

## Congressional Closeup by William Jones

### House votes Jerusalem is capital of Israel

The House passed a non-binding resolution recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel by a vote of 378-34 on April 25, despite the fact that this could provoke heightened tensions in the Middle East.

The measure was identical to one passed by the Senate on March 22 which Senate Minority Leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.) opposed because he said he felt that it would intensify divisions among Middle East rivals. The issue had dominated talks Dole recently had with Arab leaders during a trip to the region. One militant Muslim group has threatened mayhem against Americans if the Senate does not rescind its resolution.

Opponents of the bill contend that the resolution needlessly aggravates Israel's Arab neighbors by denying them symbolic rights to Jerusalem, a city which is sacred to Christians, Jews, and Muslims. "For America to play a constructive role, we need to have good relations with a number of parties in the Middle East, not just one," said Rep. David Obey (D-Wise.). "No one's interest is served by unnecessarily inflaming the dialogue at this moment."

Rep. James Traficant (D-Ohio) complained that the resolution was a result of the inordinate influence of the Israeli lobby in the United States Congress.

### Sasser says Bush not ready for budget summit

Senate Budget Committee Chairman James Sasser (D-Tenn.) said April 24 that President George Bush wasn't serious enough about cutting the deficit to warrant a White House budget summit.

The budget proposal presented by Sasser would require cuts of up to \$50 billion in the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1, up to \$20 billion of which is projected to come from cuts in Pentagon spending—cuts that most conservatives are not prepared to accept. "The Congress is not going to adopt those numbers," said Sen. Phil Gramm (R-Tex.).

White House Budget Director Richard Darman has been agitating for a budget summit, and criticized the plan passed by the House Budget Committee as inadequate because it relied on the administration's own faulty economic projections.

Sen. Warren Rudman (R-N.H.) warned that the economic situation in the country was far worse than economists were willing to admit. Rudman warned that interest rates must come down soon or the economy will be in worse trouble.

### NDPC calls for maglev technology development

On April 26, Bill Jones testified before the Transportation Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee on behalf of the National Democratic Policy Committee, which represents the LaRouche wing of the Democratic Party, and called for an upgrading of the U.S. rail system by investment in magnetically levitated (maglev) transportation systems.

Referring to the proposal of Lyndon LaRouche, candidate for U.S. Congress from Virginia's 10th District, to use the Social Security fund surplus for high-priority, safe investment in federally secured national basic economic infrastructure, Jones proposed that close to \$1 billion of that surplus be invested in implementing the various pieces of legislation

now before the Congress which are aimed at demonstrating maglev technology.

### Bush dismissal of DARPA head provokes outcry

The abrupt dismissal of Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency director Craig Fields on April 20 has provoked protest in Congress.

Fields had prodded DARPA to fund high-technology programs such as high-definition television and advanced semiconductors that could be used by both the military and private industry. His advocacy of such "dual use" technologies put him at odds with Pentagon officials who feared scarce defense dollars would bankroll civilian projects.

Sen. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.) called the firing of Fields "a disgrace to this country." Deputy Defense Secretary Donald Atwood, appearing before the Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Defense Industry and Technology, denied that there was a policy split, claiming that Fields had not been "fired" but was asked to take an important job overseeing a study of military labs.

"Just as DARPA is becoming more instrumental in U.S. efforts to develop and maintain critical technologies," said Rep. Richard Gephardt (D-Mo.) on April 24, "the administration has pulled the rug out from under DARPA by firing Dr. Fields." Gephardt called the move "a triumph of ideology over the national interest."

Rep. Jake Pickle (D-Tex.) said he found it "amazing . . . that the administration would divorce itself from these types of projects. If DARPA is not a participant in supporting certain technologies simply because they have commercial applications, I be-

lieve we will be severely limited. Many high-technology initiatives have military as well as commercial applications. . . . Especially in light of recent world events, it seems to me that government should be concentrated more on research and development in technologies which have a wide range of uses."

Sen. Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) said Fields was being fired for "failing to abide by the Adam Smith gospel according to John Sununu and Richard Darman." In firing Fields, he said, "the Bush administration . . . has written its own topsy-turvy version of the Peter Principle: Competent people will be fired at the precise moment when their talents are most in need." Gephardt and 10 members of Congress signed a letter calling for Field's reinstatement.

## **P**robe of Fauntroy ended by DoJ

The Department of Justice has announced that it is closing the 15-month-old investigation of D.C. Delegate Walter E. Fauntroy (D) into his hiring of Thomas J. Savage, the son of Rep. Gus Savage (D-Ill.). Last year, DoJ officials began a grand jury investigation triggered by allegations that the younger Savage was on Fauntroy's payroll at the same time he was running for office in Illinois.

Black political figures have increasingly been subjected to intense scrutiny by the Thornburgh Justice Department and other law enforcement agencies. Representative Savage has been an outspoken critic of the AIPAC, the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, because, he has said, it acts as an agent of a foreign power interfering in the internal af-

fairs of the United States.

Fauntroy, a former leading civil rights activist and the non-voting congressional representative for the District of Columbia, is now running for mayor of Washington. Fauntroy said that the investigation had unfortunately "diverted attention from why I am running for mayor and the critical issues facing our city."

## **S**enator complains about peace euphoria

Sen. Trent Lott (R-Miss.) attacked the simple-mindedness dominating thinking on Capitol Hill with regard to the illusory "peace dividend."

In comments on the floor on April 20, Lott noted that there had been increasingly frequent and "shrill calls for draconian cuts in defense." This was approaching the level of a "stampede," said Lott.

Pointing to the movement of Soviet armored columns rumbling through the streets of Vilnius, Lithuania by night and Soviet paratroopers occupying selected government buildings by day, Lott asked, "Does anybody doubt Gorbachov's willingness to take the next step and use the full power of the Soviet Armed Forces to impose his will if necessary?"

Noting that "change is a two-way street in a system like that in the Soviet Union, and U-turns remain a possibility," Lott recommended, "If we err, it must be on the side of safety." Taking aim at the cuts in the defense budget proposed by Budget Committee Chairman Sen. James Sasser, Lott commented that "It would appear that all reason and sensibility is being lost."

Although supportive of the cuts in the defense budget submitted by President Bush, Lott noted that "the pres-

ent euphoria goes way beyond that." The recent proposals of Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.) also caused him "great concern," Lott said. "This slash-and-burn attitude I see sweeping through the Beltway, is one that we better stop and take a very careful look at. . . . I think both the services and the Congress are getting a little carried away. The world has changed, but it has not changed that much yet." He added that the country must adequately provide for the common defense as it "moves toward the 21st century."

## **H**ouse targets drug money laundering

The House unanimously approved legislation by a vote of 406-0 on April 25 that would give federal banking regulators the authority to revoke the charters of financial institutions convicted of money laundering. Similar legislation is pending in the Senate.

"In plain language," said Rep. Frank Annunzio (D-Ill.), the bill's sponsor, "these provisions hold out the death penalty for the management and for any financial institution itself convicted of money laundering. . . . We put the street dealer in jail and we put the drug kingpin in the penitentiary, but no one has found a way to imprison a bank. Fines and forfeitures have proven totally inadequate."

The legislation would also empower the government to name conservators of such institutions and to strip them of federal deposit insurance, and would force so-called cash transmittal businesses such as check-cashing services to comply with federal regulations that they file reports on cash transactions of more than \$10,000.