

## Congressional Closeup by Kathleen Klenetsky

### Hollings stuns liberals, endorses SDI spending

Senator Ernest (Fritz) Hollings (D-S.C.) stunned a gathering of 200 liberal Democrats on Capitol Hill on May 2 with a wholehearted endorsement of full funding for the Strategic Defense Initiative.

The former Democratic presidential candidate said he had come to his decision after Lt.-Gen. James Abrahamson, head of the Strategic Defense Initiative Office, spoke before his Appropriations subcommittee on April 24.

Hollings told his Democratic colleagues that Abrahamson had disclosed shocking information on the Soviet military buildup, that the Soviets are out-investing the U.S. 10-to-1 in SDI-related technology and have already tested 18 killer satellites. "We are playing catch-up," said Hollings.

Hollings cited these revelations as the reason that he has decided to wholeheartedly support the administration's \$3.4 billion request for the "10-fold multi-faceted [SDI] approach necessary for us."

His endorsement of full funding is particularly significant because he has repeatedly proposed an across-the-board budget freeze.

The senator made his remarks to an all-day policy seminar organized by liberal Colorado Congressman Tim Wirth, who was left speechless by the pro-SDI remarks.

### McNamara, Clifford blast SDI at Fascell hearings

Former defense secretaries Clark Clifford and Robert McNamara issued venomous and lying attacks on the SDI

during hearings of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Arms Control, chaired by Rep. Dante Fascell (D-Fla.).

Clifford set the tenor by announcing: "The Russians are no more interested in stopping the SDI than I am—and I will do everything in my power to stop it."

He then proceeded to demand a freeze on the SDI budget at the paltry \$1.4 billion level allocated by Congress in 1985. He dismissed the idea that the Soviets have embarked on an aggressive SDI effort of their own, saying their massive program is "limited" and "provides no rationale for a trillion-dollar investment in folly on our part."

McNamara, whose military expertise was displayed in Vietnam, used a slightly different tack, claiming that the administration itself is split on the SDI's goals, citing statements by Paul Nitze and Max Kampelman as evidence.

Two "alternative programs," "Star Wars I and Star Wars II," currently exist, he said, claiming that only President Reagan and Secretary of Defense Weinberger still believe in the former, expressed in Reagan's original March 23, 1983 proposal for a universal defense against nuclear attack, while "virtually everyone else associated with the SDI now recognizes that such leak-proof defense, should it ever prove feasible, is so far in the future that it offers no solution to our present dilemma."

Rep. Dante Fascell, chairman of the full committee and a leading foe of the SDI, has been holding a series of hearings on the beam-defense program and anti-satellite weapons in order to establish an anti-SDI climate prior to congressional votes on the controversial program.

### Reagan budget compromise unravelling

The Reagan administration's budget-cutting compromise began to unravel almost as soon as it hit the Senate floor. Overturning a Senate-White House compromise passed April 30 for a 3% (after-inflation) hike in defense spending, the Republican-controlled body on May 2 voted up an amendment that will reduce the real defense spending increase in the FY 1986 budget to zero.

The amendment, sponsored by Sen. Charles Grassley (R-Iowa), passed by a voice vote after an attempt led by Sen. Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) to table the measure was defeated 51-48. Even Secretary of Defense Weinberger's personal lobbying off the Senate floor failed to defeat the Grassley measure.

Budget resolutions are often violated by votes on individual weapons systems, but the Senate's action means that the MX and SDI, in particular, face near-certain gouging as the budget process unfolds over coming months.

Defense isn't the only part of the Reagan budget compromise which the Senate has torn up. On May 1, it voted 65-34 to eliminate a proposed cap on Social Security cost-of-living adjustments, which administration spokesmen, and the President himself, had contended was an integral element of the \$52 billion-dollar package of cuts.

Nineteen Republicans, including 11 of the 22 up for reelection in 1986, voted to drop the provision, as did all Democrats, with the exception of Sen. John C. Stennis (D-Miss.). Majority Leader Sen. Robert Dole (R-Kan.) is now proposing a new compromise, favored by some Democrats, for a one-year Social Security freeze.

## Metzenbaum: pro-Israel and anti-SDI at once?

Senator Howard Metzenbaum's per-fervid opposition to the Reagan administration's Strategic Defense Initiative may soon propel him into a head-on political collision with an unexpected adversary—Israel.

The Ohio Democrat is known as one of the most outspoken members of the Israeli Lobby on Capitol Hill. Most recently, Metzenbaum led the charge in the U.S. Senate against President Reagan's visit to Bitburg Cemetery in West Germany, expressing great outrage over this alleged insult to the Jewish people.

Metzenbaum has also emerged as one of the more vocal and persistent critics of the beam-defense program, charging that it would serve only to destabilize the international strategic situation, drain resources from other areas of the economy, etc.

His office told *EIR* in early May that the Senator will seek deep cuts in the SDI budget, and that he is now deciding on whether to sign on to the Proxmire-Chafee-Bumpers "Alternative SDI Budget," or to back the even more radical proposal sponsored by Sen. John Kerry (D-Mass.), which calls for freezing the SDI allocation at the present paltry \$1.4 billion.

Metzenbaum has had no difficulty acting pro-Israel and anti-SDI—until now. But Israel has responded enthusiastically to a U.S. invitation to participate in the program.

The authoritative *Jerusalem Post* recently reported that the Israeli government is fully in favor of the SDI. The *Post* emphasized the economic and industrial as well as military benefits that would accrue to Israel were she to join with the U.S. in developing SDI technology. Israel is holding talks

with the United States on the immediate application of laser technology to the defense against ground-to-ground SS-21 missiles, for example. An Israeli military commentator also stressed that the SDI is the only available military option to the nation, not only because nuclear war in the Middle East would mean Israel's destruction—its enemies have greater territorial depth—but because a conventional military buildup would destroy Israel economically.

Metzenbaum's office has refused to comment. But an aide to Sen. John Chafee (R-R.I.), a sponsor of the "Alternative SDI" bill, became unhinged when it was suggested to her that the measure would threaten the lives of 3 million Israeli Jews, under the gun from Soviet-supplied SS-21 missiles in Syria.

"You can't accuse Senator Chafee, or Bumpers, or Proxmire—Mathias, admittedly, may be a different story—of being soft on the question of security for Israel," said the aide, who helped draft the bill. "Israel doesn't need laser and optics technology against the boost-phase of these missiles, it just needs conventional technology."

## Senator Gore proposes 'global foresight' office

A bill to set up a "global foresight" capability within the U.S. government was introduced in the Senate on April 30.

Entitled the "Critical Trends Assessment Act," the legislation proposes the creation of an "Office of Critical Trends Analysis" within the executive office of the President. It would prepare regular reports identifying and

analyzing "critical trends and alternative futures" in such areas as demography, economics, technology, and the environment.

Sen. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.) is the bill's main sponsor, a Malthusian "futurology" kook, which came through loud and clear in testimony Gore delivered on April 30 during hearings held by Sen. Charles Mathias (R-Md.), another Malthusian.

Gore noted, "We often lurch from one crisis to another," specifically citing the tremendous shift in energy demand during the 1970s which sent the U.S. "reeling by having to pay for nuclear power plants we no longer needed."

Gore thus used the energy crisis—manufactured by the elite Malthusian circles in which he moves—as a way of dramatizing his contention that the world is running out of all critical resources, and government should begin to take on the role of principal conservator and distributor of what remains.

Gore insisted in his testimony that his bill "would *not* constitute government by commission . . . would *not* usurp powers from any federal agency," and "would *not* be a method to invoke centralized planning into the federal government"—the louder because it would do all three.

According to Capitol Hill sources, Gore sees the legislation as a method of enhancing the influence and authority of the "limits-to-growth" crowd within the government, and believes that his "critical trends office," through its regular reports and other activities, would be able to effectively steer national economic policy in a zero-growth direction by issuing a stream of data "proving" that resource shortages make further economic development impossible.