

Congressional Closeup by Ronald Kokinda

Wilson and Hart oppose Proposition 64

Senators Pete Wilson (R-Calif.) and Gary Hart (D-Colo.) have gone on the stump against Proposition 64, the California ballot referendum which calls for emergency public-health measures to stop the AIDS epidemic.

Wilson sent a letter to President Reagan on Oct. 13, calling for the formation of a blue-ribbon "Presidential Commission on AIDS." According to the *San Francisco Examiner* on Oct. 16, Wilson said that disjointed efforts by different agencies have compounded irrational fears about AIDS. He said that if the public understood that there was no valid medical reason for a quarantine, Proposition 64 would not be on the November ballot.

Wilson's office indicates that if the President does not establish a commission, Wilson will submit legislation to the Senate.

Gary Hart, who is campaigning for the 1988 Democratic presidential nomination, toured California Oct. 11-12, lashing out at Proposition 64 as "almost fascistic." He complained that passage of the resolution would give credibility to Lyndon LaRouche—whose associates sponsored it—and would lead to enactment of similar measures in other states.

Glenn limit on SDI foreign contracts removed

The Defense Authorization conference report removed a provision which would have limited the involvement of U.S. allies in the Strategic Defense Initiative. Sponsored by Sen. John Glenn (D-Ohio), the amendment sought to limit the funds for contracts

which the SDI could give to allied governments or to firms in allied nations.

Opponents of the Glenn amendment argued that it would be bad for our allies and hinder the SDI program. The contracts that the United States has offered abroad have played an important role in lining up support for the SDI effort.

Glenn, whose office characterizes him as a "strong supporter of SDI research," had added his amendment to the Defense Authorization bill on the basis of the argument that the work should be done "at home," rather than giving technological competitors a boost. The amendment originally contained a flat prohibition against giving contracts out abroad unless the secretary of defense certified that the work could not be reasonably done in the United States. An attempt to stop the Glenn amendment in the Senate on Aug. 9 was defeated by a vote of 33 to 64.

Glenn then softened his amendment in an attempt to overcome opposition, specifying that not more than 3% of SDI funds could be spent abroad. If the allied government or firm put up more than 50% of a specific contract, then those funds would be exempted from the limit.

SDI supporters push for early deployment

A number of congressional and scientific backers of the Strategic Defense Initiative, joined by some would-be saboteurs of the program, called for a separately funded effort for near-term deployment of strategic defense systems, in a letter to President Reagan dated Oct. 1.

"Specifically, employment in very

near term of the most modern defensive means can serve to deter use of Soviet tactical ballistic missiles," the letter reads. "In this case the early fruits of SDI work could be used to deter war in the Middle East, and to defend our European and Asiatic allies from attack with shorter range Soviet ballistic missiles."

The signers made their concerns clear that the Soviet Union should not achieve an overwhelming military superiority. They motivated this early deployment effort as "critical in preventing a military imbalance, similar to the one that led a half century ago to the surrender at Munich."

Co-signers of the letter included Republican Reps. Courter (N.J.), Kemp (N.Y.), Hyde (Ill.), and Hunter (Calif.); Sens. Wilson (R-Calif.), Wallop (R-Wyo.), Quayle (R-Ind.), Hollings (D-S.C.), Heflin (D-Ala.), Boschwitz (R-Minn.), and Humphrey (R-N.H.); and scientists Drs. Lowell Wood, Edward Teller, Robert Jastrow, Fred Seitz, Hans Mark, and Harold Agnew. Eugene Rostow and Zbigniew Brzezinski, advocates of limiting SDI to a point-defense system which would not protect populations, also signed.

The signers suggest that "even within the ABM treaty we could and should deploy 100 defensive launchers at a single site in the United States. What is to be carried on these launchers should continually express the latest advances in ongoing SDI research. . . . The purposes of such deployments should include population defense, defense of critical military sites, and exploration of advanced defensive technologies."

The would-be saboteurs are seeking to ensure that deployment never progresses beyond this initial point, while scientific backers such as Teller

and Wood are seeking a means for early deployment of promising SDI systems.

Resolution seeks probe of FBI abuses

A resolution is being advanced by Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-Ariz.) that would establish a special select subcommittee of the Senate Judiciary Committee to investigate allegations "that members of Federal strike task forces and employees of the Department of Justice, the Department of Treasury, and other Executive Departments engaged in serious improprieties and violations of the law while investigating public and private citizens."

DeConcini said that these allegations "have engendered doubts about the legality and propriety of the motives and methods of these strike forces and their supervisors within the Executive Branch. . . ."

Concern that the FBI and other agencies are targeting individuals on the basis of personal and agency vendettas, resurfaced during the second week of October, as the Senate voted up three of the four articles of impeachment against Judge Harry Claiborne of Nevada, who was convicted of tax evasion. Claiborne maintained that the FBI was out "to get him."

On Oct. 9 shortly after the impeachment vote, two senators spoke of the abuse of federal power. Sen. Howell Heflin (D-Ala.) said that "there is no question that most of the Members of the Senate feel that there should be an investigation . . . pertaining to the possible overreaching by the executive branch into the judicial branch and an investigation into the procedure which has been called targeting."

Heflin declined to accuse any agency; he said that such a probe should look at the Claiborne and Abscam cases "and determine whether or not there was targeting . . . [and] whether the targeting was proper or not."

Sen. David Pryor (D-Ark.) also pointed out the abuses of the current system. Pryor served, along with Heflin, on the Ethics Committee, which considered the case of Sen. Harrison Williams (D-N.J.), who was convicted in 1981—because of an Abscam "sting" operation—of a crime which he did not commit.

"I rise today," Pryor said, "to speak against what has become the accepted practice of arbitrarily and capriciously targeting individual citizens of our country, of intimidating witnesses in their trials, of forgiving past crimes to testify against particular people, of ensnaring individuals into crime or becoming Government bounty hunters."

Pryor denounced FBI "headhunters" like special agent Yablonsky, who got Claiborne. "I fear that there are too many Yablonskys out there in this country, working for various agencies of government, who have become headhunters," he said. "They are unbridled. They are people who arbitrarily and capriciously make these decisions which can suddenly bring to a crushing end the careers and lives of any American citizen they so choose."

"They set up Pete Williams," Pryor charged. "He was entrapped."

Yablonsky "evidently was given the widest and unchecked latitude to headhunt. He wanted someone big and someone important. Did he go after the drug lords? Did he go after the major crime figures? Did he go after the child pornographers? No. He went after Judge Claiborne, and allegedly he also wanted Senator Laxalt. He said

he did not like Laxalt. I ask, is that the criteria our Federal Bureau of Investigation uses in going after someone? . . . When is our Government finally going to realize that these sorts of operations represent not the best but the worst within our system? The framers of our Constitution never intended it this way."

Why commemorate Shays' Rebellion?

Congressman Silvio Conte (R-Mass.), who can often be seen bellowing on the House floor about how the Congress is in a "morass" and can no longer legislate, has raised doubts about which side of the American Revolution his sympathies are on.

On Oct. 10, Conte sponsored and the House approved House Joint Resolution 10, to designate the week beginning Jan. 19, 1987, as "Shays' Rebellion Week" and Sunday, Jan. 25, 1987, as "Shays' Rebellion Day."

But wasn't Shays' Rebellion *against* the fledgling American government, which had just established independence from Britain? A couple of Conte's "whereas" clauses even acknowledge that it was: "Whereas Shays led the dissatisfied landowners in a series of attacks to stop debt procedures in local courts; Whereas on January 25, 1787, a major confrontation occurred in Springfield when the militia wounded, killed, and caught several of Shays' rebels as they stormed the arsenal. . . ."

Why commemorate them, then? Because, reads Conte's resolution, "Shays' Rebellion was instrumental in bringing about the writing of the Constitution," since it "exposed the problems in the existing form of government to the people of America."