

White House Congressional Agents Gear Up For Energy Cutbacks

In his first presidential press conference Feb. 8, Jimmy Carter affirmed that cutting energy consumption is his administration's top domestic priority. Carter said bluntly his energy policy will engender controversy and "require substantial sacrifices on the part of the American people," and added, "this month we've imported over half of the total amount of oil that we have used — 10 million barrels a day on the average. This has got to stop."

Two days later Senator Charles Percy (R-Ill.) and Senator Hubert Humphrey (D-Minn.) called a press conference in Washington to announce the formation of the National Alliance to Save Energy. The National Alliance is calling for a 50 per cent reduction in oil imports and will set up task forces of mayors, governors and state and local officials to lobby for and implement energy conservation programs. The watchword of the group will be "Energy saving is our major resource."

Both David and Laurance Rockefeller are members of the Alliance's new Advisory Board, whose chairman is Henry Kissinger. White House "energy czar" James Schlesinger is the group's official advisor; Vice-President Walter Mondale is honorary chairman; and cabinet secretaries Juanita Kreps (Commerce), Brock Adams (Transportation), Ray Marshall (Labor), and Patricia Harris (HUD) are all advisors. Panicked by the crisis atmosphere the Carter team has created, leading Republicans — most notably Gerald Ford and House Minority Leader John Rhodes — have joined this effort.

A leading staff member for the Congressional Joint Economic Committee, himself in frequent contact with Schlesinger's staff, reported that the White House is not

considering gas and oil rationing. He added that high energy prices plus mandatory controls on energy usage, were the only way to force real energy conservation.

Concurrent with the public campaign for cutbacks Congressional allies of the Carter administration have begun to beat the drums for solar energy. At the press conference unveiling the National Alliance, Hubert Humphrey announced he will sponsor the first solar energy conference in Minnesota and urged a national effort behind developing solar and coal resources. Capitol Hill sources have revealed that Congressman Ottinger, a participant at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund conference, is preparing legislation to require all federal buildings to convert to solar energy and the Joint Economic Committee is planning hearings on the subject shortly.

A key stumbling block to an all-out federal drive for solar energy the JEC staff member complained is the staff of federal departments including the Energy Research and Development Administration. Many were members of the Atomic Energy Commission and won't buy such ridiculous schemes as solar energy development. To handle this problem Congressman Rosenthal (D-NY) has launched an investigation into 200 ERDA staff members he claims have conflict of interest problems.

Meanwhile, James Schlesinger has already ordered ERDA to rewrite its fiscal 1978 budget to direct funds out of fission and fusion development into solar and coal programs. It is expected that proposed funding for conservation programs will be doubled by Schlesinger. The Office of Management and Budget is reviewing the reshuffled figures and Carter will act on them shortly.

USLP, ERDA, Testimony Focuses Congressional Resistance

Two events in Congress this week made public the national security issues which are at the forefront of the minds of responsible congressmen on both sides of the aisle:

On Feb. 11, U.S. Labor Party National Committeeman Richard Cohen testified at Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings on the confirmation of Paul Warnke as Arms Control and Disarmament Agency director and SALT negotiator. Warnke's own testimony, said Cohen, demonstrated his unfitness for office, by opposing U.S. research and development efforts and denying the reality of Soviet technological advances which could provide a marginally decisive military capability; at the same time, Cohen charged, Warnke was covering up National Security Council operations under the direction of James Schlesinger and Zbigniew Brzezinski to pro-

voke a Mideast showdown in order to maintain Rockefeller control over Saudi Arabian oil. Thus, Cohen concluded, Warnke was speeding the U.S. toward general war at a time when the energy and research cutbacks championed by the Carter administration would further cripple U.S. defense capability.

On the same day one week after President Carter used his first "Fireside Chat" to dictate a 20 per cent cut in U.S. energy consumption, John Kintner, director of the Energy Resources and Development Administration fusion program, told a House Science and Technology subcommittee that a brute force fusion development program could supply the U.S. with all the energy it needs by 1990 at the latest. However, Kintner warned, if funding for fusion continues at its current low level, fusion reactors would never be commercially feasible in the