

THE MILITARY

Full speed ahead and damn the allies

By William M. Arkin

WASHINGTON

THE DEFENSE DEPARTMENT scored a bureaucratic victory when the White House announced Aug. 8 that production of the neutron bomb would begin immediately. But though the long-awaited decision on the controversial weapon was hailed in some quarters as a "brave" action by President Reagan, in fact the administration side-stepped, for now, the most difficult political issue—deployment of the new weapons in Europe.

Ever since newly-appointed Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger announced his support for the neutron bomb at a press conference in February, the administration has been grappling with a shrinking timetable for deciding the issue. According to congressional testimony, production of the two weapons destined to carry neutron bombs—the short-range Lance missile and new eight-inch artillery—was scheduled to begin in May and June of 1981. A final decision on whether to produce them with or without new warheads inserted was needed before the weapons began to come off the production line in August.

The Carter administration's solution, approved by Congress in the Fiscal Year 1981 authorization bill, was to build and deploy the new launchers and the neutron bomb components separately, thus requiring another executive-level decision before the Army could convert the regular fission weapons to neutron weapons. But under Reagan, officials of both the Pentagon and the Department of Energy argued that the two-step policy would increase costs and warned that later modifi-

cations might upset timetables for the massive nuclear buildup planned for the '80s. Those arguments prevailed and the new weapons will now be produced with the neutron components in place.

The neutron bomb, or "enhanced radiation/reduced blast" weapon is the latest technical "improvement" in tactical nuclear weapons. By adding radioactive Tritium gas to the fission formula, the amount of radiation (neutrons and gamma rays resulting from the energy created) is increased six-fold while the blast and thermal effects of the explosion are reduced. By increasing the amount and radius of the radiation, deaths are caused more through lethal doses of radiation than by blast and heat.

The military says it needs the neutron bomb as an anti-tank defensive weapon in the event of a Soviet attack on Western Europe. Already the present arsenal of nuclear weapons in Europe are referred to by the military as "higher yield...dirty...unsafe"; because they would result in greater "collateral damage" (killing people and destroying property in the vicinity of use), it is feared that the U.S. might be inhibited from using them.

But in fact the present weapons are more than adequate. The United States has already deployed some 1,500 nuclear warheads in West Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Greece and Turkey for use with the new Lance missile and eight-inch artillery guns. In addition, it has deployed thousands of other nuclear weapons not slated for substitution with the neutron bombs—nuclear 155mm artillery shells, atomic demolition munitions, nuclear surface-to-air missiles, short-range Honest John missiles, and nuclear-armed aircraft—that would also be used to respond to a Soviet attack on NATO territory. These weapons are backed up by

more than 20,000 longer-range and strategic weapons aboard U.S. Navy ships and in the United States.

The neutron bomb is touted as a "better" deterrent because it has a reduced radius of blast and creates less collateral damage. For that reason, strategists say, it is the perfect weapon to counter the Soviet's advantage in tank numbers in central Europe. Neutron bombs could be used with surgical precision to disable a massive Soviet attack without precipitating an escalation to general nuclear war.

But Dr. Herbert Scoville, President of the Arms Control Association and a former Department of Defense and CIA official, in a paper prepared for a recent conference on nuclear war in Europe, disputes the claim that neutron weapons have any advantages over fission weapons as far as their effects on tank operators. According to Scoville's calculations, while the neutron weapons would pro-

duce less collateral damage, they would still damage structures and contaminate a large area when used in warfare in Europe.

briefing that the decision was preferable to "unnecessary, lengthily prolonged, inconclusive debates."

But European security is, in theory at least, the collective responsibility of all of the members of NATO, and the tendency of the United States to decide what is best for Europe has been a major cause of discord within the alliance. The allies were not consulted beforehand on neutron bomb production, and Secretary Weinberger made it clear in his briefing that, though the weapons are to be deployed in the United States, they could be flown to Europe "in a few hours."

Many of the NATO governments that face strong anti-nuclear opposition at home have tried to extricate themselves from a difficult policy situation by claiming that the neutron bomb is a purely American concern. But two practical considerations belie that claim. One is that, as a matter of strategic planning,



duce less collateral damage, they would still damage structures and contaminate a large area when used in warfare in Europe.

Information given by the Army in Congressional hearings on a possible Soviet attack also contradict the claims of greater military effectiveness. In order to be strong enough to overwhelm NATO defenses, a blitzkrieg Soviet attack would have to muster some 2,200 tanks and 2,200 armored vehicles along a 40-to-50 kilometer front. Army doctrine calls for "packages" of nuclear weapons to be used in such an attack scenario. The fact that large numbers of bombs—whether regular fission or neutron—would be needed to respond over such a large area nullifies the supposed reduction in collateral damage that may exist for a single bomb.

The military's claim that the neutron bomb is a "defensive" weapon is absurd. Like other nuclear devices, it would kill millions of civilians in densely populated Europe if any of the Pentagon's scenarios came to pass. Secretary Weinberger's assurances that the weapon "is not as important for [the Soviets] to have...as it is for us" directly contradicts his own claims that the neutron bomb "enables infantry to fight closely behind it"—obviously an advantage for either side. President Brezhnev already stated in 1978 that the Soviet Union had tested a neutron weapon. The possibility of two opposing military powers having this weapon, which they believe could be used with fewer ramifications than conventional nuclear weapons, increases the likelihood of its use and lowers the threshold of nuclear warfare.

Dodging the issue.

The Reagan administration's decision to go ahead with the neutron bomb specifies that the new weapons will be deployed in the United States and not in Europe, where they are supposedly needed. This concession is powerful testimony to the influence of a growing anti-nuclear movement in Europe. Though the administration has been contrasting its decisive action on the bomb with Carter's deferral of the issue in 1978, the crucial issue of deployment has still been avoided. Secretary Weinberger, who has been openly disdainful of European misgivings about the weapon, stated in his Pentagon press

the weapons are intended for Europe. The other is that these weapons are meant for actual use by the military forces of the NATO countries, all of which now use either the eight-inch howitzers of Lance missiles armed with U.S. nuclear warheads that the neutron bombs would eventually replace.

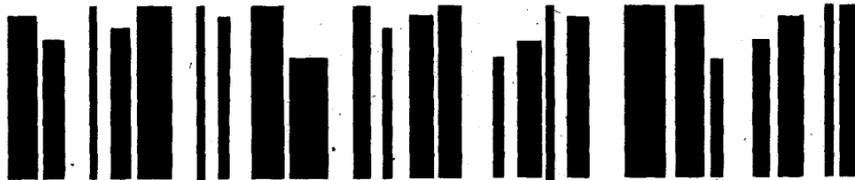
Even if one accepts the technical point that Reagan has only decided to produce and stockpile the neutron bomb and not deploy it, it is simply a matter of time before American pressures mount for its movement to Europe. If the military situation is as the Pentagon portrays it, having the neutron bomb in the United States for "deterrence" makes no sense.

The Reagan administration's handling of the neutron decision is the first indication to the Europeans of its attitude about collective decision-making. Weinberger's statement that there was "no 'European veto' on this action and his snipe at West Germany for recently reducing its military expenditures reflects the Reagan clan's penchant for military unilateralism: a tendency to make independent decisions based on American perceptions of the military situation and the belief that other countries lack the will to make sacrifices, cannot be trusted to carry out their commitments and should not be counted on by the United States.

One of the major points of the anti-nuclear movement in Europe is that the security of Europe is out of their control. The neutron decision, pointedly made by the United States without consulting European governments, can only serve to strengthen that movement. It also legitimizes earlier arguments against the deployment of new long-range weapons approved by NATO in December 1979. That decision and opposition to it has been the major catalyst for the European Nuclear Disarmament movement. Embattled NATO governments are trying to justify the basing of those new weapons on grounds of "deterrence" and safety. Now Secretary Weinberger refers to the neutron bomb in the same way, and European governments are faced with the choice of either accepting the new American line or watching both decisions unravel.

William M. Arkin is a Fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C.

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THE SOUTH

State labor leader goes on trial in an anti-union climate

By Mark I. Pinsky

DURHAM, N.C.

THE ADVERTISEMENT THAT APPEARED simultaneously last month in issues of *Fortune*, *Forbes*, and *Business Week* was nearly breathless in its appeal to companies now contemplating a move to the Sun Belt.

"North Carolina," it boasts, "has some of the most competitive wage rates in the country. And the work stoppage rate here is one of the lowest on record anywhere."

The state's worker's compensation rate is also the lowest in the country, the ad proudly proclaims, and "you can still hire the kind of people that made America great."

A more concise translation of the advertisement, which was prepared and paid for by the state Commerce Department, might read this way: North Carolina ranks 49th among the states in average hourly industrial wages, 50th in percentage of unionized workers and has the most restrictive worker's compensation law in the country, written in 1931 and taken almost word for word from a 19th century British statute.

The business climate is especially favorable these days, with the head of the state AFL-CIO, Wilbur Hobby, about to go on trial in federal court in Raleigh, N.C., on fraud and conspiracy charges growing out of the alleged misuse of CETA funds two years ago.

Hobby's trials—in and out of court—offer an instructive example of why organized labor in North Carolina is in such a fix.

Hobby's Defense Fund charges that he is the target of selective political prosecution based on "vague," "flimsy" charges generated by a mass of unfavorable and misleading publicity. Hobby, they say, "is not on trial for breaking the law, but because he has consistently... championed the cause of workers, minorities, women and the poor."

Since 1976, the Fund and Hobby's attorneys point out, there were 50 instances of CETA contracts in this judicial district where audits indicated alleged overcharges of more than \$35,000. Yet in only this instance have such charges resulted in a federal prosecution.

A dubious scoop.

In the autumn of 1975, Hobby was the subject of a lengthy series of articles in the *Raleigh News & Observer*, which charged that the labor "boss" had received more than \$1 million in combined CETA grants to several small companies he controlled (a printing company called Precision Graphics and another called Precision Data) and one operated by the state AFL-CIO (a construction training program, called the Carolina Skill Advancement Center).

The *News & Observer* did not charge that there had been any theft or embezzlement, or that the CETA workers on the three projects—most of whom were young blacks and/or women—had not been properly trained. Nor did it deny that as a result most were hired for jobs in the private sector when their training was completed.

There was, however, a clear implication that the CETA contracts had been awarded to the AFL-CIO and Hobby's companies as a "political payoff" for labor's support of the Democratic slate in the 1976 election, and that there had been numerous instances of mismanagement, inefficiency and sloppy bookkeeping.

The information in the *News & Obser-*

ver series was immediately picked up by the Congressional Club, a fund-raising machine created by Republican Sen. Jesse Helms and operated by his longtime associate, attorney Thomas Ellis. Slick, scurrilous radio and television spots—of a style soon to become familiar across the nation—were quickly produced. These attacked not only Hobby and organized labor, but also incumbent Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., a moderate young Democrat then gearing up his reelection campaign, and the entire CETA program.

(At the time, some thought it peculiar that the *News & Observer*, whose editorial position is generally liberal, Democratic and pro-labor, should end up making common cause with Helms and the Congressional Club, ultra-conservative in membership with two leaders who are longtime bitter enemies of the newspaper. By accident or design, the newspaper handed the Congressional Club a stick to beat Jim Hunt, whom it had in the past endorsed. Hobby said frankly that he was "stunned" by this development, while Ellis called a press conference—"a new experience for me," he said—in order "to commend the *News & Observer*." Politics making strange bedfellows, others recalled that this identical odd couple had during the Ford administration together brought about the collapse of Soul City, the federally backed "new town" in North Carolina planned by former civil rights leader Floyd B. McKissick. The same reporter wrote both series.)

But the ads were sufficiently negative and distorted that 11 television stations at first refused to run them, and a 12th dropped them after one airing. Tom Ellis became so frustrated that he said the Congressional Club would pay for equal time for Gov. Hunt to respond, but this offer was declined.

Jim Hunt is nothing if not a consummate politician. In his 1976 primary campaign he did solicit and receive the endorsement of Hobby and the state AFL-CIO. Thereafter he established a moderately progressive labor record (on paper, at least) by appointing a chair of the state Employment Security Commission who was, for the first time, not an anti-union man hand-picked by textile, tobacco and furniture interests. In the state legislature, the Hunt administration (admittedly under pressure from various groups, especially the Carolinas Brown Lung Association) supported speedier action and increased compensation for mill workers who were victims of brown lung, and endorsed a rewriting of the state's antiquated worker's compensation act.

Thanks to some blatant last minute counter-lobbying on the part of the state's secretary of commerce, a Hunt appointee, the rewriting died in committee. A proposed Center for Labor Education and Research at predominantly black North Carolina Central University in Durham, supported by the Hunt administration, was abandoned in the face of concerted GOP opposition. In short, the governor demonstrated that—unlike most of his predecessors—he could be dealt with on labor issues, even if he could not always deliver.

But in the autumn of 1979, Gov. Hunt wanted more than anything else to become the first chief executive in the state's history (thanks to a referendum and a constitutional amendment he shepherded through the legislature) to serve a second, successive term. Sen. Helms, perhaps the most outspoken foe of organized labor in the U.S. Senate, was at the same time assembling a Republican slate to challenge Hunt, all the elected members of his council of state and in-

cumbent U.S. Sen. Robert Morgan—all to be lavishly funded by Jesse's juggernaut, the Congressional Club. The Congressional Club, in turn, was under the deft, day-to-day direction of Tom Ellis, whose Raleigh law firm maintains as a lucrative sideline a union-busting consultation service.

For a state that was, until 1972, a one-party, Solid South Democratic stronghold, it was an unprecedented assault by the GOP, aimed at achieving a breakout from its perpetually minority status. The Hobby-CETA-Hunt issue, dropped in their laps by the dominant daily newspaper in eastern North Carolina, seemed like a godsend.

Profiles in expedience.

So it came to pass, in a move not calculated to earn him a chapter in *Profiles in Courage*, that Gov. Hunt left Wilbur Hobby to twist slowly in the wind. For an ambitious politician even then looking toward the electoral challenge of Sen. Helms in 1984, and a spot on the Democratic Party's national ticket or a cabinet position some time thereafter, the head of the state AFL-CIO had simply become a liability.

Throughout the late spring and early summer of this year, Hobby's attorneys attempted several legal maneuvers to slow, if not stop, the federal prosecution. All were unsuccessful. A challenge to the composition of the grand jury that handed down the initial indictment—charging that blacks, women and members of blue-collar socio-economic groups were disproportionately excluded—was rejected. And Judge W. Earl Britt summarily denied a subpoena request for the Congressional Club's mailing list for eastern North Carolina to be used to challenge individual members of the grand jury.

denied the motion and ordered the trial of Wilbur Hobby and three associates who are not labor officials to begin on Aug. 24.

(Ironically, the same day Judge Britt refused to move Hobby's trial to Richmond, a federal court of appeals, sitting in Richmond, ruled that Labor Department officials have a right to demand the identities of financial backers of the anti-union drive at J.P. Stevens textile plants in both Carolinas. Observers close to the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) are certain that lines from the two anti-union groups, "Stevens People" and "Friends of Freedom," will at the very least lead to Tom Ellis' Raleigh law firm, if not directly to the Congressional Club.)

In the course of his ordeal, Wilbur Hobby has been bloodied, but unbowed. At a fundraising breakfast for his defense this summer in Durham, he said, "I just want you to know that I haven't done anything wrong, unless it's to help poor people get jobs and get them off welfare." Although he has taken a temporary leave of absence from his AFL-CIO post until the outcome of his trial, Hobby has not given up his labor activ-

The Hobby case was a godsend to Jesse Helms' Congressional Club, which also attacked CETA.



The trials of Wilbur Hobby—in and out of court—show why organized labor in North Carolina is in such a fix.

In support of their motion to move the trial to Richmond, Va., citing the extensive pre-trial publicity in North Carolina, Hobby's lawyers offered as proof a 300-phone-call opinion survey covering seven counties, conducted by a professor at N.C. State University, which found that 97 percent of those phoned knew who Hobby was, and 100 of the 300 already held a "firm opinion" that he was guilty of the charges. Judge Britt

ities or his militance. On Aug. 7, he and 20 textile workers joined a PATCO picket line at the same federal building in Raleigh where he will be tried. "Our country says it supports the Polish workers," Hobby told a reporter, "yet here at home it's denying its own employees the most basic right—to withhold their labor."

Mark I. Pinsky reports from the Southeast for Reuters and several publications.