

Congressional Closeup by Ronald Kokinda and Susan Kokinda

Iklé and DeLauer lie about beam weapons

At the conclusion of hearings before the Senate Armed Services Committee on President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative March 7, Sen. Pete Wilson (R-Calif.) lambasted Defense Department spokesmen Fred Iklé and Richard DeLauer for undercutting the administration's position.

"Frankly, I have to tell you that I am mad," Wilson stated. "Your written statement, which was very strong and very optimistic, is at variance with your responses to the questions put forward by Senator Nunn. . . . I think that you have cast the entirely wrong tone by those responses."

Wilson went on to establish that Undersecretary of Defense for Policy Iklé (a Henry Kissinger liaison), and DeLauer, the Undersecretary of Defense for Research and Engineering, had made light of the ability of ballistic missile defenses to protect population centers and had implied, in their exchange with Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), that such defense systems would have relevance only for protecting offensive weapons systems, not population centers.

Wilson pointed out that such statements appeared to be in disagreement with the report of the Fletcher Commission on ballistic missile defensive systems.

"Do you disagree with Dr. Fletcher's recent statements that a 'robust, multi-tiered system' is a feasible conception?" Wilson asked. When DeLauer replied "Yes," Wilson continued, "Doesn't that [the Fletcher Report] imply a boost-phase system that can be deployed and that will not be leaky [that enemy ICBMs will not be able to penetrate to population centers]?" DeLauer waffled: "I don't want any misunderstandings about what our

expectations for such a system could be at this time."

In an exchange with Sen. Dan Quayle (R-Ind.), who practically begged the administration spokesmen for arguments in favor of strategic defense, Iklé offered no prospect for reducing reliance on offensive weapons under a ballistic missile defense system and stated that he could envisage a situation where both defensive and offensive systems would have to increase. This, despite the fact that Iklé's written testimony—which had to be signed by the secretary of defense and the White House—had laid out a detailed prescription for reducing offensive weapons systems through negotiations with the Soviets under a defensive-systems-oriented regime.

After the hearings, a Senate source charged that "this hearing could do more to set back the SDI [Strategic Defense Initiative] than anything that has happened so far. I can see those statements that DeLauer and Iklé made being thrown back at us by opponents on the Senate floor. We can't charge that the quotes are inaccurate or out of context, because they sat there and said it! I think if a vote was taken right now in the Senate Armed Services Committee, strategic defense would lose."

Democrats attack military budget, strategic defense

Sixteen anti-defense Democrats, led by Rep. Nicholas Mavroules (D-Mass.) and Republican Bill Green (N.Y.), took to the floor of the House March 7 to attack the Reagan administration's defense budget request and the strategic defense program. George Brown (D-Calif.) announced that he would take the floor later in March to attack strategic defense and the entire

military aspect of the U.S. effort in space, and invited other House members to participate.

Mavroules, a member of the House Armed Services Committee, launched the attack after the Committee for National Security (CNS), a collaborator of the terrorist-linked Institute for Policy Studies, released two proposed alternatives to the administration budget at a press conference with Averell Harriman associate Paul Warnke on March 5. The "high-threat" budget proposed by CNS would abandon the 600-ship Navy and eliminate the current strategic modernization effort, including stopping the MX missile, the B-1 bomber, and anti-satellite weapons. Research would be minimized and no funds at all provided for strategic defense systems.

"I am not arguing against research" for strategic defense, Brown said. "However, the accelerated research program the President is calling for is beyond what is needed to protect U.S. national security requirements. Furthermore, we will spend billions of dollars for the unique privilege of abrogating the best and only arms-control treaty we have . . . the 1972 antiballistic missile treaty. Without the ABM treaty, we may as well throw arms control out the window."

Brown and John Seiberling (D-Ohio) used the statements of Dr. Richard DeLauer, undersecretary of defense for Research and Engineering and an administration spokesman, to back their claims that the cost of the program would be "staggering." Brown said the cost of deploying a space-based ABM defense system would be about \$500 billion. Seiberling claimed he had seen cost estimates of \$2 trillion.

Les AuCoin (D-Ore.) attacked

"what is known as time-urgent hard-target kill capability, the MX ICBM, the Trident II SLBM, and the Pershing II IRBM. . . . We do not need them. We are better off without them."

AuCoin failed to point out that a Soviet pre-emptive strike against the United States would leave the Soviets with a majority of their strategic systems intact against a disarmed United States unless precisely these systems are built.

Melcher: 'Reagan ignores Philippines'

In a speech on the Senate floor on March 6, Sen. John Melcher (D-Mont.) accused the Reagan administration of carrying out a policy of "benign neglect" toward the Philippines, at the peril of both the Philippines' stability and of U.S. national security.

Melcher placed two letters he had received from Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos and from the Philippines National Assembly Speaker Querube Makalintal in the *Congressional Record*, along with a plea that President Reagan adopt a Philippines policy.

The Makalintal communication was an invitation to the U.S. Congress to send observers to the Philippines for the May 14 elections, and the Marcos letter contained answers to questions put forward by Melcher in an effort to clarify the internal situation in the Philippines for the U.S. Congress and the public.

Melcher, who traveled to the Philippines in December and returned with an urgent request for food aid for that nation, has not received a response from Reagan. He has warned that because of economic destabilizations in

the Philippines, caused in part by the International Monetary Fund, and because of the Pacific nation's strategic significance, the United States must act. "Doubts about the stability of or criticism of the Marcos government cannot be allowed to freeze U.S. actions on Philippines matters. The administration has not even cleared a \$10 million emergency food aid program proposed collectively last December by Cardinal Sin, the Marcos government, CARE, and the Manila Rotary Club.

"No move to clear the first year's rental on the military bases has been made, although the Philippines are desperate for cash. In conclusion, I say to the White House: Cease the delay in actions concerning the Philippines. Food aid must not be put off. Mutual agreement on defense, economic assistance, and trade concessions are the essence of long-term agreement between long-time allies and trading partners."

Melcher has thus far succeeded in blocking a Ted Kennedy-sponsored resolution to set up a U.S. commission of inquiry on the assassination of opposition leader Aquino. Kennedy and his allies are working with the same forces who succeeded in toppling the Shah of Iran and bringing in the Khomeini regime.

Pressler 'kisses' Europe goodbye

Senator Larry Pressler (R-S.D.) embraced Henry Kissinger's proposals to abandon the defense of Western Europe and introduced the complete text of Kissinger's *Time* magazine proposal to that effect into the *Congressional Record* March 4. Pressler is chairman

of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Arms Control Subcommittee and is one of the Senate's leading opponents of ABM defense systems.

Pressler argued that if the United States engages in military activities in the Middle East, Europe and Japan should be willing to lead the operation.

Two days later, Senate Majority Leader Howard Baker (R-Tenn.) declared: "Dr. Kissinger has written one of the most logical yet provocative treatises on the Atlantic alliance to appear in a very long time. It is a masterful treatment by a master of diplomacy. . . ."

Bipartisan Senate vote to freeze grain target prices

Spearheaded by former farm spokesman Robert Dole (R-Kans.), the Senate Agriculture Committee voted March 8 to freeze 1985 grain target prices. The combination of pressure from OMB director David Stockman and Agriculture Secretary John Block, and a "bargaining" spirit among farm-state Democrats like James Exon (Neb.), John Melcher (D-Mont.), and David Boren (D-Okla.) produced the approval for the bill, which will now go to the Senate floor without the threat of a filibuster, unlike last year's.

Among the penny-ante sweeteners for farmers was a ridiculous plan to provide 1985's payments for setting aside land in 1984; what the farmers are supposed to do in 1985 was unspecified.

The session was dominated by "oversupply" hysteria. Despite the Payment-In-Kind program, which pays farmers not to grow, and a serious drought, wheat output has declined only 15%.