a report published in January by the Committee for the Study of National Service. The report, "Youth and the Needs of the Nation," has been distributed to every high school

Massachusetts, and will be the subject of debates and discussions throughout the state when school opens, the staff member said. Tsongas is also working to set up a group of youth in Massachusetts to begin lobbying for the legislation, which he expects to introduce in August. According to the staff member, Tsongas plans to have the bill "done and out of the way" immediately, and is confident of easy passage.

The bill which Tsongas will introduce, with full fanfare, will call upon the Congress to create a National Commission, appointed by the President, to study what kinds of jobs could be filled by the youth, aged 16 to 24. But Tsongas already expects that one of the main emphases of the program for one to two years of free labor will be jobs in energy conservation. Tsongas's aide explained that the Senator has a plan, being developed with the help of the New England Energy Caucus, to give the youths jobs in "transportation and energy," citing in particular 14 separate amendments Tsongas has introduced on Department of Energy legislation. These amendments include the development of solar energy, tax credits for homeowners with wood-burning stoves (!), and plans to create small, decentralized hydroelectric plants throughout the country. The spokesman confirmed that Tsongas views the national service proposal as a means of implementing energy austerity plans which older workers might not support.

### **Electoral College safe**

On July 10 the Senate soundly defeated efforts by liberals to do away with the Electoral College. The vote in favor of a bill that would call for a Constitutional amendment to abolish the Electoral College fell 15 short of the two-thirds needed for approval. The bill, which has been sponsored in several congressional sessions by Senator Birch Bayh (D-Ind.), was sent to the Senate floor without Committee vote, thanks to maneuvering by Bayh. The bill would have substituted for the Electoral College system direct election of the President, eliminating what could be a major safeguard against the vote fraud carried out in direct elections. The main opposition to the bill was an unusual alliance of conservative Senators, particularly Orin Hatch (R-Utah) and Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.) and the American Jewish Congress and the Urban League. These groups voiced opposition to the bill on the grounds that their constituents have greater representation under the Electoral College system. Senator Thurmond called the legislation "radical tampering" with the Constitution. "The question is whether we are going to retain federalism or not".

An amendment to the bill calling for a balanced federal budget, introduced by Senator Harry Byrd (Ind-Va.), was withdrawn earlier this week. Senator Bayh has agreed to hold hearings on this proposal later on.

—Susan Kokinda and  
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