

## Eye on Washington by Richard Cohen



Walter Cronkite

### CEQ still at work pushing depopulation

The White House Council on Environmental Quality, whose staff produced the Carter administration's *Global 2000 Report*, is working behind President Reagan's back to entrench the report's population doctrine within the administration and Congress.

Three weeks ago, the White House announced that it was firing the entire professional staff of the CEQ, effective May 4. But my sources on Capitol Hill report that the environmentalists who compose the council's senior staff have not packed their bags. Instead they hold "semisecret meetings" with key congressional staff and members of the State Department sympathetic to their cause, to plan future strategy.

The week before Easter, CEQ staffers, headed by ousted general counsel Nick Yost, met with individuals from the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, chaired by pro-environmentalist Sen. Thomas Stafford of Vermont. They plan meetings with other Senate committees, including Chuck Percy's Foreign Relations

Committee.

Yost, whose father Charles is a former Mideast desk officer for the National Security Council, is "trying to sheep-dip the Global Future proposals into congressional legislation," says a source. The *Global Future Report*, prepared under Yost's direction, is the implementation document for Global 2000. It demands that the U.S. orient itself to a policy of global population cuts, including cuts in the American population.

This latest round of meetings has not yet netted any concrete legislative commitments, but it has stirred up some other activity. At least three prominent senators are privately circulating a letter demanding that the Reagan administration respond promptly and affirmatively to the problems alleged in the Global 2000 reports.

And the CEQ has helped secure congressional hearings on the Global 2000 policy next month in the Census and Population Subcommittee of the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee, headed by Rep. Robert Garcia (D-N.Y.).

Without any White House knowledge, much less approval, the CEQ staff is meanwhile circulating a memo on "possible congressional activity" based on the Global Future document.

A CEQ staffer reports that Yost and others are telling anyone who will listen that "they have inside people in the administration" who will back Global 2000. This was confirmed by Kitty Gillman, who says the CEQ has "high hopes" for Jim Buckley, the undersecretary of state for security assistance. Buckley, Gillman exults, is a committed conservationist. "Why, he even wrote a piece defending the snail darter."

The CEQ had looked to Alexander Haig for support, but now

doubts its value. "Haig may support our ideas," said a CEQ spokesman, "but if he said so, it might hurt us. Everything he touches turns to dust."

Other members of the network include Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs Robert Hormats, a Carter veteran, and Population Coordinator Bill Long at the Agency for International Development (AID). Peter McPherson, the newly named director of AID, is described as a "total intellectual lightweight" who has been "an easy guy to manipulate," Global 2000 supporters claim. Buckley has not been among the least manipulative, they added.

### 'Here now the news'

Despite the influence of this network, the fired CEQ staffers say they will have a tough time selling their ideas to the White House. "Let's face it," said one of them, "they fired us because they didn't like what we were doing." Commented Gillman, "If only the Carter administration had stayed in office, Global 2000 would be the centerpiece of policy. Instead we have good people trying to work behind the back of the President."

More effective, they hope, will be the Committee for the Year 2000, headed by Arco chairman Robert O. Anderson and World Wildlife Fund U.S. chief Russell Train. The committee, which includes Cy Vance, Elliott Richardson, and Walter Cronkite, has reportedly scheduled "dozens" of meetings with top administration officials.

Gillman says that former CBS anchorman Cronkite is crucial. "He has the recognition. He is trusted. We hope he can use his prestige to wow Reagan. Cronkite is a committed environmentalist. He will give his all."