

## Congressional Closeup by William Jones

### Teller seeks scientific collaboration with CIS

In testimony before the House Space subcommittee on March 25, Dr. Edward Teller called for closer collaboration with the republics of the Community of Independent States in the areas of science and space.

"The issue of world stability, as we have now, appears every 500 years," Teller told the committee during hearings on bilateral space cooperation. Teller, who designed the hydrogen bomb and is well known as a virulent anti-communist, surprised the congressmen and press by recommending "decisive and fast action to bring about extensive cooperation with scientists of the newly formed CIS." He insisted that this should be mutually beneficial work on joint projects, which would be "more dignified than gifts, and would lay the foundation for future friendship."

"Cooperation should be executed in a completely open manner," said Teller, who argued that secrecy does not produce security. Teller suggested converting SS-18 missile launchers to launch observation satellites, as one possible project. A few hundred very small, 100-200 pound satellites around the globe could provide minute-to-minute observational data on global weather, "converting meteorology from a black art into a science," to include the oceans and other factors left out of today's weather forecasting models, he said.

After the hearing, a reporter asked Teller how he could now be supporting cooperation after being such an arch anti-communist for years. "I changed my mind," the 84-year-old scientist replied.

Earlier, Rep. George Brown (D-Calif.), who chairs the full Science, Space, and Technology Committee, told Russian scientists participating in a teleconference that they might want

to ask if we would use the technology we get from Russia for our military. Russian Minister for Science and Technology Boris Saltykov responded that the republic will do the small amount of defense research necessary for its defense, regardless of what the United States purchases. When asked if the United States should cooperate with the republics on the SDI, Teller answered emphatically, "Yes!" "I believe such an effort should be multi-lateral," he said. "The contribution of the Russians could be technically enormous." The ultimate point for security is openness. "Defense is the best way to avoid [nuclear weapons] proliferation."

Brown has advanced his own proposal to establish a U.S.-Russian science center, independent of that proposed by Secretary of State James Baker. Boris Saltykov, Russian minister of science, higher education, and technology policy, stressed that even modest cooperative efforts could maintain research efforts of potential significance to the entire world. "World-class scientific facilities in the former Soviet Union must be preserved."

Brown later said in floor comments on March 24 that if the scientific capabilities are not utilized, "the loss will be not just to the new republics, but to all humanity."

### START treaty hits a snag

Hearings which were scheduled to begin in March on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) have again been delayed as the fate of the treaty, signed by the United States and the former Soviet Union, now involves four entirely new nations.

Initially it was thought that the treaty could be resolved simply by ob-

taining signatures from the four new states, Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and Belarus, on protocols appended to the text of the treaty. Disputes between Russia and Ukraine, however, over who controls the nuclear arms on Ukrainian territory, have caused a significant bottleneck in the treaty process. Previously it had been agreed by all four republics that all short-range nuclear weapons in Ukraine, Belarus, and Kazakhstan would be sent to Russia by July 1 for destruction.

Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk has, however, canceled the removal of short-range nuclear weapons from the country because of concerns that Russia would not dismantle the arms. The key question Secretary of State James Baker III will face whenever the hearings may begin will be, "Who is this START Treaty with anyhow?"

### Release of Kennedy files restricted

Key members of the House and Senate introduced legislation on March 26 which would require public disclosure of the secret files compiled during the investigation of the 1963 assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The resolution comes after a nationwide debate over the issue, sparked by the release of the Oliver Stone film "JFK," which exposed the coverup of the Warren Commission.

At a press conference on March 26, Rep. Louis Stokes (D-Ohio), former chairman of the House Select Committee on Assassinations, announced the release of the documents. But the procedure developed to examine the documents is far from an "open door" on the Kennedy files. A review board of five members, appointed by

the same three-judge panel which appoints federal prosecutors, will examine the material. Intelligence agencies which wish to restrict the release of certain documents could appeal to the board, which would then decide whether the documents were to be released. The decisions of the panel are subject to presidential veto. The review board will be appointed for a two-year period with the possibility of a one-year extension.

Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.), himself a target of the Oliver Stone film as being complicit in the Warren Commission coverup, felt that the release of the documents would reveal no "smoking gun" of a government conspiracy in the assassination.

Independent investigator Mark Lane, whose book *Rush to Judgment* also exposed the Warren Commission coverup, was skeptical. "If there were incriminating documents," said Lane, "they've had over 20 years to destroy them."

## Gates threatens Iraq, Iran

In testimony before the House Armed Services Committee on March 27, CIA head Robert Gates warned that Iraq could be the target of further military action by the United States or by U.N. Security Council action.

Gates claimed that Iraq, in spite of the massive destruction of the country during the Gulf war and U.N.-sponsored economic sanctions, could quickly build up its pre-Gulf war military potential and again become a threat.

Gates warned of a significant military build-up by Iran, which, Gates claimed, wants to assert itself as the major power in the area. Iran has been purchasing advanced warplanes, anti-aircraft missiles, and some extended-

range Scud missiles, primarily from Russia, China, and North Korea, according to Gates. Iran's "clerical leadership has not abandoned the goal of one day leading the Islamic world and reversing the global dominance of western culture and technology," he said. He also tried to downplay the non-proliferation agreements between North and South Korea, warning that North Korea was on the point of developing a nuclear capability and would also be able "to put nuclear materials and related technologies on the market."

Gates received a sympathetic hearing from House Armed Services Committee chairman Les Aspin (D-Wisc.), who had commented in an interview the day of Gates's testimony that he would recommend militarily destroying Iraq's nuclear potential if Iraq did not show itself willing to do so on its own.

## 'Peace dividend' proves ephemeral

Efforts to free up funds from military cuts for use in a variety of social programs has run into problems, when the Senate failed in a 50-48 vote to cut off a Republican procedural delay which has prevented a vote on the measure.

Democrats were hoping to break down the "firewalls" of last year's budget agreement in order to win funds for a variety of domestic programs. Last year's budget agreement specified that if increases were made in any particular area of the budget—domestic, international, or defense—the money must be cut from other programs in the same area.

The Senate vote fell 10 votes short. The attempt to tear down the firewalls has also met with stiff oppo-

sition in the House, where a vote has been postponed four times already because of growing opposition from conservative Democrats and Republicans. President Bush has promised to veto the measure.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates that if the firewalls remain, fiscal year 1993 domestic spending must be cut by \$6.8 billion to stay within the spending caps. House Budget Committee Chairman Leon Panetta (D-Calif.) warned of bitter fights when appropriations are decided. "This will be a real go-to-the-barricades year for appropriations," said Panetta.

## Vatican pressured to recognize Israel

In an outrageous interference in the affairs of a sovereign state, Rep. Edward Feighan (D-Ohio) introduced a resolution in the House on March 24 which calls for Vatican recognition of the state of Israel.

The resolution, presently with 37 sponsors, maintains that since the Church of Rome has opened formal channels of communication with Israel, and since relations have been reestablished between Israel and the nations of eastern Europe, it was time that the Vatican also establish relations with Israel, claiming this would be "a positive step toward peace and stability in the Middle East."

The resolution disregards the fact that the Vatican is a sovereign state and, by inferring that it is the lack of Vatican recognition which is putting a brake on the Mideast peace process, ignores the fact that the so-called Middle East peace process has been stalemated because of Israeli intransigence in refusing to recognize Palestinian autonomy.