

Congressional Closeup by Barbara Dreyfuss and Susan Kokinda

Population control resolution introduced

Representative Sam Gejdenson (D-Conn.) and Rep. Pat Schroeder (D-Colo.) introduced a Sense of the House Resolution Oct. 22 which would encourage the President to pressure world leaders to make an effort "in world population control and birth control throughout the world."

Both Schroeder and Gejdenson have previously signed a letter to President Reagan urging him to implement the Carter administration's *Global 2000 Report*, which calls for cutting back the world's population by 2 billion within 20 years. In fact, it was the Population Action Council, one of the major population-control groups, that helped draft this resolution. The Population Action Council recently held a conference, attended by many leading administration figures including Undersecretary of State Meyer Rashish, which urged businessmen to actively promote population-control in underdeveloped nations. The Council is working closely with corporate executives in lobbying for passage of this resolution.

As Gejdenson's aide admitted, the resolution tries to sell population-control programs to those who would not normally back such programs, on the basis that U.S. national security is involved. The resolution warns that as "the pressures for food and other foodstuffs increase," nations would become chaotic and exports of strategic minerals would cease.

It also tries to compel the President to act, based on his having heard the concerns of Third World

leaders at the Cancún summit about underdevelopment. "This is especially appropriate, with President Reagan today in Cancún at the North-South conference taking a look at the disparities in the world as far as wealth and the industrial nations, compared to the underdeveloped nations."

The population-control lobby is hopeful that the resolution will pass this session of Congress, because there are already 72 co-sponsors. Included are the most outspoken backers of population control: Richard Ottinger (D-N.Y.), who put forth his own legislation to set up an office to monitor population trends; James Scheuer (D-N.Y.), who previously headed up a special committee on population trends; and Robert Garcia (D-N.Y.), who has held hearings on Global 2000.

SPIS renews labor probes

The Senate Permanent Investigations Subcommittee (SPIS) reconvened its hearings on labor racketeering and corruption on Oct. 28 with testimony from Labor Secretary Ray Donovan, who announced that the Labor Department now fully endorses the witch-hunt tactics against labor that have long been advocated by the Subcommittee and its ranking minority member, Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.). Donovan, whose own confirmation hearings were marred by Ted Kennedy's unsuccessful but much-reported attempts to link him to "corrupt" labor officials and practices, now appears to be bending over backward to prevent

a recurrence of such charges.

Donovan put the administration on record behind Nunn's pending labor-racketeering legislation (S. 1163), which would remove a union official from elected union office immediately upon conviction of a crime, rather than upon final expiration of the appeal process, as is currently the case. Donovan went so far as to propose that S. 1163's extension to 5 to 10 years of the period barring a convicted official from again holding office be *even further* extended. Donovan further delighted Nunn by revealing that the Labor Department has reversed its longstanding policy of pursuing primarily civil charges against violators of such laws as ERISA—which governs union pension funds—and would now actively seek out and pursue criminal charges against labor officials. Nunn interrupted Donovan's testimony to crow, "This is by far the strongest statement of Labor Department intentions in this matter that I have ever heard. I find this a profound, significant, and positive change."

Donovan also reported that in early March the Labor Department, along with Treasury and Justice, had established a task force on labor racketeering which was already refining its "targeting" procedures.

Following Donovan's testimony, Nunn carried out a little grandstanding with taxpayers' money, by flying in Anthony Scotto, the convicted former head of the Brooklyn local of the International Longshoremen's Association. Scotto, not surprisingly, exercised

his Fifth Amendment rights, and refused to answer questions. Subcommittee member Warren Rudman (R-N.H.) suggested that the Committee explore the possibility of granting Scotti immunity in exchange for testimony on corruption on the waterfront—a proposal which will be explored by the Committee.

The hearings continue with representatives of the Teamsters Central States Pension Fund, and the AFL-CIO's Lane Kirkland.

Skilled labor shortage facing U.S.

Senator Lloyd Bentson (D-Tex.) made a series of lengthy floor statements during the last two weeks of October expressing concern about the shortage in skilled labor he says the U.S. faces.

Bentson in a floor speech Oct. 22 presented a series of statistics from the Department of Labor on skilled manpower shortages projected for the 1980s which he warned merely indicate the magnitude of the problem, and are far below projections of the Chamber of Commerce and others. Bentson declared in summary that, "Our nation confronts a shortage, for example, of 28,000 computer operators, or 21,300 machinists, each year of this decade. And an accumulative skilled-labor shortage will exist in excess of 250,000 persons annually, or 2.5 million over the full decade in just the 13 cited occupations. . . . These are minimum estimates. . . . The actual total for all skilled occupations is substantially higher."

Although Bentson intends to make further statements on what should be done to correct the problem, he noted in his floor statement Oct. 22 that either more labor-saving equipment could be introduced into workplaces to "stretch out" the existing skilled-labor pool, or that education programs can be geared more toward meeting the demands for skilled craftsmen.

Bentson announced that he will hold hearings Nov. 3 in the Joint Economic Committee's Subcommittee on Economic Growth and Intergovernmental Relations to review the shortage of skilled labor. Representatives of the American Electronics Association, the National Machine Tool Builders and the Materials Research Corporation are scheduled to testify.

Lifting paraquat ban gains momentum

Congressional efforts to overturn the so-called Percy Amendment, the ban against using U.S. assistance Act in mid-October. The act quats to eradicate marijuana crops, achieved a major success when the Senate passed the Foreign Assistance Act in mid-October. The act included an amendment which would repeal the ban that was originally put forward by Charles Percy (R-Ill.). Senator Lawton Chiles (D-Fla.), who led the fight to repeal the paraquat ban, had already gotten Percy's agreement to back the repeal before the bill went to the Senate floor.

Efforts for the House to take similar action are stymied because

the entire foreign aid bill is stalled. The House has been unable to pass a new Foreign Assistance Act for three years because of controversy over various aspects of the bill, and so has only passed a continuing resolution which maintains programs and aid at existing funding.

In an effort to get House action on the paraquat amendment, four Congressmen introduced a separate bill on Oct. 22, H.R. 4822, which would lift the ban on U.S. funds going for paraquat spraying. The four Congressmen are Andy Ireland (D-Fla.), E. Clay Shaw (R-Fla.), Earl Hutto (D-Fla.) and Billy Lee Evans (D-Ga.). Congressman Ireland declared that "It is no accident that three of the members introducing this bill today are from Florida. Our state is being literally buried under drug money—an estimated \$7 billion every year. Honest businesses and businessmen are being driven out. Banks are flooded with so much money they must take three days to count cash from honest businessmen."

The Congressmen also detailed the findings of the House Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse which show that, despite claims to the contrary, paraquat itself is not dangerous, should some marijuana sprayed with it be smoked. Ireland also noted that Mexico, which has dramatically slashed marijuana growing by using paraquat, had to spend only \$10 million in 10 years to do so. Effectively, use of paraquat in Colombia, which supplies about 85 percent of U.S. marijuana according to the Congressman, would cost far less.