

## NUCLEAR POWER

## Congress bucks Carter on breeder

By Jon Stewart  
Pacific News Service

**W**ASHINGTON—While attention has focused on foreign criticism of President Carter's efforts to halt nuclear proliferation, recent events under the Capital Dome may be even more threatening to the administration's nuclear policy.

Powerful forces in Congress—abetted by a marked lack of support for the President in his own administration—have mounted a campaign to reverse Carter's decision to delay the nation's breeder reactor and nuclear fuel reprocessing programs.

Both programs produce plutonium, the prime ingredient of nuclear weapons. The administration fears that commercialization and export of such facilities will provide non-nuclear nations an irresistible capacity to develop their own nuclear arsenals. Carter's commitment to foreclose the plutonium programs was also intended as a tangible example to other nuclear nations.

#### Trouble in Congress.

But by a resounding 38-0 vote the House Science and Technology Committee elected May 11 to restore some \$117 million for continued development of the plutonium breeder reactor project at Clinch River, Tenn. Without congressional support the President's foreign policy initiative on non-proliferation may strike a hollow note among the other nuclear supplier nations.

Meanwhile, a similar revolt is brewing in the Senate Energy Committee, where the nuclear lobby believes the breeder has even greater support. Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho) declared in a recent speech that "the administration's nuclear energy policy is a formula for nuclear isolationism," expressing his support for both the breeder and the fuel reprocessing programs.

The Senate committee is expected to hold hearings soon on the breeder authorization. Congressional sources expect Church to block any administration effort to introduce an amendment representing the President's position.

Several staff sources close to the debate claim the administration itself is chiefly to blame for the House committee vote.

Said one congressional staff member,



"The administration never came up and said why they were doing what they were doing." He added that the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) "is acting in a manner that's counter-productive to the administration's policy."

#### Leftovers from Ford/Nixon.

The view that forces within ERDA—which is to say, within the administration—are not supporting the administration's position is reinforced by other sources.

According to an aide to Rep. Tom Harkins, who carried the President's amendment in the House committee, "ERDA was definitely not there to push the President's position, either in a lobbying stance or in a public stance... Whether by commission or omission, ERDA by its absence has hurt the President."

All current ERDA appointees, including the chief congressional liaison and lobbyist, Hollister Cantus, date from the

Ford and Nixon administrations.

Beyond ERDA's failure to drum up support on deferment of the breeder, the White House itself is blamed by some for "not having learned to lobby on the hill yet."

Supporters of the President's anti-breeder position are already looking for other avenues to derail the revitalized actor. If the House amendment to restore breeder funding can't be reversed in the Science and Technology Committee, many of whose members represent districts with high-level research and development programs, the next target may be the House International Relations Committee, which has requested the ERDA bill be referred to it before coming to the House floor. The committee is concerned with its foreign policy aspects.

According to a source on that committee, "There's no way that money is going to stay in the budget. The Science and Technology Committee was undermining U.S. foreign policy when they worked this mischief [on breeder funding]."

"We can beat them on the floor and we can beat them in the International Relations Committee and there's a good chance we can beat them in their own committee on a revote" following new hearings, scheduled for the next few weeks, he predicted.

The International Relations Committee will also hold hearings on Rep. Jonathan Bingham's (D-N.Y.) bill to ban nuclear exports—a measure that goes well beyond the President's position.

Bingham has also introduced another measure that would prevent the Nuclear Regulatory Commission from licensing any plutonium-handling facility aside from military, medical or experimental programs. The bill would effectively ban all breeder or reprocessing programs involving plutonium.

#### West German cutbacks.

Ironically, on the very day the breeder funds were restored by the House committee, West Germany—a leading advocate of the plutonium economy and breeder development—announced a \$51.7 million cutback on breeder funding.

The West German decision, coming just days after Chancellor Helmut Schmidt promised to make nuclear exports the nation's top foreign exchange earner, was apparently not a reaction to Carter's non-proliferation initiative. Rather, it was a response to domestic critics of West Germany's nuclear program, who now represent a significant political force.

Similar domestic opposition to the plutonium breeder is growing in France and Britain, where fragile coalition governments are equally vulnerable to political pressure.

The news from West Germany buoyed administration officials just as it saddened the nuclear industry lobby. Said the Atomic Industrial Forum's Tom Hunt, an active congressional lobbyist, "The West German decision is certainly not going to be a great help, but Helmut Schmidt is not going to stop the breeder. It looks like [the freeze] may have been a token gesture, but it doesn't make us happy."

Still, said Hunt, any effort to halt weapons proliferation through a halt on the breeder reactor "is specious."

"Nobody is going to contain the breeder," he said.

## REPRESSION

## FBI conspired against Republic of New Afrika

*Despite past FBI denials new documents reveal a concerted attack to discredit and destroy the RNA.*

**J**ACKSON, MISS.—The FBI conducted secret COINTELPRO (disruptive "counter intelligence" operations) operations against Imari Obadele, President of the Provisional Government of the Republic of New Afrika (RNA), in 1968 and 1969, recently released documents have revealed. They show that the FBI circulated letters intended to disrupt and discredit activities of Obadele and the RNA, including one letter on RNA letterhead with Obadele's signature forged by the FBI.

Obadele is currently serving a 12-year sentence in federal prison on conspiracy charges stemming from a shootout here in August 1971. The new documents tend to confirm charges by Obadele and his supporters that they were victims of a conspiracy on the part of the FBI and government.

As recently as last Dec. 15 FBI director Clarence Kelley denied that Obadele and the RNA were COINTELPRO targets. But on March 30 Kelley reversed himself and released ten pages of FBI communications about the letters, including copies.

The documents also appear to contradict a sworn statement submitted to U.S. District Judge Walter Nixon Jr. in 1973 prior to Obadele's trial. Defense attorneys had asked the government to produce any documents of actions against Obadele and the RNA that could be "arguably illegal." The Justice department responded with a sworn affidavit to the court

stating that a search of the files disclosed no illegal activity by the government.

#### False rumor of misused funds.

The new documents describe how in November 1968 the special agent in charge of the Detroit FBI office asked FBI director J. Edgar Hoover for permission to circulate an anonymous letter "to various members of the Republic of New Afrika" suggesting that then-information minister Obadele was misusing RNA funds.

The plan was approved by Hoover's assistant, who noted, "Since this is an anonymous letter, there is no possibility of embarrassment to the Bureau."

The Detroit office reported the letters "did create a favorable response" and requested authority to mail a similar letter to RNA officials in other states. The

same rumor was circulated among civil rights lawyers in Mississippi between 1971 and 1974 to disrupt RNA legal defense efforts.

The FBI also wanted to "develop the best possible means of counterintelligence action against the newly-formed Black Panther party" of Detroit. So a letter was prepared and circulated "on RNA stationery and signed by Brother Imari, to prospective members of BPP and certain BPP officials."

The fake letter said, "In the past the Black Panther party has not helped black people but has bled the black community of respect and has organized prostitution and crime. It threatens with violence black businesses who do not wish to support them and through acts of terror bring the wrath of the white cop on the inno-

cent black community."

In explaining this letter to Hoover the agent wrote, "Detroit believes this letter will be effective in creating dissension between the RNA and the BPP."

The signature on the letter is an excellent copy of Obadele's handwriting.

#### Mississippi attack.

In 1971 the FBI directed an armed attack on RNA headquarters in Jackson, aided by local police. One police officer was killed and others wounded.

Three RNA members were subsequently convicted of murder and sentenced to life imprisonment and a fourth was given a ten-year sentence.

Dismayed that they had failed to ensnare Obadele, who had spent the night at a different house five blocks away, the FBI charged that there had been an RNA conspiracy to attack federal officers, that Obadele had given the orders to shoot.

While the FBI concealed its own actions against the RNA, a paid informer, Thomas "Snoopy" Spells, testified to the FBI version of the facts. Even though some of his testimony was discredited (for example, he testified that Tamu Sana Ana was at a meeting in Mississippi at a time when she could prove she was in Ghana), the court convicted Obadele and the other RNA defendants.

Despite FBI claims to the contrary, COINTELPRO has not ended for these men and women.

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## JOBS &amp; EMPLOYMENT

# Trouble with unemployment insurance

**By Paul Rosenstiel**  
As the recession of recent years deepened, the task of combatting it fell to the unemployment insurance (UI) system. To the already established program, with its 2,700 offices around the country, a number of amendments were made: more workers were brought under its coverage, benefit levels were increased and benefits were made payable for as many as 65 weeks.

In this way the government quickly pumped vast amounts of money into the economy (\$19.5 billion in fiscal year 1976), enabling unemployed workers to weather long periods of joblessness and preventing the economy from skidding into a 1930s-style depression.

But now a reaction to these lifesaving expansions has set in among many economists and politicians. The expansion of the last few years are being whittled away. Eventually, the entire concept and scope of the system may be altered, leaving it but a withered and pale resemblance of what it was even before the recession.

The cutbacks began May 1 when about 120,000 workers were cut from the program as the maximum number of weeks of benefits was reduced to 52. Next February that figure will probably shrink to 39—the pre-recession maximum—leaving even more of the unemployed without benefits. And until February, those people collecting beyond 39 weeks may be compelled to take jobs of less skill and less pay than they customarily take or face losing UI benefits.

The timing of these cutbacks obviously isn't linked to a sharp decline in unemployment. With official unemployment still above 7 percent the "recovery" for the unemployed hasn't arrived.

But for business and government economists it is now two years old and fully in bloom. For them the primary worry these days is inflation. An expanded UI system is perceived as both unnecessary and, perhaps, inflationary as well.

## Dissatisfaction with program.

But dissatisfaction with the expanded UI system among many economists and policy makers runs even deeper. They argue that using it to counter a deep recession perverts the insurance concept of the system and that's what they'd like to get back to.

"I think almost everyone knowledgeable in the area agrees that 65 weeks of benefits in terms of an insurance program financed by employer contributions is too three states are now \$4.6 billion in debt to the federal unemployment trust fund.

long," says Roger Rossi, head of research for the Unemployment Insurance Service in Washington.

Congress, too, is dissatisfied. Last year it established the National Commission on Unemployment Compensation to formulate plans for changing the system. Its recommendations are due by the end of next year.

One factor pushing economists to revamp the system is the huge debts it has incurred over the last few years. With high unemployment benefit payments have far exceeded receipts from the employer payroll taxes that pay for them. Twenty-

haps non-poor recipients should be cut from the program. They cite preliminary government statistics showing that 61 percent of FSB recipients have incomes above the poverty line, even with UI benefits excluded.

## Is it a question of skills?

Beyond the financial problems many economists and policy makers are getting uncomfortable paying people not to work for 65 weeks. Many believe that long-term unemployment is actually not a problem of need. As a result, many advocating change in the system argue that per-

Since the UI system is meant to tide workers over until they get a new job, this provision is necessary, explains Rossi, because "if they don't have a saleable skill then the whole conceptual structure of the unemployment insurance program begins to break down."

The federal government has taken a few steps towards providing more jobs to some of the long-term unemployed. Under President Carter's economic stimulus package 240,000 jobs, provided for in an October amendment to the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), will be created specifically for low income people unemployed 15 weeks or longer or recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children. If these jobs are funded by Congress, administrators in Washington hope to move some FSB recipients to them.

## Not a comprehensive program.

But it's questionable whether this approach offers anything but a temporary solution to the plight of the long-term unemployed. The CETA jobs provide no training. They are temporary projects lasting no longer than a year. The unemployed who take these jobs will find themselves in the same boat a year later—no jobs, no new skills and no demand for the skills they have.

The National League of Cities supports limiting benefits to only 12 weeks if UI were part of an overall employment, training, insurance and welfare program.

While AFL-CIO advocates an extensive UI system, an employment and training expert close to the labor movement says that stance is just a "bargaining position" from which the AFL-CIO can fight for what it really wants: an expansion of public service jobs.

Past experience, however, offers little evidence the government can or wants to create an effective and comprehensive program of jobs and training. Says the AFL-CIO, "CETA and other employment and training program have been able to help only a fraction of the disadvantaged and unemployed." Attempts to offer training within the UI system have hardly gotten off the ground.

Whether the government will go ahead and slash the UI system without ensuring adequate jobs for those left dangling remains to be seen. At the very least, it would seem that hard times are on the way for those unfortunate enough to not have a job as Carter and his advisers prepare for "good times."

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"Sorry...Due to economic difficulties we may be unable to continue this program."

Illustration by Jay Kinney

In turn, the fund has borrowed a total of \$12 billion from the Treasury to cover a variety of deficits.

To prevent the debts from growing ever larger, the same law that this month cut benefits to 52 weeks also switched funding of the Federal Supplemental Benefits program (FSB), which pays benefits beyond 39 weeks, from payroll taxes to general Treasury revenues.

But Treasury financing severs the link that made the programs an insurance system and justified paying benefits on the basis of past earnings rather than finan-

of a stagnating economy but rather the result of job-seekers not possessing the skills that companies wish to hire. Says Pierce Quinlan, administrator of the Office of Comprehensive Employment Development, "The likelihood of them returning to their previous occupations is not great."

Thus new FBS guidelines require recipients whose skills, in the opinion of the UI office, are not in demand seek other jobs even if they are less skilled or lower paying than the recipient's usual line of work.

## French rally supports Wilmington 10

PARIS, FRANCE—More than 3,500 Parisians crowded into a hall here May 5 to demand the release of the Wilmington 10, a group of imprisoned civil rights activists in North Carolina. Featured speakers were Angela Davis and George Marchais, head of the French Communist party. In a major policy address Marchais declared that his party would be second to none in the defense of freedom in all its dimensions and in all countries—capitalist or socialist.

He attributed the recurring pattern of racial and political repression in the U.S. to an economic system that "reduces millions of people to poverty and unemployment while the kings of the dollar flaunt their limitless wealth."

He recalled the common struggles for liberty waged by the French and American people since the American Revolution and expressed the wish that this friendship would continue. At the same time he warned the Carter administration that the French people would not tolerate any interference with its own political choices or any external effort to reverse the gains secured by a left government.

Davis, who became a cause celebre here

during her own imprisonment, received enthusiastic support. "North Carolina," she declared, "is our South Africa. Like the Vorster regime there, the government of North Carolina takes out huge advertisements in the business press inviting large companies to come where labor is cheap and plentiful and profits at their highest level." She drew a laugh when she mentioned that Michelin, the major French tire manufacturer, had recently invested in North Carolina to take advantage of the situation.

Meanwhile in the U.S., a special post-conviction hearing is being held to determine whether the Wilmington 10 defendants, who were convicted in 1972 and sentenced to long jail terms, should be granted a new trial. Key prosecution witnesses have recanted their 1972 testimony, saying that they were pressured and coached by the prosecution. Other irregularities are also being examined. The state of North Carolina has announced that if a new trial is ordered by the court, they will not conduct one.

—Bernard H. Moss

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"North Carolina is our South Africa," Angela Davis proclaimed.