

Congressional Closeup by Barbara Dreyfuss and Susan Kokinda

Hearings on nuclear nonproliferation slated

The subcommittee on Energy, Nuclear Proliferation, and Federal Services of the Governmental Affairs Committee will hold hearings on the Nuclear Nonproliferation Act, also known as the Percy-Glenn bill, on June 24 and 25. The act requires that any nation that receives nuclear energy material sign the International Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty or accept full-scope safeguards under the International Atomic Energy Agency. This has established extensive international monitoring of a nation's nuclear weaponry, which many nations regard as a major infringement on national sovereignty.

The hearings are being held in relation to a report on the act released in late May by the General Accounting Office. The report, which is actually mandated in the act, reviewed whether the act was working effectively and whether the law had hurt U.S. nuclear energy trade. The authors claim that the act has not hurt the export of U.S. nuclear energy technology, despite reports to the contrary from the nuclear energy industry.

The report has also recommended that the act be strengthened by the adoption of what is called timely warning. This requires the United States to establish certain mechanisms that would allow it to detect very early the "misuse" of nuclear fuel. This provision is very controversial, as it would also mean extensive oversight of another nation's energy programs.

The hearings will include testimony from former Carter admin-

istration officials who led the fight to curtail U.S. nuclear energy exports, including Joseph Nye, formerly of the State Department, as well as spokesmen for the Atomic Industrial Forum, Westinghouse and the Natural Resources Defense Council. The administration will testify with representatives from the Department of Energy, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and Nuclear Regulatory Commission speaking.

Also expected to testify is James Malone, assistant secretary for the International Energy, Oceans and Environmental Policy group in the State Department. Malone is responsible for the Reagan administration's nuclear nonproliferation policy, and wrote the transition team report urging the reversal of Carter policies. He is heading a special interagency working group on the issue.

ICC nominee calls for review of deregulation

A last-minute broadside from Common Cause, the "consumer advocate" group, alleging overweening Teamsters union influence, apparently failed to slow the confirmation process for Reese Taylor, chairman-designate of the Interstate Commerce Commission. The Senate Commerce Committee spent only 30 minutes at its June 9 hearings questioning Taylor, a close associate of Reagan intimate Sen. Paul Laxalt (R-Nev.). At the conclusion of the hearing, committee chairman Bob Packwood (R-Ore.) announced that he found the allegations "unfounded" and was extremely satisfied with Taylor's qualifications and views.

Taylor, a Nevada labor-management lawyer, will take over the ICC less than one year after the implementation of trucking deregulation. While Taylor announced in the hearings that he was "neither a deregulator nor a regulator" by philosophy, he is viewed by many in industry and labor as intimately familiar with the havoc deregulation has caused.

At the hearings, Taylor said that one of his first priorities is "to study the impact of what has already been done" to the industry, rather than forging ahead with new administrative initiatives. He added, however, that he does not "intend to legislate by administrative fiat," and that, if he feels changes need to be made in the legislative mandate of the ICC, he will take his case to Congress.

The Common Cause allegations made June 8 centered on an "unidentified" Teamster source who claimed that Taylor was "in the hip pocket of the Teamsters" and that his nomination was a political payoff in exchange for IBT support of Reagan's campaign.

Narcotics Committee hears calls for war on drugs

The House Select Committee on Narcotics in two full days of hearings on "Narcotics Law Enforcement Policy," June 4 and 5 heard testimony from law enforcement officials demanding a national commitment to rid the country of the drug menace. A number of witnesses criticized the Reagan administration's budget cuts which, they testified, were crippling drug

enforcement effort nationally.

Chairman William Hughes (D-N.J.), of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Crime, testified to the direct relationship between the drug problem and growth of crime. Hughes stressed that he has had bipartisan cooperation from the ranking Republican on his subcommittee, Rep. Harold Sawyer (R-Mich.), for bills he has introduced to restore funds in enforcement programs.

However, Hughes noted that he found it "troubling because it appears that the decision has been made by the Office of Management and Budget to cut law enforcement budgets pending the conclusion of the study on the Task Force on Violent Crime. . . . I know I've been tough on the administration," Hughes said, "but I'm frustrated. We already know what we have to be doing."

Sterling Johnson, Jr., the special narcotics prosecutor from New York City, summed up the sentiments of many law enforcement witnesses by demanding a "commitment from the President on down to stop the drugs. . . . This has to be given the priority that the President is giving the national defense budget. It has to be treated like a national security question. We have to have education, prevention, a medical program, and prosecution that ensures a swift and certain conviction upon arrest, all moving at one purpose."

Although Rep. Clay Shaw (R-Fla.) "agreed in principle" with the critics of Stockman's budget cuts, Representative Coughlin (R-Pa.) tried to press Johnson into admitting that funds for destroying drugs at their source was a more cost-effective method for

drug eradication. Johnson countered that it was not proper to "use the cost-benefit argument of eradication at the source of drug supply as an excuse to not put money into other areas. . . . The President needs to sit down with people who are experts in their field and develop an across-the-board plan of action."

But Stockman's budget-cutting found an ally in liberal Democratic Rep. James Scheuer (N.Y.), who also pressured witnesses to reveal their plans for deploying severely limited funds. "From the point of view of incremental additional dollars," Scheuer intoned, "should we get greater results from reducing demand rather than supply?" Scheuer later disagreed that the national commitment to fight drugs was anything like the Apollo moonshot commitment.

Wrangles continue over water policy

The administration and the Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Water Resources continued to spar over water policy at the opening hearings of the subcommittee's extensive review of water issues on June 8. Testifying for the administration, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Engineering William Gianelli and Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land and Water Gary Carruthers reported that water issues have been "moved to the front burner," under the auspices of the Cabinet Council on Natural Resources and Environment chaired by Interior Secretary James G. Watt.

However, subcommittee members voiced dissatisfaction with this

structure. Republican Sen. Pete Domenici (N.M.) told the witnesses that he had a whole inventory of issues that composed water policy and that the administration needed to address. He questioned what overall proposed spending levels for water over the next 3 to 4 years, given that there is declining support for water spending in Congress at the same time that spending in real terms has dropped 40 percent over the past 15 years. Domenici pointed out that the Environmental Protection Agency spends more money on water projects than the Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation combined. He cited the need to re-evaluate the methods of determining cost-benefit ratios and cost-sharing for projects. "You may pick one of these issues and solve it, but we still won't have a water policy," he concluded.

The subcommittee will consider legislation by Senators Domenici and Moynihan to authorize water project spending through block grants to states. Both Gianelli and Carruthers expressed administration opposition to this proposal, citing widespread concerns that such a proposal would wreak havoc with national water-policy planning and development. Gianelli stated, "While we are firmly committed to giving states a greater role in water development, it is doubtful that the block grant approach is the answer to our water problems." This is especially true since the administration continues to support the Stockman budget cuts and Volcker interest rates to the detriment of any projects that would encourage economic growth, as water projects tend to do.