

## Congressional Closeup by William Jones

### Lantos seeks military presence in Israel

Rep. Thomas Lantos (D-Calif.), a member of the Israeli lobby in Capitol Hill who had lobbied fellow Democrats to back the authorization of force for Bush's military action in the Persian Gulf, is seeking a permanent U.S. military presence in Israel.

With the stationing of the Patriot missiles in Israel, and their being manned by U.S. soldiers while training Israeli soldiers to operate them, Israel has broken with its policy of not having foreign troops stationed on its soil. There are presently both American and Dutch personnel stationed in Israel.

Lantos mooted the possibility of a mutual defense treaty when he visited Israel at the beginning of February. This is occurring in a situation where circles in Washington are discussing an integration of Israel into a broader NATO framework.

### Dornan accuses King Hussein of lying

Rep. Robert Dornan (R-Calif.) outdid himself in Goebbels-like rhetoric in attacking King Hussein of Jordan for his criticism of the genocidal U.S. bombing of Iraq, in comments on the House floor Feb. 6.

"It is a real tragedy," said Dornan, "to see King Hussein of Jordan move with some of his rhetoric into the camp that the United States is the problem here, not his namesake but no relative, Saddam Hussein. His move was dictated, I think, not so much by principles, because he has been all over the lot the last 20 years trying to sustain his Hashemite minority rule over a country, Jordan, that has become more Palestinian in great numbers, al-

most 65%, than it is Hashemite."

Dornan accused King Hussein of "vicious lying" in saying that the United States was trying to destroy Iraq. Dornan complained that King Hussein and those demonstrating were "emboldening Saddam Hussein by saying that we are the problem in the world, not a totalitarian dictator that took advantage of the weakness in our State Department and evil German businessmen selling his weapons of war."

### War opponents are 'true patriots,' says Owen

Rep. Major Owens (D-N.Y.), a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, called for a halt to further escalation in the Gulf war and a ceasefire, in comments on the floor of the House on Feb. 6.

Owens rejected the argument, accepted by many congressmen, that now that hostilities have been initiated, the Congress must unite in solidarity, "support the troops," and halt their criticism of the war. "I come here as a leader," said Owens. "I was elected by my constituents to be a leader, to offer moral leadership on all kinds of issues, and if I cannot offer it at this time, I would never be able to offer it. . . . This is an important point to make a moral statement, and we are here to make that moral statement," said Owens.

"The fact that we are in the minority, the fact that the dissidents are so few, does not mean that we do not still have an obligation to state our point of view. At this moment in history, the record should show that there were a handful who disagreed."

Owens warned of the calls for the use of nuclear weapons. "There are some savages in the streets who are

yelling, "Nuke them and watch them glow," said Owens. "There are some people who find some great joy in the bombs that are falling every day."

Owens was seconded by Rep. Ron Dellums (D-Calif.), who noted that "those of us who continue to raise our voices in dissent are really attempting to continue to be true patriots in this country, because to do less is to violate the spirit upon which this entire government is based, that is the right to speak out."

Dellums warned that "the potential death and destruction that can be rained down in the context of an escalation that could indeed include massive destruction conventionally, use of chemical weapons, even nuclear weapons, is so awesome to contemplate that it frightens this gentleman."

In response to Rep. Robert Dornan's (R-Calif.) red-baiting of anti-war protestors, Dellums said that Dornan "raises the specter of the national security state. It raises the specter of oppression of perspectives and points of view."

### Nuclear proliferation bill penalizes Europeans

A bill was introduced on Feb. 5 by Reps. Pete Stark (D-Calif.) and Timothy Penny (D-Minn.) which would penalize European firms that have helped developing countries in their nuclear development program.

Stark pointed to the example of a high-speed centrifuge plant for enriching uranium in Pakistan, which Stark claims helped Pakistan build nuclear weapons.

The bill, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1991, would bar firms who have contributed to such nuclear development programs from trading

with the United States for at least two years. The countries which would directly be affected by this legislation include West Germany, Switzerland, Austria, France, Italy, and others.

## **Greenhouse bill to study fusion, fission**

A horrific environmental bill has been introduced by Sens. Albert Gore (D-Tenn.) and Timothy Wirth (D-Colo.), which, using the ozone hoax as justification, contains new punitive measures against U.S. industries violating the "greenhouse laws." The bill calls for extensive "energy-saving" measures and imposes new taxes on industry for environmental purposes.

The only saving grace of the bill is a section calling for a demonstration of the achievement of ignition conditions in both magnetic and inertial confinement fusion energy by the year 2010.

Such programs shall demonstrate the "feasibility of magnetic and inertial confinement fusion for the production of electricity. If such a feasibility is determined for a fusion technology," the bill continues, "the Secretary [of Energy] shall prepare a design for a prototype commercial fusion reactor using such technologies, including associated cost estimates and specifications . . . to permit bids for construction."

In another section, the bill calls on the Secretary to report on whether continued or increased use of energy generated from nuclear fission can contribute substantially to safe and reliable supplies of electricity and reduce the generation of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the United States and internationally.

"In preparing such a report," the

bill reads, "the Secretary shall consider and make recommendations on the appropriate level of federal support for research, development, and demonstration of advanced nuclear reactor technologies to support these objectives."

Tragically, however, the economic restrictions and costs imposed by the other clauses of this bill will effectively hamper the nation from mobilizing the resources necessary to expand nuclear capacity, much less to develop fusion.

## **Gingrich backs Bush at conservative meet**

The former *enfant terrible* of conservatives House Minority Whip Rep. Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.), tried to whip conservatives into line with administration policy at the Conservative Political Action Conference in Washington on Feb. 8.

There has been discontent among conservative Republicans with Bush's about face on taxes and his refusal to back the Baltic states against the Soviet crack-down, and there is a small but vocal opposition to Bush's war in the Persian Gulf.

Gingrich complained that conservatives were doing "a huge disservice to America when we spend 60-80% of our time beating up on the President."

## **Impeachment bill stalled but gains public support**

The resolution submitted in January by Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez (D-Tex.) is expected to be assigned to a subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee in mid-February. While the bill is said to be stalled in the legislative process, it

is rapidly gaining wide public support, according to Gonzalez's office in San Antonio, Texas.

Gonzalez's office reports that they continue to receive letters and calls from all over the country in support of the impeachment bill. Various groups, town councils, and organizations have issued statements of public support for the move, the office adds.

Gonzalez's office also noted that the demand for impeachment is becoming an important demand of the U.S. peace movement, as seen, for example, in a demonstration in Tacoma, Washington which featured banners with "Impeach Bush" slogans.

## **Broomfield attacks Ramsey Clark**

Rep. William Broomfield (R-Mich.), a supporter of Bush's Gulf war, attacked former Attorney General Ramsey Clark's exposé of the U.S. bombing of Iraqi civilians. Broomfield argued that Clark's visit to Baghdad would send a signal to Saddam Hussein that America is turning against the President.

Denigrating Clark as an "ambassador from Greenwich Village," Broomfield accused him of "truth-in-packaging," and tried to play down the important role that Clark is playing in bringing the high casualty rate among Iraqi civilians to public consciousness. "Mr. Clark has not held public office in 22 years. He has no constituency, other than the occasional reporter who is kind enough to give him a little publicity."

Broomfield, as ranking Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, is the point-man for Bush administration foreign policy initiatives.