
House Committee Votes to Delay ASAT Deployment

Despite strong Administration protests, the House Appropriations Committee on 21 October voted overwhelmingly to delay the deployment of the Pentagon's new antisatellite weapon, or ASAT, for roughly a year, from 1987 to 1988. The decision, which came on a voice vote, stemmed from what the committee described as "concern over the apparent lack of attention given by the Administration to the arms control implications of space weapons."

The specific action taken by the committee was to delete \$19 million for the procurement of ASAT parts and test equipment that are needed next year if the weapons are to roll off an assembly line in 2 years, as the Administration had planned. Last June, when the deletion was first proposed by Representative George Brown (D-Calif.), Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger expressed the Administration's strong opposition to a delay and described the acquisition of the equipment in fiscal 1984 as "imperative." The committee disagreed and asserted in its report that the purchase "represents an important step toward a possible arms race in space that could prove exceedingly expensive and dangerous."

The decision resulted from a compromise between Representatives Matthew McHugh (D-N.Y.) and Lawrence Coughlin (R-Pa.), who wanted to delay both the procurement and testing of the Pentagon's ASAT, and others such as Representative Norman Dicks (D-Wa.), who felt this was too extreme. Under the compromise, the tests, which are scheduled to begin this autumn, can go ahead, but the Administration has to produce a report on "the specific steps the Administration contemplates undertaking, within the context of U.S.-Soviet negotiations, to negotiate a verifiable agreement with the Soviet Union to ban or strictly limit existing and future ASAT systems" (see *Science*, 28 October, p. 394). The report, which is due by next April, will be unclassified.

Other Administration weapons proposals received more favorable treatment. The committee spurned attempts to delete funds for production

of 21 MX missiles and advanced procurement of the B-1 bomber. It did, however, narrowly agree to eliminate \$124 million for the production of binary chemical weapons. Also, due in part to lobbying by the Association of American Universities, the committee agreed to restore \$30 million in funds for basic weapons research.

The measure was scheduled for consideration on the House floor as *Science* went to press, and will then be taken up by a House-Senate conference committee.

—R. JEFFREY SMITH

Federal Court Finds IBT Officials Guilty of Fraud

Three of the four officials who went to trial in a case involving the Industrial Bio-Test Laboratory of Northbrook, Illinois, were convicted of mail fraud on 21 October in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois. This ended a complex trial lasting almost 6 months. Company officials were accused of faking toxicity studies on products under review by the Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency in the 1960's. The products have been retested since then and found safe, but hundreds of other health and safety tests performed by the company have been called into question as a result (*Science*, 10 June, p. 1130). The fourth official, the company's founder and former president, Joseph Calandra, was granted a mistrial in July to undergo heart surgery. He may be tried later.

Those found guilty were Moreno Keplinger, manager of toxicology; Paul Wright, former section head in charge of rat toxicology; and James Plank, former assistant to Keplinger.—ELIOT MARSHALL

Creationists, ACLU to Do Battle Again

A four-to-three decision in the Louisiana Supreme Court on 17 October clears the path for another creation versus evolution trial, similar to the one held in Arkansas in December

1981. The Louisiana trial is not expected to occur before mid-1984.

The Louisiana legislature in July 1981 enacted a "Balanced Treatment" law similar to the Arkansas law that was declared unconstitutional on First Amendment grounds in January 1982. It requires the equal presentation of evolution and creationism in elementary and high school science classes. But a tangle of legal actions has kept the law in suspension, with the measure's supporters and critics scoring victories at various stages of the battle.

As in the Arkansas case, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) will be leading the attack on the constitutionality of the law. Indeed, the ACLU has had a legal complaint filed since December 1981, but it has been deferred pending the resolution of a separate challenge to the legislature's authority to determine the content of the school curriculum. Although the challenge was upheld in federal district court by Judge Adrian Duplantier on 22 November 1982, the creationists, led by Atlanta attorney Wendell Bird, appealed to the Louisiana Supreme Court, where they secured the favorable four-to-three decision.

The Louisiana Supreme Court decision effectively revives the ACLU suit, which was filed in New Orleans. The stage is therefore once again set for judging creationism on the merits.

—ROGER LEWIN

DOE Officially Terminates ISABELLE

The Department of Energy, to no one's surprise, has officially accepted the recommendation of its High Energy Physics Advisory Panel (HEPAP) to terminate Brookhaven National Laboratory's Colliding Beam Accelerator project (CBA), once known as ISABELLE (*Science*, 9 September, p. 1038).

Alvin W. Trivelpiece, director of the department's Office of Energy Research, told the House subcommittee on energy development and applications on 19 October that most of the \$23 million in research money allocated to CBA in fiscal year 1984 would now be diverted to advanced research on the Superconducting Super Col-