

Senate Imposes CBW Limitations, Cuts Defense Research

Before evacuating Washington last week for its summer recess, the Senate, which has grown increasingly critical of military policy and military spending, used the debate on a military procurement authorization bill to get off some parting shots at the Pentagon. The Senate unanimously passed an amendment restricting Defense Department activities in chemical and biological warfare (CBW), sliced \$45 million from the defense research budget, and took steps which reflect congressional intentions to exercise closer control of the military.

The CBW amendment does not affect CBW spending but, rather, imposes controls on the transportation, storage, and disposal of chemical and biological agents.

The amendment was put forward by Senator Thomas J. McIntyre (D-N.H.), a member of the Armed Services Committee, and a group of eight senators who had introduced their own CBW control amendments but agreed to back McIntyre's measure.

On 12 August the Senate accepted the amendment by a vote of 91 to 0, influenced unquestionably by acceptance of the measure by Armed Services Committee chairman John Stennis (D-Miss.) and by Defense Secretary Melvin Laird's acquiescence in proposed controls.

The bill still authorized a total of some \$297 million for CBW weapons and research. Earlier the Armed Services Committee had cut the request by some \$16 million, in funds for research on offensive uses of CBW.

Congressional concern over CBW policies had undoubtedly been sharpened by such recent incidents as the death of several thousand sheep near the Army's Dugway, Utah, proving ground after an accidental release of nerve gas; public outcry over plans to ship chemical agents cross-country by rail and dispose of them off the Atlantic coast; and a revelation that several persons had been affected when nerve gas leaked at a storage point overseas on the island of Okinawa.

The McIntyre amendment includes the following requirements.

- No money is to be spent for "delivery systems specifically designed to disseminate lethal chemical agents, disease producing biological micro-organisms or biological toxins."

- Lethal biological or chemical agents cannot be stored in a foreign country without notice to that country and to congressional committees having jurisdiction.

- Before CBW agents can be transported outside military installations the Surgeon General must determine that there is no hazard, and notice must be given Congress, relevant Cabinet officers, and Governors of states affected, except in wartime.

- No money can be spent for storing or testing agents outside the United States unless the Secretary of State determines that there will be no violation of international law.

- No money will be spent for open-air testing of lethal CBW agents unless the Secretary of Defense, under guidelines approved by the President, determines that such tests are necessary for national security and the Surgeon General decides there are no health hazards.

McIntyre, who sponsored the CBW amendment, is

chairman of the Armed Services Committee's new subcommittee on military research and development, which, in its first year of operation, engineered a cut, in committee, of about \$1 billion from the Defense Department's \$8-billion budget for research, development, training, and evaluation. The bulk of the savings came in cutbacks of hardware development projects, notably the \$300 million saved in the cancellation of the Air Forces Manned Orbiting Laboratory, but other research areas of the budget were also pruned.

The \$45-million cut made on the floor resulted from passage of an amendment attached to the bill by Senator William J. Fulbright (D-Ark.). The amendment called for reductions in several areas of research, including foreign-area social sciences research, of which Fulbright has been sharply critical.

Fulbright, who is chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, has persistently argued that military support of foreign area research constitutes an unwarranted intrusion by the Pentagon into foreign policy matters (*Science*, 30 May 1969).

The Fulbright amendment, which the Senate adopted on 12 August by a vote of 49 to 44, included the following provisions.

- A \$77-million cut in funds for federal contract research centers, or about 10 percent of the total federal funds received by research organizations such as the RAND Corporation and the Hudson Institute.

- A reduction of \$2 million, or about a one-third cut of funds, for research done in foreign institutions, and a cut in other behavioral and social sciences research of another \$3 million.

- A \$5-million cut in Project Agile counterinsurgency research.

- A cut of the \$8 million from Project Themis, the Defense Department's program to encourage creation of new centers of research excellence in the universities. The \$33 million originally requested for Themis this year was reduced by \$4 million in committee, and further cuts would pare funds for the year to \$21 million.

McIntyre and Stennis strongly opposed the Fulbright cuts, and McIntyre conducted a careful floor defense of the committee recommendations, mostly to empty seats. The spirit of the recent bitter debate on deployment of the Safeguard ABM system seemed to carry over into the debate on the procurement bill, so that, on the amendments, the Pentagon seemed to face the biggest voting bloc of critics in the Senate that it has had to contend with since the prewar era.

Discussion of huge cost overruns on the C-5A military transport, the main battle tank, and other weapons-development projects have distressed many senators this year. And concern about strategic policy, particularly in Southeast Asia, has created a sizable group of congressional skeptics. The two streams of discontent joined this spring to cause the unexpected uprising. The procurement bill must still be acted on in the House. On the Senate side, final action is still required, and observers expect the attack to be resumed after the recess.

—JOHN WALSH