

## Congressional Closeup by William Jones

### Few congressmen are still fighting for peace

Despite the growing anti-war sentiment in the United States and the close votes for war just days earlier, the House and the Senate passed separate resolutions on Jan. 17 and Jan. 18 commending the actions of President Bush in launching the war against Iraq.

The Senate passed its resolution unanimously on Jan. 17, while in the House, six representatives voted against the resolution and six abstained. Another 24 did not vote at all.

The members who showed the courage of their convictions were a handful of black congressmen and a few others, who, like Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez (D-Tex.), are still working to stop the war.

Rep. Gus Savage (D-Ill.) lambasted the opportunistic flip-flop on the part of most Democratic senators and House members: "If you are opposed to capital punishment, you cannot say you are opposed to it until someone is convicted and put on death row, and say, 'Okay, go ahead with the execution.' If you are against the plan, you must be against the execution, to be consistent." Although stressing that he also supports U.S. troops in the Gulf, he noted that there were other victims who have been totally ignored by the media. "What about the civilians in Baghdad? We are all God's children, or we none are. We are equally so," said Savage.

Rep. Charles Hayes (D-Ill.), an opponent of the war who had visited the Gulf shortly before the vote on the authorization resolution and who has relatives among U.S. forces stationed in the Gulf, condemned the hypocrisy in the new resolution. "We all know that this measure will carry overwhelming support here in the House," said Hayes on Jan. 18. "We also know

that the media will tout these results all over the world as clear support for the President's actions. . . . I do not support the President's actions in the Persian Gulf and never will. I refuse to sanction more deaths. I will not contradict myself. However, I will never abandon my support for our troops, nor for the death of innocent human being whether they are American, Israeli, or Arab. Everyone is entitled to the right to life." Hayes called for the President to immediately initiate serious negotiations to end the war.

Rep. Ron Dellums (D-Calif.), noting how the resolution blurred the distinction between support for the troops on the one hand, and "commending and supporting" the President's actions in the execution of the war on the other, said that he regretted "that this legislation is put before us in this manner. It does the nation a disservice to cloud this important issue with ambiguity."

### Mazzoli condemns loss of life in Gulf war

Rep. Romano Mazzoli (D-Ky.), who voted against authorizing President Bush to use military force against Iraq, expressed horror on Jan. 16 over the loss of human life and the civilian casualties in the war.

"While President Saddam Hussein and I profess to a different religion and to a different God, I think each of our gods has one idea about life," said Mazzoli, "that life is precious. Human life should not be sacrificed." Referring to the "beautiful children of Iraq," Mazzoli warned members, "this will not be a television war, but this will be a real war, and the victims of this real war will be the

innocents: the children, the boys and the girls."

Mazzoli condemned the "soap opera" type of media coverage of the war, where he felt the war "appears to be just an episode on television of 'China Beach' or 'MASH' or some such television show." He warned that what was occurring was "not a television special, but a bloody, killing war, which will take the lives of our men and now our women, at the flower of their youth, at the flower of their talents and abilities."

Mazzoli noted with dismay that "in all this television, we tend to forget [Iraq] is not a nation without a rich history. This is not a nation without a rich tradition, without a very rich civilization. After all, the cradle of civilization is where the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers come to confluence, and that is in the nation of Iraq, where we have the earliest of civilizations."

### Gore calls for new environmental restraints

Sen. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.) introduced on Jan. 14 the World Environment Policy Act, which would place major curbs on industrial production. The bill is co-sponsored by Sen. Timothy Wirth (D-Colo.).

The proposal is premised upon the mythical "ozone problem," which Gore characterizes as "the single most serious manifestation of the global environmental crisis" and "the single greatest environmental threat that our planet has ever faced."

The Gore bill goes beyond the Clean Air Act passed by the Congress in 1990, requiring greater control of methane emissions, especially from landfills, and making recycling a priority for the federal government, es-

pecially in procurement policies.

The bill would amend the Solid Waste Disposal Act, requiring states to design and operate landfills and sewage treatment facilities, to minimize emissions of methane and "other pollutants." It would also place new penalties on so-called "gas guzzlers," would require the federal government, in all of its major procurements, to buy recycled products in preference to those produced from raw materials, and includes provisions to facilitate the export of environmentally sound technologies produced in the United States. It also seeks increased support for international family planning organizations.

The enviro-maniac Gore is also using the war with Iraq as a pretext to place further restrictions on the export of high-technology products to Third World countries.

## **M**oynihan bill would deny China MFN status

Sen. Daniel Moynihan (D-N.Y.) introduced a bill on Jan. 14 which would revoke the Most Favored Nation (MFN) status granted to the People's Republic of China because of its continued repression of political opponents to the regime. China had been given MFN status in 1980 on the premise that the totalitarian regime was changing its character.

"Clearly, the conditions under which China received Most Favored Nation status have changed. We would not have offered MFN status to China had the events in Tiananmen Square occurred in 1979, rather than 1989," said Moynihan. "We cannot ignore what happened in China. And we cannot avoid calling it by its name: an armed revolt by the Chinese Army

against what we must recognize to be the legitimate authority of the Chinese people."

Similar legislation introduced by Moynihan during the last session of Congress failed to pass.

## **S**enate resolution backs Lithuanian freedom

A Senate joint resolution was introduced in the U.S. Senate on Jan. 16 calling on the Soviet Union to "immediately cease all hostilities against the Baltic people, remove their troops from Baltic facilities and government buildings, and initiate good faith negotiations with the democratically elected Baltic governments regarding the restoration of the independence of the Baltic countries."

Until the time when the President can certify to the Congress that the Soviet Union has met these demands, the resolution recommends that the Export-Import Bank not issue any credits for the financing of exports to the Soviet Union and that the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development oppose any association status for the Soviet Union in these institutions.

The resolution further instructs the Commodity Credit Corporation to extend agricultural credits to the Baltic states, and recommends that appropriate private institutions provide emergency medical assistance to the Baltic states.

Rep. Mary Rose Oaker (D-Ohio) hinted at the danger which the U.S. embroilment in the Gulf might cause in the face of increased Soviet aggression in Europe. In comments on Jan. 14, shortly before the bombing of Baghdad, Oaker said: "We should also recall that

the consequences of Soviet aggression against Hungary in 1956 were far more serious than Egypt's nationalization of the Suez Canal."

Sen. James Exon (D-Neb.), an opponent of the war, had warned of the resurgence of the Soviet military on Jan. 16. "As chairman of the Subcommittee on Theater and Nuclear Forces of the Armed Services Committee, I have long struggled with the ultimate threat to mankind and that is the reascension in the Soviet Union of the hardline military leadership that I am very fearful is taking place right now."

## **E**nergy Policy Act to set oil floor price

Rep. Leon Panetta (D-Calif.) introduced Jan. 18 the National Energy Policy Act which would set a floor price on oil of \$16 a barrel at the point that imported oil prices fell below that price.

The bill would exempt from the tax all oil produced from onshore wells and would permit the President to exempt oil exports from Mexico, Venezuela, and Canada as a means of furthering Western Hemisphere energy cooperation.

The bill calls for rapid development of "alternate fuels," and would require federal agencies to have 60% of federal vehicle fleets using alternate fuel vehicles by the year 2000.

The proposal also increases the automotive fleet mileage fuel efficiency targets required by the corporate average fuel economy law 20% by 1996 and 40% by the year 2001. The bill also calls for increasing the strategic petroleum reserve to an "eventual" level of 2 billion barrels from its current level of 590 million barrels.