

attacks against Poindexter reflect both substantive disagreements that Regan has with several recent administration initiatives, and a more general, longstanding desire to minimize the role of national security adviser. When Robert McFarlane resigned as national security adviser last December, both Regan and Secretary of State George Shultz called for downgrading the post as a means of enhancing their own policy influence with the President. It was widely reported at the time that Shultz and Regan believed that Poindexter, a career military officer, would play a low-key staff role outside the mainstream of administration policy making.

The issue in the "Get Poindexter" bid is strategic, having to do with evaluations of Soviet intentions. According to the sources, Poindexter has tended to align himself inside administration policy circles with Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger on such decisions as the President's May 17 repudiation of SALT II, and the general upgrading of U.S. strategic assessments of Soviet intentions following the February congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The Cannon-Hoffman knife-attack on Poindexter was based on interviews with White House "senior" staffers who insisted on remaining unnamed. The "mice" again?

Keeping security loose

Earlier this year, several major newspapers published classified "leaks" on U.S. intelligence methods used in gathering evidence of Libyan involvement in a series of terrorist bombing attacks in West Germany. In response, CIA Director William Casey called the editors of five major U.S. newspapers on the carpet and threatened prosecution under a 1950 national security law.

A case is now awaiting decision by the Justice Department against an NBC journalist, James Polk, an associate of the radical-liberal Institute for Policy Studies, who did a televised newscast leaking information about U.S. submarine spying on the Soviet Union.

In the wake of those leaks, Admiral Poindexter ordered a staff report recommending tightening of security procedures within the administration—including broad use of polygraph tests and the creation of a special FBI unit with fulltime responsibility for probing leaks damaging to national security. At a cabinet working-group meeting several months ago, Poindexter presented the staff report and recommendations. It won the enthusiastic support of Casey, Weinberger, and National Security Agency director Gen. William E. Odom. Donald T. Regan, Treasury Secretary James Baker III, and George Shultz opposed the recommendations as too severe. A stalemate resulted. Apparently, no further initiatives were taken to stop the leaks.

Not surprisingly, the public disclosure of the cabinet-level debate over the needed tightening of security came as a result of leaks—again from Don Regan's "mice"—who passed to the press the minutes of the cabinet working-group session and the text of the staff memorandum prepared for Admiral Poindexter.

California AIDS initiative certified

by Marianna Wertz

A citizens' initiative, mandating the application of public health measures to the deadly disease AIDS, was officially certified for the Nov. 3 ballot in California on June 25. The office of Secretary of State March Fong Eu released a statement to the press, stating that initiative petitions were found by random sampling to bear the valid signatures of 505,510 registered voters. As 443,219 signatures are required to qualify an initiative for the ballot, the measure was certified.

The announcement of certification came on the same day that press headlines reported to the world on findings at an international conference on AIDS, being held in Paris, that AIDS is "epidemic" in Africa, the tropics, and in the United States.

In press conferences held simultaneously in Los Angeles and Sacramento, Prevent AIDS Now Initiative Committee (PANIC) president Khushro Gandhi and vice president Brian Lantz explained what the initiative will require, if it is voted up in the November election. The measure mandates that "AIDS" and "the condition of being a carrier of the HTLV-III virus" shall "be placed and maintained by the director of the Department of Health Services on the list of reportable diseases and conditions mandated by Health and Safety Code Section 3123." The California Code provides for standard measures of public health—including population screening and quarantine—for all diseases which are so placed on its list of reportable diseases and conditions.

Hottest political issue

The PANIC Initiative, as it is called, is the hottest political item in California since Proposition 13. Its foes are attempting to portray it as the "LaRouche initiative," associating it with Democratic presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche, founder of the National Democratic Policy Committee. Gandhi and Lantz are both officers of the NDPC, and NDPC activists gathered a large number of the signatures to qualify PANIC for the ballot.

The initiative has drawn widespread support in California and from around the nation, from those Americans who are outraged that a deadly disease is being treated as a question of civil rights, rather than a question of public health. Even in the Bay Area, with the highest concentration of AIDS victims per capita in the nation, a June 23 radio poll conducted by the largest Bay Area radio station, KGO, resulted

in 53% of the record number of 768 callers supporting the "separation" of AIDS victims from the general population.

Khushro Gandhi states in his circular letter in support of the initiative, "AIDS is the only disease in recent U.S. history to which we have not applied the usual measures applied to every other such epidemic. It should be obvious, that the only reason for the unusual way in which AIDS has been handled by public health officials, is pure, naked political pressure."

Just how naked, and how heavy that pressure is, has begun to surface in opposition to the initiative. One of its prominent detractors, Los Angeles City Councilman Joel Wachs, called the initiative "the single greatest threat to civil liberty since Nazi Germany." Wachs, who said on June 25 that he will devote "110%" of his time to defeating the initiative, is a leading "gay rights" advocate.

In West Hollywood, a major homosexual center in the state, the homosexual paper *Frontiers* titled its coverage of the initiative: "This is War." A parade on June 22 in West Los Angeles drew out close to 200,000 activists to demonstrate on "Gay Pride Day" against the initiative and its connection to Lyndon LaRouche. Placards with the slogan "No to LaRouche" were prominently displayed throughout the line of march.

The opposition effort has reportedly raised \$275,000 in pledges to date, and has set a goal of \$6 million to finance its campaign to defeat the initiative. The leadership of the "Stop LaRouche" movement, as it is being called, includes the following individuals:

- Harry Britt, homosexual member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors and a vice-president of Social Democrats U.S.A., Michael Harrington's branch of the Socialist International.

- Bruce Decker, Chairman of the California AIDS Advisory Committee, appointed by Gov. George Deukmejian (R); board member of the gay-rights electoral organization, the Municipal Election Committee of Los Angeles (MECLA).

- Roberto Esteves, president of the Alice B. Toklas Gay Democratic Club, who is assuming responsibility for liaison with "the straight community."

- The Revolutionary Workers League, a Maoist sect that advocates "worker-community defense guards" to protect against "racist, sexist, homophobic cops."

- The American Civil Liberties Union, which is arranging free legal help for anyone associated with the campaign to defeat the initiative.

The effort to defeat the initiative was to be formally launched on June 29, at the annual San Francisco Gay Pride parade, which traditionally draws up to 300,000. Plans were made to focus the entire parade against the initiative, and to make "Defeat LaRouche" the most prominent slogan. The anti-initiative leadership has made clear that their efforts have only two goals: ensuring that the issue is not "gay vs. anti-gay"; and "stopping LaRouche from getting a foothold in California."

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