

# Celler Careless About Aiding Interests

By Jack Anderson

The venerable, 84-year-old dean of the House, Rep. Emanuel Celler (D-N.Y.), has become a bit careless about promoting his pocketbook interests in Congress.

For 50 years, he has shuffled papers and switched nameplates to separate his law practice from his congressional actions. But this hasn't prevented him, apparently, from tending the cash register of a multi-million-dollar conglomerate on Capitol Hill.

The conglomerate, Fischbach and Moore, does electrical work for power plants, industrial facilities, office buildings and other installations. It has received government contracts for a variety of projects, ranging from the FBI's vast new headquarters in Washington to anti-ballistic missile sites in North Dakota.

Repeatedly, Celler has put his power and prestige on the line in favor of projects that would benefit Fischbach and Moore. In promoting these projects, however, he hasn't mentioned that he has a financial stake in the company. He has served, off and on, as a director, and his law firm does legal work for the company.

There was a big brouhaha in the 1960's, for example, over Consolidated Edison's construction of a nuclear generating plant at Buchanan, N.Y., and a hydroelectric plant at Cornwall, N.Y. Celler rose to the defense of Con Ed.

## Sacred Cow

"The Cornwall plant," he declared, "has been attacked as an invasion of the scenic beauty of the Hudson . . . I have grave doubts as to whether or not there will be any invasion of the beauty of the Hudson. Nor is scenic beauty a sacred cow to be worshipped at all and any cost."

As for those who opposed the nuclear plant, Celler snorted: "These are the same skeptics who, in the 15th century, warned Columbus not to set out on his voyage to India, which finally led him to America. These are the same skeptics, who, in 1888, said the Brooklyn Bridge would fall down. These are the same skeptics that denigrated Kittyhawk and flying machines, and these are the same skeptics who scoff at our efforts to reach the moon."

Celler omitted the fact that Con Ed had contracted with Fischbach and Moore to do the electrical work.

In 1969, Celler helped rally a close House vote in favor of the anti-ballistic missile system. "The gamble is too great, the awesome risk too much to bear" if the ABM system is not constructed, he told the House gravely.

He neglected to mention that his favorite conglomerate would help with the construction.

## Celler and Lockheed

Again in 1971, Celler sup-

ported the controversial \$250 million loan to Lockheed Corp. "I think Lockheed is worth saving!" he cried. He pointed out that "in my own state, there are suppliers on subcontracts involving over \$67.5 million."

He discreetly didn't mention that Fischbach and Moore was one of the subcontractors.

Celler has voted for military construction that included electrical contracts from Fischbach and Moore. As House Judiciary Chairman, Celler also has jurisdiction over the FBI which, perhaps coincidentally, awarded Fischbach and Moore the electrical contract for the new J. Edgar Hoover building.

All the while, Celler has put on a great show of abstaining, in the name of ethics, from handling private law cases before the federal government. What he has done for ethics, however, is required by law. It happens to be a federal violation for congressmen to take fees in federal cases.

The door to Celler's law layout displays two signs. One identifies the firm of Weisman, Celler, Allan, Spett and Sheinberg. The other omits Celler's name. All cases involving the government are assigned to the firm without his name.

A prospective client might have difficulty, however, in distinguishing between the two firms. Both have the same telephone number. Indeed, they share furniture and fix-

tures as well as phones. While they keep separate books and bank accounts, the same staff is used by both firms.

Footnote: The kindly Celler told us he had been guilty of no conflicts and would swear, so "on a stack of Bibles." Our charges, he said, were "contemptuously false." When we compared his past statements with the Fischbach and Moore contracts, he insisted that he had been unaware of any connection.

## Washington Whirl

**Running Mates**—Sen. George McGovern has told campaign aides that, if he wins the Democratic nomination, he won't choose any of the top presidential contenders for a running mate. His first choice, if he could get him, would be Sen. Ted Kennedy. Other possibilities he has mentioned: Florida's Gov. Reuben Askew, Illinois' Sen. Adlai Stevenson, Indiana's Sen. Birch Bayh and Idaho's Sen. Frank Church. Sen. Hubert Humphrey, in contrast, has indicated he would like McGovern as a running mate.

**Harlem Heroin**—Rep. Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.), worried about drug addiction in his Harlem district, has privately asked Central Intelligence Director Richard Helms for 10 studies the CIA has made on worldwide drug routes to the U.S. When Helms declined, Rangel served notice he would invoke the Freedom of Information Act.