

Congressional Calendar by Barbara Dreyfuss and Susan Kokinda

Hearings open on defense industrial base

Under prodding from Research and Development Subcommittee Chairman Richard Ichord (D-Mo.), House Armed Services Committee Chairman Melvin Price (D-Ill.) convened the first of a series of extensive hearings on Sept. 17 to examine the war mobilization capabilities of the United States' industrial base.

In his opening statement, Price said, "Today questions are being raised about our industrial base, about productivity in America . . . about obsolete plants and equipment and obsolete tooling, and about skill shortages among personnel in critical defense industries. The Congress has given inadequate attention to the availability of materials that are critical requirements of certain defense systems."

At the hearings, Price announced that following several days of full committee review, he would appoint a special panel chaired by Representative Ichord to make a further study and produce a report by the end of the year. In addition, Price said he would name the chairmen of three other subcommittees to the panel, the subcommittees on procurement, seapower, and investigations.

The Sept. 17 hearing opened with testimony presented by the chairman of the Task Force on Industrial Responsiveness of the Defense Science Board, Robert Fuhrman, president of Lockheed Missiles and Space Company. Also testifying was Dr. Eugene Fubini, chairman of the Defense Science Board. They reviewed the findings of their recently completed study on

the United States' lack of industrial preparedness for war.

Rep. Sam Stratton (D-N.Y.), chairman of the investigation subcommittee, quizzed a later witness, United Technologies chairman Larry Gray on the Fuhrman-Fubini report that the U.S. defense industry currently lacks 20,000 machinists qualified to meet present production requirements.

Replying to questioning by Stratton, Gray stated that there was an apparent national policy of discouraging aerospace employment since about 1969, from which the country has never recovered. In addition, Gray noted that education is geared to the "humanities" rather than to developing technical skills. Moreover, Gray said that the shortage of machinists has not even begun to peak, predicting that by 1985, the U.S. will be short 250,000 machinists.

Hearings confirm cocaine coup

According to Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), classified hearings held on Sept. 9 in the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that the recent military coup in Bolivia was a "cocaine coup."

Following the hearings that day DeConcini released the following statement:

"Today compounded my most basic and worst fears about the current political situation in Bolivia. Because the information I heard today was classified, I am not at liberty . . . to discuss detail. However, the answers to my questions

confirm the existence of multiple and persistent linkages between the junta and international narcotics smuggling organizations. On that point there is no question. While information on my specific questions about individuals is privileged, it is fair to say that the narcotics connections go to the highest levels of the Bolivian regime. Further action will await my examination of the material I receive today."

Pass bill to abolish Open Markets Committee

A bill to abolish the federal Open Markets Committee passed the Domestic Monetary Policy Subcommittee of the House Banking Committee Sept. 10. The legislation, sponsored by Rep. Parren Mitchell (D-Md.), passed by a vote of 4 to 2. The federal Open Markets Committee consists of the seven members of the Federal Reserve Board bank presidents. It meets once a month to decide on money supply.

In a statement to the committee, Rep. Henry Reuss (D-Wisc.), declared his support for the bill and his long-standing opposition to the Open Markets Committee because it gives regional bankers too much control over monetary policy, which Reuss believes should be under the control of presidential appointees, and not regional representatives.

"Basic decisions affecting money supply, housing, interest rates, economic growth and value of the dollar . . . should only be made by officials of the United States appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The presi-

dents of the 12 regional bank boards . . . have themselves been elected by the nation's bankers. . . Those who make monetary policy should be responsible to the people, not to banker constituencies."

Reuss has promised hearings in the full committee on the bill, although action by the committee is not expected until after the new session starts.

Wheat cartel in the works?

A group of senators and congressmen who are members of the Inter-Parliamentary Group that regularly meets with members of Canada's Parliament have proposed the establishing of a joint U.S.-Canadian wheat exporting commission. The commission could in effect create a wheat cartel similar to the OPEC oil cartel. The group is led by Sen. Edward Zorinsky (D-Neb.) and Rep. Glenn English (D-Okla.).

The U.S. congressional group introduced a concurrent resolution Sept. 12 to establish the joint Canadian-United States Wheat Exporting Coordinating Commission. The aim would be, according to group member Rep. Arlan Stangeland (R-Minn.), "to export wheat at prices above the cost of production, to promote long-range market development, to increase commitments to food assistance programs, and to encourage wheat exporting nations to increase their storage facilities."

The proposal was made in the form of a resolution in order to spur the President to reorganize the agriculture and exporting sections of the government through executive action. The proposal was worked

out by the Inter-Parliamentary group over the course of several meetings held with Canadian parliamentarians, who simultaneously proposed the measure to the Canadian government. In addition to the United States and Canada, Australia and Argentina are being asked to join the commission, which would then consist of the world's four largest producers of wheat for export.

In the U.S., the measure has been referred to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate, while in the House it has been sent to the Agriculture and Government Operations committees, although no action is expected until the next session of Congress.

Senate committee says no on Indian nuclear fuel sale

Nuclear fuel will be denied the Indian government for use in the nuclear power plant at Tarapur, India, if the full Senate backs up the decision of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Sept. 10. By a vote of 8 to 7, the committee decided to block the sale of nuclear fuel, critical for the plant's continued operation. It is very likely that if the Senate votes against the sale, the Indian government will go elsewhere.

Interestingly, the Carter administration had supported the fuel sale over the objections of the Nuclear Regulatory Agency. By an executive order, Carter ordered that the fuel be delivered. Under an executive order, the Congress has to act within a certain time against the order, or it becomes law, in this case before Sept. 26.

The House has already voted against the fuel transfer. Sen. John Glenn (D-Ohio) was the chief sponsor of the Senate legislation opposing the transfer, and his office and leading environmentalist groups conducted heavy lobbying against it. The matter will be reviewed in the full Senate Sept. 18 or 23.

Asks NSC adviser to explain role in Stealth leaks

Rep. Robin Beard (R-Tenn.), ranking Republican on the Investigations Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee called Sept. 16 for further hearings into the role of the White House in the leaks that precipitated the declassification of information on the existence of the Stealth aircraft.

Beard's request was motivated by the testimony of retired Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, who testified that high-level Pentagon and White House officials revealed to him that it was David Aaron, deputy assistant for National Security Affairs, who leaked the information on Stealth to the *Washington Post*.

Zumwalt further charged that President Carter made the decision to leak the information as part of his reelection efforts. Asked if he was merely referring to the President's decision to declassify Stealth after leaks on it were published, Zumwalt said no. "A decision was made by the President to leak the information sometime before that so there would be no need to protect it."

Beard has now requested that Aaron appear before the subcommittee to testify.