

## Congressional Closeup by Ronald Kokinda and Susan Kokinda

### Moynihan leads charge for slave-labor bill

By an overwhelming 301-87 vote, the House passed a bill March 2 to create an American Conservation Corps (ACC), authorizing some \$300 million a year for the next six years to create approximately 100,000 jobs per year. The bill, sponsored by Rep. John Seiberling (D-Ohio), was defended on the House floor because it calls for labor-intensive jobs. "The ACC is not a slickly packaged version of a pork-barrel boondoggle," said Rep. Douglas Bereuter (R-Neb.). "It is based on a proven concept." Men and women, ranging in age from 15 to 25, would perform "backbreaking, unglamorous tasks."

"Unlike pork-barrel programs lurking in other so-called jobs programs," said Rep. Thomas Petri (R-Wisc.), another supporter of the bill, "the jobs created in this bill would be labor intensive, inexpensive, and cost-effective."

The real godfather of this hideous legislation is Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D-N.Y.).

An aide pointed out that since the program would be targeted to the disadvantaged, "you'll have mostly inner city blacks breaking their ass under real strict discipline. We'll grind them into shape digging ditches and in hard labor. This is hard labor for the most part and for real low wages—the minimum wage."

The aide stated that the entire environmental movement will mobilize behind the bill. "The Sierra Club is just wonderful," he said. "They understand the meaning of hard work for a good cause, like the environment. Moynihan has always stood by the en-

vironmentalists on important matters. They want the bill expanded. They say that we should have 250,000 people doing this work."

The AFL-CIO will also back the bill and has been supportive of Moynihan from the beginning, the aide reported.

"These are not union jobs," said the aide. "These are jobs for black kids, mostly at hard labor. It is important that the labor movement is showing a community of interest here with minorities and the environmentalists."

Many black groups have endorsed the plan, including the Urban League, the aide boasted. They expect "new black political leaders" like would-be Chicago mayor Harold Washington to endorse the plan. Washington supported it as a congressman.

At this moment, the administration officially opposes the bill on purely budgetary grounds. Should the bill pass the Senate, they would not, however, veto it.

Moynihan's people are exploring the possibility of a compromise with the White House which would involve payment of a stipend instead of wages, at a level lower than the federal minimum wages; they would manage this by saying that room and board are an included part of the total wage-stipend.

Moynihan's current strategy calls for an effort to bring the bill for a vote before the Senate Energy and Interior Committee, following hearings within the next few weeks (the bill is in this committee because the program is administered by the Interior Department). If that should fail, Moynihan will try to tack it onto some other legislation.

The bill has solid support from the Democratic leadership, including

Senate Minority Leader Bobby Byrd (D-W. Va.). Moynihan is reported to be cautiously optimistic about passage.

### Defense subcommittee ignores real defense

In their first opportunity to question Defense Undersecretary for Research and Engineering Richard D. DeLauer on administration programs for such advanced weapons systems as directed-energy beam research, the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense instead focused on anti-defense articles in the press and purported Soviet theft on U.S. technology. While DeLauer's extensive written report to the subcommittee on research and development and acquisitions contained several brief paragraphs on directed-energy systems, sandwiched between material on software and cruise missile technology, the undersecretary did not mention such research in his remarks to the committee and made only passing reference to administration efforts in basic physics.

Senator Jake Garn (R-Utah) spent ten minutes attacking a recent *Time* magazine article on defense and then left to chair a Senate Banking Committee hearing. Senator William Proxmire (D-Wis.) then took the discussion into the area of Soviet thefts of U.S. technology, with the concurrence of DeLauer and the subcommittee.

Proxmire asserted that the Soviets spend an enormous amount of resources in trying to "close the technology gap," and that half of their success in doing so comes from stealing or gaining access to U.S. advances in technology.

DeLauer enthusiastically agreed and offered the subcommittee a classified briefing on Soviet espionage activities in the technology area.

After the hearing, an observer suggested that perhaps the decision to keep the U.S. directed-energy beam program at an order of magnitude smaller than the Soviets' is to prevent their theft of this important technology.

## Senator opposes IMF increase for wrong reasons

Citing grassroots opposition, Sen. Gordon Humphrey (R-N.H.) announced in a statement on the Senate floor March 1 that he will oppose the administration's request to increase the IMF quota by \$8.4 billion dollars.

Humphrey stated that, "the fact of the matter is that the United States is being pressured by the IMF, the banks, and other harbingers of doomsday scenarios to push ourselves more deeply into the black hole of international debt."

But in typically conservative ideological fashion, Humphrey blamed the "mismanagers of struggling LDC economies" for the crisis and urged the United States to stop giving money to "ideological adversaries."

Showing the real source of his opposition to the quota increases, Humphrey suggested that his colleagues "take the time to poll their constituents on this question," asserting that "they will find very little support for this proposal at the grassroots level." Last month, Humphrey engaged in a lively exchange at a New Hampshire town meeting with representatives of the National Democratic Policy Committee.

## NonSENSE solar bill introduced in Senate

Senators from across the political spectrum introduced the Solar Energy National Security and Employment Act (SENSE) on Feb. 28, in an effort to put solar energy and conservation in the forefront of U.S. energy efforts. Senators ranging from Pete Domenici (R-N.M.) and Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) to Paul Tsongas (D-Mass.), Dale Bumpers (D-Ark.), and Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.) have put forward a package of legislation which will foster use of solar energy and energy conservation by means of tax credits, loans, mandating utilization in U.S. defense facilities, and small business incentives.

The ludicrous invocation of the national security benefits to be gained by reducing dependence on imported oil through renewable resources and conservation, coupled with the so-called employment benefits to be found in the solar and conservation "industries," led *EIR* to question whether the legislation was being introduced as a conscious foil to efforts to make a directed energy beam program a center of national attention.

In motivating his support for SENSE, Sen. Dale Bumpers cites the infamous *Global 2000 Report*, issued during the Carter administration, on the need for renewable energy sources: "If this gap [between worldwide oil supply and demand] is not filled with energy from renewables, at least in part, *Global 2000* concludes that it will require far higher prices and slower economic growth." Bumpers adds the *Global 2000 Report's* argument against using nuclear energy to fill this gap.

## House passes science education bill

The House of Representatives passed by an overwhelming margin a bill to improve science and mathematics education in the United States March 2. The legislation, sponsored by Education and Labor Committee chairman Carl Perkins (D-Ky.), would provide \$425 million for retraining teachers, for scholarships, and for more research. Some of the funding can be spent on new equipment, such as computers.

The vote of 348 to 54 in favor of the bill underscores the fact that Congress has discovered the enormous national shortfall in qualified science, math, and engineering teachers in the country. The Perkins bill, one of dozens of similar bills, appears to be a good-faith effort to address the problem at its lowest level.

However, the lack of an effective approach to rejuvenating the industrial base of the United States, which would define the need for basic science and mathematics education, means that the congressional debate is likely to soon stray into the direction of "computer learning for a post-industrial society."

There is a multiplicity of bills on the Senate side on science, mathematics, and education, sponsored by the "Atari" Democrats (and Republicans) who hope to retool education for a post-industrial society.

Exemplary of the senators who have sponsored education legislation in the Senate are Gary Hart (D-Colo.), Paul Tsongas (D-Mass.), Club of Rome member Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.), Bill Bradley (D-N.J.), and Chris Dodd (D-Conn.).