

## Congressional Closeup by Ronald Kokinda

### Helms introduces AIDS control bill

Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) introduced the AIDS Control Act of 1987 on June 10, S. 1352, "a comprehensive bill designed to be an important first step in curbing the spread of the AIDS virus."

The senator said, "To this point, substantively not much has been done to protect from this dreaded disease those who do not now have it. In fact, based on the public-health response to date, a good case can be made that AIDS is the first politically protected plague in all history."

Helms said that "it could be the fear of powerful homosexual rights groups [which] explains their silence," but "many public-health officials have also had their heads in the sand."

Taking aim at the so-called safe sex campaign, one section of the bill mandates the Public Health Service to inform recipients of federal family-planning program funds, that condoms "will not provide full protection against the AIDS infection." Helms said, "We owe it to the recipients of these services to tell them the truth about how safe certain measures are."

The bill has five major provisions, including one to force the Atlanta Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to keep records, by name, of not only those with the AIDS disease, but also those carrying the virus, who have not themselves shown symptoms. "By keeping records only of those individuals with AIDS and ignoring the numbers of those infected, we will never be able to grasp the magnitude of this epidemic," Helms said.

Other areas include protection of the organ, semen, and blood supply; increased testing for the AIDS virus

among the military, prisoners, immigrants, Veterans Administration hospital entrants, and applicants for marriage licenses; repeal of the Washington, D.C. law 6-170 which bars certain AIDS tests for insurance applicants; and Senate encouragement for AIDS testing by states.

"Our health-care personnel have a right to know which patients have HIV infection so that they can take necessary precautions to protect themselves from contracting disease," Helms said.

Another provision requires AIDS tests for those entering St. Elizabeth's Hospital, a federally administered mental hospital in Washington, D.C. "AIDS testing is elementary for accurate diagnosis" of dementia and other nervous disorders resulting from AIDS, Helms said.

### House puts hold on new Soviet embassy

The House on June 16 voted 414-0 to prohibit Soviet diplomats from occupying their new embassy in Washington, until steps are taken to counter the advantages afforded by the embassy's location for electronic espionage, and until the United States can enter a new embassy in Moscow where security is assured.

The Mount Alto amendment, named after the site of the new Soviet embassy, was adopted as part of the Department of State Authorization bill providing \$8.5 billion in funding over the next two years. The amendment was opposed by the administration.

Rep. James Courter (R-N.J.) put forward an amendment to halt construction on the U.S. embassy in Moscow, which would force construction of a new building. The building is so

riddled with Soviet listening devices, that "we should recognize it for the KGB masterpiece it is and begin again," Courter said. But after appeals that Congress wait to hear from a special panel on the embassy security question, headed by James Schlesinger, the amendment was defeated 272 to 142.

Rep. William Broomfield (R-Mich.) had harsh words for the State Department's opposition to the Mount Alto provision. "They don't want the Congress to tell them to improve their security and to get tougher with the Soviets," Broomfield said.

### Wallop argues for concept of victory

Sen. Malcolm Wallop (R-Wyo.) has proposed introducing a "radical" idea back into U.S. military planning, that victory should be the aim of combat.

"Today America neither intends to defend herself nor pursue victory in the event of war," Wallop said on June 10. "We have no plans for defense nor goal of victory anywhere in our military structure."

"For instance," Wallop pointed out, "NORAD [the North American Air Defense Command] is assigned to maintain only the peacetime sovereignty of U.S. air space; no mention is made of either peacetime or wartime defense against any missile threat. The U.S. Strategic Defense Command merely pursues research into defense against ballistic missile attack."

"Can any American understand why no branch of our military plans to win a confrontation that someone else starts against us?" Wallop asked. "Clearly the responsibility for defend-

ing the nation against Soviet ballistic missile and aerial attack must be given to some branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. Clearly victory must be our purpose if someone dares assault us."

Wallop said he will be introducing an amendment to the Defense Authorization bill "to direct the secretary of defense to assign to one or more of the branches of the Armed Forces, the specific mission to defend the U.S. against all aerial threats and, in case of war, to provide the necessary capabilities to assure the free use of space in order to ensure a U.S. victory."

## **G**ephardt amendment would 'stifle' trade

The Senate will take up trade legislation soon, and Sens. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and Don Riegle (D-Mich.), two liberal Democrats, have clashed over the Gephardt amendment imposing mandatory trade restrictions.

Baucus raised the issue of the Gephardt amendment on July 10-12. "If the Gephardt amendment becomes law, it would start us down a path that would stifle world trade and cripple the U.S. economy within a few short years," Baucus charged.

Riegle said on July 11 that he was working with the Senate Finance Committee to modify the amendment, which Baucus labeled "son of Gephardt," in order to attack the \$170 billion current trade deficit. Riegle noted that such a deficit represented 8 billion jobs, and that "many of the jobs that are disappearing are some of the best jobs in our society."

Baucus said he agreed on the symptoms of the trade deficit, but argued that restrictive practices to force

open foreign markets for U.S. exports was only 10% of the problem. "If all of our major trading partners' trade barriers were eliminated, U.S. exports would increase by no more than \$30 billion, which is something, but is not much in the face of a \$170 billion overall trade deficit."

The senator added that one analysis estimated that 20% of the trade deficit was caused by declining U.S. competitiveness, and pointed to a study by the Federal Reserve claiming that 50-75% of the problem was due to U.S. trade deficits.

Baucus outlined the rapid, 50% or more, price increases that consumers would face under the Gephardt amendment, if they bought goods from restricted countries. "If you think kids' clothes are expensive today, just wait until Gephardt, because most of those clothes come from the countries restricted under Gephardt." Baucus suggested that a shirt costing \$40 would jump to \$55; slacks costing \$30 would jump to \$50; and cars, stereos, etc., would jump even more.

"And all of those figures assume that domestic alternatives to these products would be available," Baucus said. "Mr. Gephardt says that his amendment will 'get tough' on the Japanese. But it will end up getting tough on American consumers."

## **P**roxmire scores Reagan's control of Fed

Senate Banking Committee chairman Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wis.) expressed concern on June 9 that Alan Greenspan, nominated by President Reagan to become chairman of the

Federal Reserve Board, will not be able to impose an anti-inflation program, even if he wants to. Proxmire will chair Greenspan's confirmation hearings in the Senate.

Proxmire said that the Congress created the Fed independent of the President, by staggering the 14-year terms of those he appoints to serve on its seven-member board, so that even a two-term President could barely appoint a majority of the board. "But here we have a President who has appointed every member of the board in barely three years," Proxmire said. "Illnesses and premature resignation have made that possible."

"The question is, if Chairman Greenspan decides to take on the White House and move in with a tough, no-nonsense, anti-inflation program, in the face of a Reagan administration that wants easy money to push along an expanding economy in the critical election year—1988—who would you bet on?" Proxmire asked.

Proxmire suggested that the easy course for Greenspan would be to go along with the other six board members who, like himself, were all appointed by the same President. "That is especially true when to follow that course would be most likely to coincide with the view of his old friends and associates and clients on Wall Street, as well as the principles of his favorite guru, Ayn Rand."

Proxmire noted on July 11, possibly as a warning, "The Constitution gives Congress the money power. The Congress has delegated that power to its created Federal Reserve Board. It can abolish the Federal Reserve Board any time, at will. The Congress can reclaim its own constitutional power over the nation's credit supply at any time, in whole or in part."