

Congressional Closeup by Barbara Dreyfuss and Susan Kokinda

Select group formed to investigate Abscam

Forced by former Sen. Harrison Williams (D-N.J.) to agree to launch an investigation into government misconduct in the Abscam frameup and related sting operations, the Senate voted March 25 to establish a Select Committee to conduct such an inquiry. Williams won this Senate commitment after he and Sens. Daniel Inouye (D-Hawaii) and John Melcher (D-Mont.) focused the Senate floor debate on Williams's entrapment into a discussion of the threat Abscam poses to constitutional government.

The resolution establishing the Committee, S.350, states that it will be looking into allegations including "improprieties in the formulation and conduct of the so-called Abscam undercover operation . . . the allegation that in the Abscam operation attempts were made to create improper conduct on the part of certain persons . . . questions of possible prosecutorial misconduct . . ." and the "pattern of illegal or improper targeting and investigative techniques utilized."

Whether the Select Committee carries out its mandate and gets to the bottom of Abscam will depend on constituent pressure.

The Committee will consist of four members from each party. The Democrats, announced the same day that the resolution was adopted, are Senators Inouye, Walter Huddleston (D-Ky.), Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), and Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.), who has been actively investigating other dirty operations of the Carter Jus-

tice Department (see article, page 57).

The Republicans announced March 29 are Sens. Charles Mathias (R-Md.), James McClure (R-Idaho), Warren Rudman (R-N.H.) and Alan Simpson (R-Wyo.).

House questions FBI-DEA reorganization

The House Judiciary Subcommittees on Crime and Civil and Constitutional Rights and the House Select Committee on Narcotics held hearings March 29 and 30, respectively, to examine the FBI-Drug Enforcement Administration reorganization which has given the FBI increasing responsibility and oversight for drug law enforcement. A number of Congressmen expressed "serious concerns" about the reorganization, which put FBI agent Mullen as acting Administrator of the DEA, abolished DEA regional offices, and made the DEA accountable to the Director of the FBI rather than the Attorney General. Civil and Constitution Rights Subcommittee Chairman Don Edwards (D-Cal.) began the March 29 hearings, noting that they came in the context where "many people have real concerns that FBI people have been out of control and have damaged innocent citizens, particularly in their undercover operations such as Abscam."

The National Anti-Drug Coalition led by associates of *EIR* founder Lyndon LaRouche, recently issued a paper strongly critical of proposals to tie the DEA more closely to the FBI, criticisms echoed in the hearing. The NADC

questioned the FBI's competence, considering its record in Abscam, and raised the fact that the FBI has no authority abroad, making it difficult to conduct serious investigations. Thirdly, since previous reorganizations of various agencies have taken years to become effective, there could be a crisis in law enforcement in the anti-drug field.

Associate Attorney General Rudolph Giuliani, who appeared before the committees with FBI Director William Webster and FBI agent Francis Mullen, testified that the reorganization was carried out in order to bring the resources of the FBI and its "expertise" in long-term surveillance, and in financial investigations of organized crime, into the drug-enforcement effort. Giuliani noted that "the FBI has encountered increasing drug-trafficking violations coincident with its involvement into public corruption. . . ."

Leo Zeferetti (D-N.Y.), the Chairman of the Select Committee on Narcotics, called for preserving the "integrity of the DEA as our lead drug-enforcement agency. . . . We are concerned that the involvement of the FBI in drug enforcement not so envelop the DEA as to jeopardize the essential relationships of the DEA with other government agencies and governments abroad." Bill Hughes (D-N.J.), Chairman of the Crime Subcommittee, asked why a task-force approach would not have sufficed to increase cooperation between the DEA and FBI, adding that every time a reorganization occurs "drugs enforcement efforts are set back substantially because of morale and other problems.

While Webster and other wit-

nesses could not clearly delineate how changes in personnel and policy and in the chain of command would work in joint operations between the FBI and DEA, Webster tried to reassure committee members that the DEA remained its own agency. "All the vital organs remain intact," he claimed.

Congress sets new round of Euro-bashing

Several Senators are planning to stage another round of attacks on our European and Japanese allies for allegedly refusing to shoulder their fair share of the West's defense burden. The spectacle, schedule tentatively for April 22, will coincide with the West German Social Democratic Party Congress in Munich and could undermine the efforts of Chancellor Helmut Schmidt to stay in office.

According to aides to Senate Majority White Ted Stevens (R-Alaska), the Senator will chair hearings in the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee on whether the United States should continue to maintain troops in Europe. In March, Stevens announced that he was considering legislation to pull all or part of the U.S. NATO force home and "force the Europeans to defend themselves."

"He is still damn angry and frustrated," said an aide of Stevens. "Our thinking is that we want to give the boys a chance to bash the Europeans, and especially the Germans, real good."

Other sources report that should Stevens go so far as introducing actual legislation, it will

call for withdrawal of funding for two additional divisions agreed to be placed in Europe, rather than withdrawing troops. Aides to Stevens confirm that there is a desire to go after the Japanese, as well

Senate sustains President's veto of Oil Emergency Bill

The Senate sustained President Reagan's veto of the Standby Petroleum Allocation Act March 24, falling five votes short of an override. The Act, drafted by Sen. James McClure (R-Id.) was a replacement for the expired Emergency Petroleum Allocation Act and would have given the President authority to implement, or not implement, an emergency allocation system in the event of an oil crisis.

The President vetoed the bill on the grounds that in a crisis the free market could best allocate scarce resources. While the President and a number of Republicans are pushing the free-market approach for ideological reasons, the major oil companies and Eastern Establishment think tanks are also backing this approach. As Sen. James Exon (D-Neb.) warned on the Senate floor, in the event of an oil crisis "I would suggest that the term 'free market' merely means that Big Oil is free to do whatever it wants to do."

The key backers of the free-market approach in the Senate are not conservative Republicans, but liberal Democrat Bill Bradley (D-N.J.) and liberal Republican Charles Percy (R-Ill.), an in-law of the Rockefellers. An aide to Percy, who is often called the Senator

from Standard Oil of Illinois, indicated that another benefit of the free-market approach is that many independent oil companies and small companies that "do not have any business being here" would be bankrupted.

Senate committee blocks the MX

The Senate Armed Services Committee, meeting in closed session March 29, decided against any interim deployment of the MX missile in existing silos, according to Capitol Hill sources. The full committee apparently has accepted a subcommittee report to eliminate the \$2.2 billion requested by the administration to deploy the first nine MX missiles in existing Titan II or Minuteman silos.

On March 23, the subcommittee on Strategic and Nuclear Theater Forces voted 9 to 0 to withdraw the funds in the 1983 budget for MX deployment.

The key Senator who has been lobbying for cutting the interim MX deployment, Gary Hart (D-Colo.), is one of the heads of the Reform Caucus in Congress which includes a number of outside defense analysts, particularly those at or working with the ostensibly conservative, Washington-based Heritage Foundation.

Hart and his associates oppose the MX interim deployment because they are trying to reorient U.S. defense strategy, focusing it around conventional weaponry. Capitol Hill observers believe that Hart will try to use the MX action to begin a debate on strategic weaponry generally.