

Congressional Closeup by Ronald Kokinda and Susan Kokinda

Laxalt submits resolution on 'strategic defense'

Republican National Committee Chairman and Presidential confidante Sen. Paul Laxalt was the point man in introducing a resolution on Friday which called on the United States to maintain a strong defense. While much of the resolution reflected warmed-over "peace through strength" phraseology, one key section called on the U.S. to "create a strategic and civil defense which would protect the American people against nuclear war at least as well as the Soviet population is protected; . . . and to achieve overall military and technological superiority over the Soviet Union." Senator Steve Symms, an ultraconservative from Idaho, elaborated in prepared remarks in the Congressional record on the significance of these two points. Symms attacked the MAD concept of Mutually Assured Destruction and called on the United States to "use advanced technology to defend its citizens against the horror of nuclear war." Citing a GAO report on the possibility of satellite-based defense, Symms further stated that "the United States can have superior force and a superior war-fighting capability. We also need to exploit advanced technology, such as the cruise missile [sic] and space-based anti-missile defense."

The resolution, which has already been endorsed by Caspar Weinberger, Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman John Vessey, National Security Adviser William Clark and Powell Moore, Deputy Secretary of State for Congressional Relations, was supported by a broad spectrum of Senators, including Democrats such as Ernest Hollings (S.C.), Bennett Johnston (La.), Russell Long (La.), John Melcher (Mont.), and Jim Sasser (Tenn.). The resolution appears to be an initiative of the Coalition for Peace

Through Strength—an American Security Council-spawned group whose membership ranges from various traditionalist military and patriotic organizations to the Order of St. John of Jerusalem.

Fact-Finding delegation visits Italy to probe drugs

Led by William Hughes (D-N.J.), the Chairman of the Crime Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee, a six-man delegation of congressmen visited Italy, Turkey, Egypt, Manila, China, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, and Thailand in mid-November to examine internal efforts against illegal drug trafficking. Staff accompanying the delegation stopped in Hong Kong. According to a Hughes spokesman, the chairman thinks headway was made with the Chinese regarding the exports of methaqualone (qualudes) and the use of mainland China as a major trans-shipment point.

On the other side of the world, however, the delegation, which besides Hughes included Clay Shaw (R-Fla.), Harold Sawyer (D-Mi.), Carlos Moorhead (R-Cal.), Ed Jones (D-Tenn.), and Mike Lowry (D-Wash.), was stunned at the extent of the narcotics trafficking in Italy, particularly Sicily, and the fact that the United States has only five DEA agents in the entire country. On Dec. 14, Hughes held hearings before his subcommittee with Dominick DiCarlo, Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics Matters, and Francis Mullen, the acting head of DEA. Mullen repeated his oft-heard praise of Hong Kong's efforts at curtailing narcotics trafficking, noting that "Hong Kong has emerged as a substantial force among Southeast Asian governments in the effort to immobilize traffickers through financial investigations."

The Hughes subcommittee could become the major locus of narcotics investigations in the House, if the Select Committee on Narcotics expires at the end of this session. Its chairman, Leo Zeferetti (D-N.Y.) and ranking Republican, Tom Railsback (R-Ill.) were both defeated in their reelection bids and that may damage the committee's chances for recharter in the 98th session. It is not yet clear whether Hughes will use the augmented importance of his subcommittee to challenge Mullen's defense of Hong Kong, the capital of Dope, Inc.

Rep. Kramer bares bias against beam weapons

Speaking to a National Space Club luncheon on Capitol Hill Dec. 15, Rep. Ken Kramer (R-Colo.), a leading advocate of the strategic and military utilization of space along the lines of the High-Frontier proposal—which revives Admiral Haywood's 1960 proposal for space-based anti-missile missiles, with conventional rather than nuclear-armed missiles—revealed a bias against an immediate program gear-up to develop directed-energy beam weapons. In terms that are emerging as a political "line" to delay beam-weapon development, Kramer said that the United States has "not made the kind of progress in directed energy that needs to be made" and that we are "not at the point in our technology to make those choices."

Kramer noted that after visiting various laboratories around the country, "There is no sense of objectives." Kramer added that it was "important that that be changed and changed at the highest levels of government." Referring to the chemical versus short-wave-length laser controversy, a red herring used to delay the overall program, Kramer said he was "supportive

of a better organized and coordinated program to answer which technologies should be developed and when."

Kramer's remarks centered on the growing Soviet emphasis on and power in the "geopolitical pivot of world power,"—space. "This past summer the Soviet Union simulated a first strike against the U.S.," Kramer said, warning that "all conditions are present for a technological surprise by the Soviet Union." Kramer outlined that the U.S. response that he is advocating "draws on Project Defender" initiated in 1958, but then "shelved by [Defense Secretary Robert] McNamara because it ran counter to the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction."

House votes to kill Clinch River

The House of Representatives voted 217 to 196 to delete funding for the Clinch River Breeder Reactor (CRBR) from the Continuing Resolution Dec. 14, the first time that Clinch River has ever suffered a setback in the House. The vote is not expected to kill Clinch River at this time, since it is anticipated that Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker (R-Tenn.) will get the funding passed in the Senate and restored in Conference with the House.

The margin of CRBR's defeat was almost an exact reversal of the last House vote in July 1981, which approved funding by a vote of 206 to 186. The influence of the Fabian Society-dominated Heritage Foundation and the British-dominated National Taxpayers Union was clearly at work.

Budget Director David Stockman, a Heritage Foundation mole, set the tone for the defections by getting a 40 percent cut in CRBR funding into the administration's proposed FY1984 budget. It is unclear whether the new Energy Secretary Donald Hodel will

attempt to get this cut restored before the budget is sent to Capitol Hill.

In September 1982 a Government Accounting Office report said that the cost of CRBR would nearly double and that the revenue receipts would be less than anticipated, a classic "cost-benefit" analysis.

The result was that 35 members who voted for CRBR in 1981 switched to opposing it Dec. 16. The defections included Republican whip Trent Lott (R-Miss.) and 19 other Republicans, many closely allied to the Heritage Foundation's post-industrial society philosophy. Assuming that CRBR is preserved by Senate initiative, another vote is expected in the House on the regular FY1983 appropriations bill, which will be taken up in the new Congress.

Who's who on Senate committees

Despite the entrance of only five freshman Senators in January (the smallest freshman class in over 75 years), several key committees have been the locus of major changes in composition and leadership. No changes occurred in the majority Republican side of the Senate Armed Services Committee, but the Democratic changes, with the addition of Ted Kennedy to the Committee, appeared to be geared to using the Committee as a point of confrontation. Kennedy replaces the pro-defense traditional Democrat, Howard Cannon (Nev.), whom Kennedy connected forces helped to "Watergate"; and newly-elected Jeff Bingaman (N.M.), whose activity at the Democratic mini-convention seemed to consist of hanging on to Pamela Harriman's hem, replaced the very conservative Harry Byrd of Virginia, who—though an in-

dependent—served on the Democratic side. Furthermore, John Stennis (Miss.), who had served as ranking Democrat on the committee and who was another sane, defense traditionalist, gave up his position as ranking Democrat (for another committee ranking position) in favor of Scoop Jackson (D-Wash.).

With Kennedy's move to the Armed Services Committee, and with the downgrading of moderate and traditional democrats, the committee could very easily become a battlefield between nuclear-freeze proponents and the bankrupt, off-the-shelf, strategy being pushed by the majority. The crucial issue of beam-weapon defense is at this point on neither's agenda.

Similarly, the defeat of Sen. Harrison Schmitt (R-N.M.) leaves the technology and space subcommittee of the Senate Commerce Committee in the hands of a *Global 2000* advocate, Sen. Slade Gorton (R-Wash.). The role of that subcommittee in supporting the nation's space efforts is central to ensuring that a beam-weapon program be undertaken in the necessary broad-based civilian as well as military context.

The other important committee to undergo major changes is the Senate Banking Committee, where the re-authorization of the International Monetary Fund in 1983 is likely to become a major issue. A number of Southern and Western junior senators might be expected to reflect populist pressure to resist an IMF re-authorization as a "bail out of the big banks." The new GOP members are Paula Hawkins (Fla.), Mack Mattingly (Ga.), Chic Hecht (Nev.), Paul Trible (Va.), and Gorton. Paul Volcker's protector William Proxmire has reasserted his position as ranking Democrat, replacing Don Reigle, who held that position briefly after the resignation of Sen. Harrison Williams earlier this year.