

Congressional Closeup by Kathleen Klenetsky

Senators launch new assault on NATO allies

Senators Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) and William Cohen (R-Maine) have kicked off a new round of attacks on America's European allies, warning that unless they spend more money for defense, the United States might withdraw from the alliance. The two went into a tirade against European NATO members during Senate Armed Services Committee hearings Feb. 4, where Secretary of Defense Weinberger and Joint Chiefs of Staff Chairman Gen. John Vessey testified on the Pentagon budget for FY 1986.

"Why should we spend more when our allies don't meet their commitments?" fumed Nunn, who proceeded to go into a long complaint alleging that the financial "input" into NATO far exceeds the "output."

He was seconded by Cohen, a leader of the Military Reform Caucus, a group of congressional defense "reformers" with close links to Kissinger's Center for Strategic and International Studies. "We've got to sit down and have some meaningful talks about how we're going to make this [NATO] work," said Cohen, hinting that economic retaliation, rather than troop withdrawal, might be the best tactic.

Last spring, Nunn, a creature of the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies, tried to implement Henry Kissinger's Soviet-inspired scheme for "decoupling" NATO by sponsoring an amendment demanding withdrawal of troops from Europe if the allies didn't significantly increase their financial contribution to NATO. Although the amendment was defeated, partly due to Reagan administration efforts, it caused a furor and much mistrust of the United States.

At the Feb. 4 hearings, Nunn indicated he would introduce similar legislation during this Congress—a move which, in the context of Soviet-sponsored terrorist operations against U.S. targets in Western Europe, could potentially garner far more support than it did last time around.

Back from Moscow, Hart launches 1988 campaign

Fresh back from a mid-January visit to Europe and the Soviet Union, where he was feted by Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko, Sen. Gary Hart (D-Colo.) is signaling his intentions to make another bid for the Democratic presidential nomination in 1988. In what was widely interpreted as an informal declaration of intent, Hart gave a "theme" speech to a crowd of several hundred admirers in Boston's Faneuil Hall on Feb. 4, in which the effects of his sojourn in Russia could be heard loud and clear.

Hart issued a rabid denunciation of President Reagan for preaching a "patriotism consisting merely of nationalistic flag-waving, public relations symbolism and military interventionism."

The United States has to get rid of such nasty tendencies, Hart went on, and adopt a "genuine patriotism" which "must appeal to the deep sense in all of us that each of us can do better at our chosen tasks, that our nation can do better at home and abroad, that there is a higher purpose for a great nation than outdated political arrangements on the one hand, or self-interest, materialism and selfishness on the other."

Right after his meeting with Gromyko, and doubtless bringing tears of joy to the foreign minister's eyes, Hart had issued a scathing attack against the Strategic Defense Initiative, and

called for the United States to declare a moratorium on nuclear weapons testing and deployment.

Hart apparently got some new ideas on how to run a presidential campaign from the Kremlin. According to his fans at the *Washington Post*, Hart plans to deliver a major speech each month on topics ranging from defense policy and arms control to economics. He also intends to establish a think-tank to bring together "creative thinkers" on public policy, is writing a book on defense policy, and will rejoin the military reform caucus in Congress.

Goldwater moves to repeal War Powers Act

Senator Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.), the new chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, introduced a bill into the Senate on Jan. 29 mandating the repeal of the War Powers Resolution. The prime cosponsor of the legislation, S. 305, is Sen. Jeremiah Denton (R-Ala.).

In a statement motivating the bill, Goldwater terms the War Powers Resolution "unconstitutional," and charges that it "attempts to deny flexibility to the President in the defense of American citizens and their freedoms. Even if it were not unconstitutional," he states, "it is impractical and dangerous."

"The biggest mistake any Congress could ever make," he asserts, "would be to become convinced that it has exclusive or primary control over tactical military decisions and that Congress alone can give the order to go to war or make peace, something the Constitutional Fathers were careful to prevent."

Goldwater argues that the War Powers Resolution would have prevented President Franklin Roosevelt "from taking courageous action prior to a declaration of war against Nazi Germany, action which probably saved Great Britain and the resistance in Europe from total annihilation." The resolution "would have brought a total disaster to the democracies had it been in effect in the 1940s."

Biden blasts SDI at Brookings Forum

Senator Joe Biden (D-Dela.), the ranking minority member of the Senate European Affairs subcommittee, told a Brookings Institution seminar on the future of the Atlantic Alliance on Feb. 5 that the U.S. Strategic Defense Initiative will be the major issue facing NATO in 1985.

Calling the SDI "a visionary scheme," and an example of the Reagan administration's "flawed public dialogue on strategic issues," Biden charged that Reagan has "caused alarm among NATO" with his beam defense. Specifically, said Biden, Reagan's March 23, 1983 announcement of the program "was incredibly ill-timed" because it coincided with the Euromissile deployment and "created once again questions about U.S. leadership and its commitment to the allies, since it implied that the U.S. would withdraw behind a technological shield."

Biden also claimed that development of the SDI "could enhance decoupling" of the United States and Europe.

Ironically, Biden's charges were echoed nearly verbatim by Al Haig in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Feb. 7. Haig,

who was fired as secretary of state in June 1982, said: "I thought the President's speech was ill-timed, ill-advised, and created the problems we have today. I wish he hadn't made it." Haig said that the speech "confused" America's allies about what the program would actually do.

Mathias gets marching orders from Gromyko

Senator Charles Mathias (R-Md) traveled to Moscow, and met with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko Feb. 7. The Soviet foreign minister took the opportunity of the meeting to reiterate Soviet propaganda against President Reagan's beam-weapon development program, the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), in the weeks leading up to the mid-March Geneva arms talks.

"Reaching mutually acceptable agreements to prevent an arms race in space," said Gromyko, is the top priority for Geneva. The talks, he added, must address "the danger inherent in plans to militarize outer space."

He warned that the commitment of the Reagan administration to go ahead with the SDI "would topple the ABM treaty and many other agreements, and would mean an end to the whole process of nuclear arms limitation and reduction, and would set up a run-away arms race in all directions."

Apparently, when Gromyko speaks, Mathias clicks his heels. According to his aid John Hess, the senator from Maryland will lead the Senate fight to reduce all spending on the Strategic Defense Initiative by 75%. His plan includes having all funds for prototype development and testing of beam-weapon systems eliminated,

killing the program by bogging it down in the abstract research phase.

Meese approved by Senate Committee

The Senate Judiciary Committee voted 12-6 on Feb. 5 to approve Edwin Meese's nomination as U.S. attorney general. The full Senate is scheduled to vote on his appointment Feb. 18.

As *EIR* has reported (Jan. 12), the international drug lobby mobilized every asset it has against Meese, for fear he will undertake a clean-out of the Justice Department and FBI to permit an effective war on drugs. Sources have told *EIR* that the drug lobby is preparing for a long-term Watergating operation against Meese, in the likely event they cannot block the appointment. Charges of "cronyism," which were already dismissed by a federal court, will be leveled at Meese repeatedly to prevent any sweeping changes in the Justice Department, particularly if he attempts to bring in trusted associates from California.

Organized-crime tainted Senate Judiciary Committee member Howard Metzenbaum (R-Ohio) blasted Meese during the hearings, and the Washington-based Common Cause organization attacked "the White House and Mr. Meese and his attorneys" for supposedly quashing a report issued by the Office of Government Ethics which they claimed implicated Meese in "unethical" financial practices.

The dissenting votes were six of the eight Democrats on the Committee: Kennedy, Leahy, Byrd, Metzenbaum, Biden, and Baucus. Democratic Senators Heflin of Alabama and DeConcini of Arizona voted for Meese.