

Congressional Closeup by Ronald Kokinda and Susan Kokinda

NASA supporters rally against budget cutters

The Space Science and Applications subcommittee of the House Committee on Science and Technology held hearings on the long-range goals of the nation's space program during the last two weeks of October. Witnesses, including a panel of former NASA administrators, stressed that the space agency must prepare a long-range plan to bolster the science and technology of the nation, and not succumb to cost-benefit analyses from the Office of Management and Budget.

One of the criticisms from the subcommittee was the lack of adequate long-range planning being done by the space agency. Dr. Christopher Columbus Kraft, the director of the NASA Johnson Space Center in Texas throughout the Apollo program, responded that "NASA has been under great pressure by every administration since the lunar landing to reduce its expenditures, while at the same time it has been criticized by the Congress and others for its lack of vision—for failing to expand its goals."

Kraft reviewed the 15-year history of the space agency and stated that in general NASA has been allocated "less than 10 or 15 percent per year" of the budget it needed. Today even the Shuttle "is not getting enough money to maintain its momentum" he stated.

Dr. John Naugle, former NASA Chief Scientist, stated that "there is no lack of vision in space science on the part of NASA or this nation's space scientists," but that the budgetary pressures have meant that space science missions are launched decades apart, interrupting the continuity of scientific research.

Presidential science adviser George Keyworth charged recently that the space program lacked vision,

though he has made no effort to increase its funding or authorize new programs.

Dr. Tom Paine, NASA head from 1968 to 1970 and former president of the Northrop Corporation, was asked what programs the Congress should support when faced with so many "conflicting" choices.

Rep. Manuel Lujan (R-N.M.) said that the committee, for example, was considering stretching out the schedule for NASA's proposed space station so there would also be enough money to build the fifth orbiter for the Shuttle fleet. "Should we vote for the station or the orbiter?" he asked.

Dr. Paine responded by stressing the long-range aims of space exploration. He quoted from an Oct. 4 *EIR* article: "Dr. Hermann Oberth has said, 'This is the goal: to make available for life every place where life is possible. To make habitable all worlds as yet uninhabitable, and all life purposeful.'"

Most of the witnesses agreed that the civilian science and technology space program could and must be expanded, while at the same time NASA will be called upon to develop the space technology for the upgraded military space program.

On the first day of the hearings, Oct. 18, California Rep. George Brown pointed out that there was more "overlap of space technology" today than 25 years ago when the National Aeronautics and Space Act that created NASA was written, and that institutional changes might be needed. "I strongly encourage joint hearings with the Armed Services Committee" and other committees, he stated, to discuss "space policy and program issues."

On the panel of former administrators was also Dr. James Fletcher, who recently led the panel assessing poten-

tial beam weapon technology for the President. Dr. Fletcher concurred that the military would be looking increasingly for new capabilities in space.

The majority of the witnesses testifying at the hearings saw the space station as the most important initiative the Congress must fund.

NDPC testifies before the Senate

National Democratic Policy Committee representatives testified Nov. 3 before the Senate Energy Committee in support of the nomination of Judge William Clark to be Secretary of the Interior. Although pointing out that the nation would be better served had Clark remained at the National Security Council, the NDPC spokesman pointed to the role which Clark had played at the NSC in developing and fostering President Reagan's beam-weapons policy, as evidence of Clark's qualification to assume any policy position deemed appropriate by President Reagan.

"That Judge Clark would play an active role in the making of such an historic and vitally necessary decision, despite his alleged initial 'inexperience' in the ways of the foreign policy elite, suggests that this country needs much more of that kind of 'inexperience,'" the spokesman said.

'People Protection Act' introduced in Senate

Senator William Armstrong joined his House colleague Ken Kramer, also a Colorado Republican, in introducing the "People Protection Act," a bill designed to encourage development of the organizational infrastructure re-

quired to put President Reagan's March 23 anti-ballistic missile defense initiative into effect. Kramer introduced the bill in the House last spring.

In introducing the legislation, S.2021, on the Senate side on Oct. 28, Armstrong attacked the Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) doctrine, which Reagan's policy supplants, as a "murder suicide pact" which is both "insane and immoral." Armstrong praised President Reagan for emphasizing strategic defense, "a revised nuclear strategy which is logically sound and historically correct and does not rely on the good will of the generals in the Kremlin."

Nuclear freezers try once more

Sen. Ted Kennedy and his minions tried again to pass the nuclear freeze through the Senate Oct. 31, bringing up the freeze resolution as an amendment to the temporary debt limit extension. The resolution lost by a vote of 40 to 58.

The four Democratic Party presidential hopefuls who serve in the U.S. Senate (Glenn, Hart, Cranston, and Hollings) all voted for the freeze.

Despite the defeat of the freeze, which was expected, many senators turned to the Kissingerian build-down proposal during the debate, pointing to it as the "realistic" alternative to the freeze.

Senators oppose Jordan RDF Project

New York Senators Daniel Moynihan (D) and Alfonse D'Amato (R) teamed up at the behest of parts of the Israel

lobby to kill funding for an administration plan to establish a joint Rapid Deployment Force with Jordan. The Reagan administration had been seeking to appropriate approximately \$220 million in the classified section of the FY84 Defense Appropriations bill to be spent to arm and equip two Jordanian army brigades as part of a special strike force for use in emergencies in the Persian Gulf.

Defense Secretary Weinberger and others in the administration have been seeking to reduce U.S. reliance on Israel's military capabilities in the region and build up ties with friendly, moderate Arab nations such as Jordan and Saudi Arabia. Knowing that the Zionist lobby in the United States would mobilize to defeat such a project, the administration had sought to keep the funding classified.

However, Israeli radio revealed in mid-October the existence of the funding in the defense appropriations bill and mobilized its assets in the Senate. On Oct. 29, Senator Moynihan introduced an amendment to the debt limit extension bill which stated that no funds could be expended by the Congress in a classified manner. "While I cannot speak for the government of Israel," Moynihan said, "one can understand that informed judgment in that nation would be alarmed to learn that the U.S. was secretly planning to arm and equip two armored brigades in a country which borders on Israel—particularly when that country is Jordan. Israel could only assume that the forces would be used against it." Moynihan stated that the "effect of the amendment, if enacted into law, would be to kill the project. The Congress would never vote for such a monstrous measure if that vote were made known to constituents."

The amendment passed on a voice vote and was cosponsored by Sens.

Roger Jepsen (R-Iowa), Jennings Randolph (D-W.Va.), Robert Byrd (D-W.Va.), Carl Levin (D-Minn.), Bill Bradley (D-N.J.), and Don Riegle (D-Minn.).

Two days later appropriations defense subcommittee chairman Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) announced that the administration had withdrawn the requested classified \$225 million from the defense bill. Al D'Amato, lobbying within the Appropriations subcommittee and using Moynihan's show of force on the Senate floor, convinced the administration that it had no chance of pushing the RDF funding through the senate.

Democrats tussle over Grenada

House Speaker Tip O'Neill personally intervened to halt a bipartisan group of six congressmen from traveling to Grenada to investigate the situation there. O'Neill insisted on having "his own group."

The group halted by O'Neill, informally organized by Rep. Austin Murphy (D-Pa.) and arranged by the Defense Department, would have included two other Democrats, Eckart (Ohio) and Reid (Nev.), and three Republicans, Bereuter (Neb.), Rudd (Ariz.), and Solomon (N.Y.).

Now, the O'Neill group, led by Majority Whip Tom Foley (D-Wash.), will go alone. Originally to have been composed only of Democrats, the group will now consist of eight Democrats—Alexander (Ark.), Boland (Mass.), Barnes (Md.), Bonker (Wash.), Dellums (Calif.), Stokes (Ohio), and Stratton (N.Y.)—and five Republicans—Michel (Ill.), Cheney (Wyo.), Broomfield (Mich.), and Robinson (Va.). Their trip has been arranged by the State Department.