

Percy Bill Paves Way For Carter Nuclear Embargo

The "Nuclear Nonproliferation Act of 1977" submitted to Congress by Sen. Charles Percy (R-Ill) and cosponsored by Sens. Javits, Ribicoff, Glenn and Cranston, is in essential agreement with about-to-be announced Carter Administration policy, according to an informed member of Sen. Percy's office. The proposed bill is a rehash of the discredited Baruch Plan of 30 years ago, whereby U.S. financiers attempted to bluff and bully the world into banning all development of nuclear technology under the guise of stopping the spread of nuclear weapons.

The Percy bill would make permanent the present ad hoc U.S. embargo of vital enriched uranium supplies to Europe, Japan and other countries for essential research and development of fast breeder and high temperature nuclear reactors. Already an "unofficial" Carter Administration embargo of enriched uranium to Euratom, aimed at blackmailing West Germany into reneging on its major nuclear technology transfer with Brazil, is weeks away from forcing the shut-down of West German research and prototype reactor programs.

The Bill

In Percy's own words, his bill establishes "unprecedented criteria to govern the transfer and use of U.S. nuclear export items." Anticipating his opposition, the Senator has added that "there will be those who will assert that this bill goes too far — that it calls for a unilateral moratorium on U.S. nuclear exports." The bill itself leaves little doubt that it prepares the way for that drastic measure.

The professed aim of the bill is to establish a system of "international controls over the transfer and use of nuclear equipment, material, and sensitive nuclear technology, which will prevent the further proliferation of nuclear explosive capability, including the establishment of a system of international sanctions." A further provision would mandate the U.S. to "ensure that sensitive nuclear technology will not be transferred internationally to non-nuclear weapon states, and that enrichment and reprocessing facilities will not be constructed or operated in non-nuclear weapon states." The bill would also encourage renegotiation of already concluded technology transfer agreements. As a sop intended to woo the developing nations away from nuclear power and into solar energy schemes, the bill offers U.S. aid in developing "appropriate technology for energy production consistent with the economic and material resources of those nations."

Preparing For Showdown

Last week, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commissioner

Victor Gilinsky, probable Carter appointee to head the Commission in June when its commission head retires, addressed the Japanese Atomic Industrial Forum meeting in Tokyo. It was in Tokyo two months ago that the Trilateral Commission issued a policy call for a world-wide ban on nuclear reprocessing facilities. Gilinsky told the audience of Japanese nuclear industry representatives that they should practice "restraint of the wide-scale reprocessing of spent nuclear fuels." Japan has been subject to heavy Carter Administration armtwisting in recent weeks aimed at halting their development of the Tokai nuclear fuel reprocessing facility which the Japanese industrials deem essential for secure energy supplies. Gilinsky showed his keen awareness of the current Japanese vulnerability on this issue. He stresses that the U.S. is "aware of how much the Japanese economy has riding on its investments in nuclear power, and it is this investment that provides a powerful incentive to our two nations to take the lead in restraint." Gilinsky added that he was "confident that the decision to defer reprocessing will not be reversed by President Carter."

Japanese Develop New Reprocessing Technology

According to reports in the Japanese *Asahi Evening News*, the Power Reactor and Nuclear Fuel Development Corporation of Japan has become the first to develop a method of extracting used nuclear fuel so that the unburned uranium and plutonium are mixed. This new technology will be used by the Japanese government, according to *Asahi*, as its "trump card" in negotiations with the Carter Administration, which is trying to ban extraction of plutonium on the grounds that it will lead to proliferation of nuclear weapons.

If this new technology is applied by the Japanese, *Asahi* says, the U.S. will lose its basis for banning the operation of nuclear fuel reprocessing plants since it would be impossible to develop weapons from the technology mixture.

The Japanese development, announced by Prof. Takashi Kobo of Tokyo University, has been tested in reactors in Norway, the U.S. and France for the past three to six months with no abnormalities appearing, indicating the process is practical.