

Eye on Washington by Stanley Ezrol

EIR is a new D.C. policy force

Last week, a phone call was made to *EIR* headquarters by the State Department. Foggy Bottom, of course, has been the target of many of our well-deserved blasts, so every call we receive from that Department is cause for interest. But last week's call was especially notable.

It seems a certain *EIR* article on U.S. policy toward Asia circulated particularly fast in Washington.

With the article a major cause for discussion on Capitol Hill and among Asia specialists, the Asia divisions within State scrambled for copies, and orders to procure one were given to the Department library. Keeping a stiff upper lip, the librarian dutifully contacted *EIR*, and informed us that the controversial article was the latest in a series of requests for *EIR* articles from at least four divisions of State.

The department is now considering a subscription, the librarian reported, adding that a spot check with other government libraries found several of them also actively considering *EIR* subscriptions. "The Congressional Research Service already subscribes," she noted.

That call from State is worth noting because it is typical of a new (and sometimes grudging) acceptance of *EIR* throughout Washington as a major policy and information source. This recognition, which pits *EIR* directly against the more "established" research organizations such as the Congressional Research Service, the Brookings Institution, and Georgetown's CSIS, has developed especially over the past several months. During that time *EIR* has sponsored five major seminars in the capital and

EIR subscriptions have expanded to more than 100 congressional offices.

The *EIR* plan, starting in early spring, was to use the circulation of the *EIR* journal, combined with the seminars, to fill the policy vacuum in the capital following the November political shakeup.

That is what has begun.

"Fresh air in a stale city," is how one administration official described *EIR*.

The seminars have been the most visible of the *EIR* activities. Topics have included Europe's attitude toward high American interest rates, the summit meeting between President Reagan and Mexican President López Portillo, and the effects of the administration's economic program on the U.S. economy. All were chosen to highlight critical issues. The aim was to bring together American and foreign officials from business and government for open policy discussions. A longtime Democratic Party leader who attended one of the recent events commented that no other organization in the country could bring together such a seemingly diverse audience.

All told, 12 of the 13 cabinet departments have attended the seminars, as well as White House and executive agency officials, 20 foreign embassies, Capitol Hill representatives, and corporations.

The seminar on the U.S.-Mexico summit, held on March 26-27, had nine of the 13 cabinet departments in attendance, including many officials directly responsible for drafting policy proposals for the López Portillo-Reagan summit.

Another example was the seminar on the U.S. economy held June 10. The keynote speech was given by *EIR* founder Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., who spoke on the outlook for the Ottawa summit. When LaRouche concluded, dozens of of-

ficials competed for limited phone lines to call in reports on the speech to their departments.

At this time, 26 senators receive *EIR* directly at their offices, as do 75 members of the House, and five members of the Reagan cabinet. In many cases, these subscriptions were provided by constituents—a message that makes the elected official take particular notice.

The sheer depth of *EIR*'s weekly reporting has now caught on on a Capitol Hill notoriously starved for actual information.

In the past few weeks, an aide to a Democratic leader of the Senate Agricultural Committee confirmed that *EIR*'s information on agriculture is "top-notch." Former astronaut Senator Harrison Schmitt (R-N.M.) requested extra copies of the *EIR*'s May 5 Space Shuttle issue, saying he wanted to pass them around. A chief Senate committee staffer told us he loves to read *EIR*, especially its economics coverage. But "I never get to see it until the senator has made it completely dog-eared."

On the other end, note the use of *EIR* to lobby Congress by the endangered Savings & Loan Associations. In June, Rep. Stephen Neal (D-N.C.) of the House Banking Committee called the Washington *EIR* office, saying that a pile of *EIR* articles had been presented to the congressman by North Carolina S&L leaders.

At least one cabinet department has tried to use information from *EIR* to fight the Reagan budget cuts. A short time ago, officials from the Social Security Administration asked *EIR* for information on how the high interest rates add to the federal budget deficit. At the time, *EIR* was the only information source making this connection, in regular articles on the budget. "A lot of people around here have seen your articles," the caller said.