

## **Congressional Closeup** by William Jones

### **B**ush backer attacks

#### **LaRouche on matching funds**

The imminent possibility of Democratic presidential candidate Lyndon LaRouche qualifying for matching funds with the Federal Election Commission has upset Bush supporters, who seemed panicked during a House debate on the matching funds procedure on Oct. 29.

Democrats attached an amendment to the Dire Emergency Appropriations Act which would require the U.S. Treasury to front funds, which would be covered by revenues collected between January and October 1992, for matching funds. Since matching funds are allotted in January on a first-come, first-served basis, and the fund has become smaller because many taxpayers have not checked the \$1 contribution on their tax forms, there is a possibility that President Bush, who began his fundraising early, could grab most of the \$10.6 million which would be available at that time, depleting the fund and depriving Democratic candidates of funds during the spring primaries.

The measure was opposed by Republicans, with Rep. Bob Livingston (R-La.) leading the charge. But the real threat, for Livingston and others, seemed to be that LaRouche would again qualify for matching funds in 1992. The terrifying "LaRouche factor" was referred to several times during the debate.

"The system is so awful," said Livingston, "that in recent years, now convicted felon Lyndon LaRouche has received \$1.3 million in public financing. It does not matter whether you supported him or opposed him. He qualified. He got \$1.3 million in public financing, and in the coming months in the new presidential contest, he and various other racial extremists and political fringe candi-

dates will qualify and will receive taxpayer dollars to further their radical agendas, and no one can say 'no.' "

The amendment, sponsored by Rep. Vic Fazio (D-Calif.), remained appended to the Dire Emergency bill, which was passed 252-162.

### **S**enate kills Bush's phony energy bill

The Senate rejected on Nov. 1 in a vote of 50-44 an administration-backed proposal to develop a "national energy strategy."

The legislation was a combination of "energy efficiency" measures and a supposed expansion of domestic energy resources, which was opposed by the electrical industry, environmentalists, and the auto industry.

The legislation would have permitted oil drilling in a part of Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; vaguely allowed for the resumption of nuclear energy plant construction in the far future; required vehicle fleet owners to switch to fuels other than gasoline; enforced higher fuel efficiencies with no new automotive technologies, thereby simply downsizing cars; eliminated the government's role in the uranium enrichment industry; and deregulated the electrical industry.

Deregulation of the electrical industry is Bush's move toward repeal of the 1935 law which regulated the electric utilities. That law had been passed in order to put a halt to financial abuses, including the refusal of private companies to invest in new power and transmission capacity, and the use of the assets and good name of electricity companies for financial scams.

Bush's deregulation is supposed to open access for every mom-and-

pop generating concern to the intricate, interconnected high-voltage electricity transmission system. That could wreck the transmission network connecting the 100 utility companies east of the Mississippi River.

### **G**ephardt 'sharpens teeth' of Super 301

House Democratic Whip Richard Gephardt (D-Mo.), known for Japan-bashing during his unsuccessful 1988 bid for the Democratic presidential nomination, together with Rep. Sander Levin (D-Mich.), introduced a bill on Nov. 4 which would extend the Super 301 provisions of the 1988 trade law. That law placed sanctions on countries running a trade surplus and maintaining what have been labeled "protectionist" barriers for their domestic industry. The bill sets the stage for a trade war against Europe and Japan.

The bill would establish a three-part test for a nation to be targeted under Super 301: It must account for 15% of the U.S. trade deficit, have a trade surplus itself, and engage in protectionist practices that limit exports from the United States and other countries. "Targeting" a country would trigger negotiations, with time limits, and could lead to retaliation if the negotiations fail.

### **M**military may be used in Russia 'aid' measures

House and Senate negotiators agreed on Nov. 1 on a defense bill which would limit production of the B-2 Stealth bomber, and allot up to \$1 billion in Pentagon funds to be used for humanitarian assistance to the former

Soviet Union.

The proposal, sponsored by Rep. Les Aspin (D-Wisc.), allows the secretary of defense to use U.S. military aircraft and personnel to help distribute food, medicine, and other humanitarian aid. The model for this was Operation Comfort, in which U.S. troops were used to enforce the "right to humanitarian intervention" on behalf of Kurdish refugees in Iraq. Such use of U.S. forces, practically unheard of in situations other than during a war, could create conflicts with authorities in the former Soviet republics.

The measure would also give President Bush the authority to use military funds on unspecified programs to promote the conversion of the Soviet military-industrial complex to civilian purposes and to help in the destruction of Soviet nuclear arms.

The conferees also agreed to spend \$4.15 billion on anti-missile systems, up from the \$2.9 billion included for the Strategic Defense Initiative in last year's budget.

## **P**opulation control, IMF stall foreign aid bill

The House defeated the Foreign Assistance Authorization Act, which would have authorized appropriations for foreign assistance programs for fiscal years 1992 and 1993, by a vote of 262-159 on Oct. 30. Opposition to population control and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) were two major factors contributing to its defeat.

One controversial measure would have authorized \$20 billion for the U.N. Fund for Population Activities, which is opposed by the Bush administration. The UNFPA has been a

strong supporter of the Chinese anti-population program, which utilizes forced abortions and involuntary sterilization. The bill would also overturn the so-called Mexico City policy adopted in 1984, which would restrict U.S. population funds from going to any foreign non-governmental organization performing or actively promoting abortion as a method of family planning.

Population control advocates like Rep. David Skaggs (D-Colo.) insisted that these provisions would "restore the United States role as a responsible world partner in international family planning efforts," but met heavy opposition.

Other legislators expressed concern with increasing the U.S. quota to the IMF. Conservative opponents of the Fund allied with others who feared that IMF loans going to the Soviet Union would be used to pay back German banks.

Rep. John Duncan (R-Tenn.), a member of the House Banking subcommittee on International Financial Institutions, had earlier accused the Bush administration of lying about why Congress should pass a bill that includes a \$12 billion U.S. quota increase for the IMF-World Bank.

Duncan had told a journalist, "Undersecretary of the Treasury David Mulford . . . argued that it was necessary for humanitarian aide to Moscow, and many Democrats agreed. But, the truth is that all of that money will go to bail out banks that are about to go under, since they are overextended with Third World debt. . . ."

"What this administration has been doing is shifting bankers' blunders to the taxpayer. . . . I can tell you the American people are starting to get fed up with bank bailouts at their expense. There has been a horrible waste for taxpayers, who not only pay

20% of IMF and World Bank funds directly, but frankly have a higher quota since most foreign aid now goes to pay off IMF, World Bank, or Wall Street loans to debtor nations."

The bill also contained provisions which would establish a multinational arms transfer and control regime to restrict arms sales to the Middle East and the Persian Gulf.

Debate on the bill was heavily colored by the objections of congressmen who were worried about the outcry from their constituents against a major foreign aid package during a time of crying economic need domestically. Congressional leaders and the administration will now try to work out a compromise.

## **E**xport bill restricts nuclear technology

The House passed on Oct. 30 the Export Administration Act, which contains provisions severely restricting the transfer of nuclear technology to "non-nuclear-weapon states" as well as the export of uranium. The measure would particularly target countries like Pakistan, Syria, and Iran.

The resolution prohibits any "nuclear commerce" with non-nuclear-weapon states "which pose significant threats to regional or global peace and security." The measure also calls for imposing trade sanctions on "any foreign entity that engages in nuclear trade" in contravention with the principles laid out in the bill.

The bill would increase the authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and recommends that the President push for provisions at the IAEA for "snap" inspections of facilities that may not have been declared to the agency.