

Congressional Closeup by Barbara Dreyfuss and Susan Kokinda

Garcia gives platform to Global 2000 hoax

The first congressional hearings on the *Global 2000 Report* were held May 12 by Rep. Robert Garcia (D-N.Y.) in the Census and Population subcommittee of the House Committee on Post Office and Civil Service he chairs, to explore the "need for immediate attention to the interrelationship of environmental and population issues," including population reduction that the *Global 2000 Report* demands.

The subcommittee conducted its hearings amid charges by the National Democratic Policy Committee that "the *Global 2000 Report* is a hoax." "The NDPC formally requests," a spokesman said, "that this be the end of congressional consideration of the totally hideous doctrine of population control of Global 2000."

Five Global 2000 advocates testified first. Richard Ottinger (D-N.Y.), supporting Global 2000 and his own bill H.R. 907, which proposes the establishment of a "national population policy," said that the "greatest cause for war in the future is the pressure of population growth." Lester Brown, president of the Worldwatch Institute, claimed that production of food was dropping, population was growing, and that this was a fundamental cause of inflation. "There is no solution to inflation," Brown said, "unless we get the brakes on population growth."

Arnaldo Torres, representing the United League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC), expressed his "total agreement with Global 2000 in concluding that demand cannot be satisfied. . . . We must all be educated to realities of hav-

ing less to give to more that want."

Marshall Green, director of the Population Crisis Committee, testified that American republican institutions of government "were originally designed for a much smaller society," and that population growth was "imposing strains on our own governmental institutions." Ned Dearborn, a staffer for the Global 2000 study, called for greater coordination between budget policy, through the Office of Management and Budget, and population policy.

Senate panel to boost DIA?

In its report to the Senate, accompanying its secret intelligence community authorization proposals, the Senate Intelligence Committee has recommended a major upgrading of the Defense Intelligence Agency. Released on May 8, the report states, "If the benefits of 'competitive analysis,' a concept which both the administration and the committee strongly support, are to be realized, it is imperative that the DIA have analytical capabilities comparable to its sister agencies."

The authorization for fiscal 1982 would enable the DIA to implement a wide range of personnel measures designed to attract and retain high-quality analysts. The proposal has provoked widespread debate, both in the committee and in the intelligence community. Especially concerned is the CIA, which fears a diminution of its role, and which was criticized in the report for the first time for weaknesses in certain areas.

This report is the first released

under the chairmanship of Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) in the Intelligence Committee.

While most other intelligence agencies suffered serious downgrading in the intelligence community reforms of the 1970s, the DIA and the military intelligence agencies were left relatively untouched in terms of their ability to gather—but not share—counterintelligence information. This monetary upgrading, if approved by the full Senate and House, could put the DIA in a commanding position, both domestically and internationally, in terms of the factional infighting under way in the intelligence community.

Helms defeated on food stamp votes

Senate Agriculture Committee chairman Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) was defeated in a series of Agriculture Committee votes as he attempted to cut back the food stamp program. Helms was consistently blocked by a coalition led by Senators Bob Dole (R-Kans.) and Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.). Dole countered Helms's proposals with his own reform package which he claimed would save \$200 million more than the one proposed by the administration, but was not as draconian in cuts that affect children and the elderly.

Among other defeated Helms proposals (by votes of 14-3 and 13-2) were:

- cutting food stamp benefits for families whose children receive free school lunches;
- requiring mandatory "workfare" for food stamp recipients;
- tightening eligibility require-

ments on recipients, which would remove several million people from the program.

Helms did win on an amendment to preclude striking workers from receiving food stamps.

Bank industry hearing sidesteps key issues

Round two of the Senate Banking Committee's oversight hearings May 7 on the state of the banking industry turned into a case of "fiddling while Rome burns." Committee chairman Jake Garn (R-Utah) and various savings and loan association spokesmen consumed the entire discussion period consoling each other over the oppressiveness of federal government regulations and paperwork, generally ignoring the fact that the S&Ls and thrifts are on the verge of collapse.

The prepared statements of several witnesses detailed the state of the thrift industry, however. Richard Lawton, who represented the National Savings and Loan League, stated, "During 1980, the savings and loan industry had its worst earnings experience since the 1930s. 1981, however, may make 1980 look like a golden year." Stuart Davis of the U.S. League of Savings and Loan Associations pointed out the impact of sky-high interest rates: "Today's interest rates crowd out the small businessman and the young family. . . . Big business, big banks and big government can bid for funds at ever higher levels. . . . Small businesses, small municipalities, family farmers and the housing sector cannot. Inevitably, smaller financial institutions and their customers bear

the brunt of a credit crunch which leaves in its wake failed businesses, lost skills, increased burdens on government benefit programs, a cynicism toward economic policy-makers and untold human tragedy," he said.

Yet, despite this testimony concerning the impact of high interest rates, speculative money market funds, and potential deregulation of banking, the entirety of the discussion period focused on the costs and inconveniences of federal paperwork requirements.

Anticrime block grants proposed for states

Representative William Hughes (D-N.J.) introduced the Justice Assistance Act of 1981 (H.R. 3359) last week, which will provide grant funds to states on a per capita basis for anticrime programs. Touted as a resurrection of the now-defunct Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA), the bill would establish an Office of Justice Assistance through which to render assistance to the states, who would then decide in which of 12 program areas the money would be spent.

Law enforcement specialists cautioned, however, that the 12 categories for assistance were not in traditional areas of police and law enforcement but, rather, reflected the "school of social work" type of assistance, including: community anticrime efforts, "sting" operations, arson control, white collar and organized crime work, career development, victim witness assistance, alternatives to jail and prison, treatment alternatives to street crime, prison overcrowding,

criminal justice training, planning, and prosecution management information systems.

Social Security reforms already introduced in House

Even before the Reagan administration announced their proposals for Social Security reform May 12, Congress was reviewing changes in the Social Security law. Rep. J. J. Pickle (D-Tex.), chairman of the Social Security subcommittee of the House Ways and Means Committee, has introduced H.R. 3207 to reform the Social Security system.

Pickle's bill includes proposals to eliminate the minimum Social Security payments on a prospective basis, and to phase out the student Social Security payments in a similar manner so that those currently receiving benefits will not be affected. It also proposes that the long-term problems of the Social Security fund be solved by changing the age of retirement from 65 to 68 years.

The bill, put forward by such a high-ranking Democrat as Pickle, indicates that the severe austerity proposals of the administration will not run into much opposition from *some* Democratic quarters. Pickle, in fact, indicated that he thought the Reagan proposals were a good basis for compromise. Sources on the Senate Finance Committee have said that the committee will shortly draft its own bill and expect it to reach the Senate floor by the end of May. They anticipate that the legislation will include ending student Social Security benefits and the minimum rates for Social Security benefits.