

GOP-Controlled Foreign Policy Panels Would Reverse Several Clinton Stands

Administration Sees Provisions as Isolationist Bid to Preempt President

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The international affairs bills approved by key committees in the Senate and House last week contain dozens of far-reaching and controversial provisions that would force major changes in U.S. foreign policy in many areas, especially in relations with China.

Under the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's version of the State Department authorization bill, the president would be required to recognize Tibet as an "occupied sovereign country" and appoint an ambassador to its "legitimate" government, headed by the Dalai Lama. The House International Relations Committee bill contains similar language, and both versions contain several other provisions designed as challenges to Beijing.

The House version contains provisions that would reverse the Clinton administration's recent decision to ship intercepted Cuban refugees back to Cuba and would cut off aid to Russia because of arms sales to Iran.

Such efforts by the Republican-controlled foreign policy committees have horrified Clinton administration officials and State Department foreign policy professionals, who regard them as efforts by isolationists to settle old scores with the remaining communist regimes and reduce the U.S. role in the world.

Public and media attention to the legislation has focused on provisions that would slash international affairs spending and eliminate the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, the United States Information Agency and the Agency for International Development, which administers foreign aid.

But the bills are also laden with sleeper provisions that would affect U.S. participation in international peacekeeping and relations with sev-

eral countries in Asia and the Middle East.

The House bill would even involve the State Department in domestic child support disputes by authorizing revocation or withholding of a passport from anyone more than \$10,000 in arrears.

"This is a staggering assault on

foreign policy," one senior State Department official said. Even if the administration agreed with the policy mandates, the official said, it would oppose the bill because it preempts the president's constitutional authority to set U.S. foreign policy.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher told a Senate Appropriations subcommittee on Thursday that the proposed legislation, especially the spending cuts, would undermine the achievements of decades of bipartisan U.S. foreign policy, but he declined to say whether he would recommend a presidential veto.

Senior congressional Democrats such as Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (Vt.) and Rep. Lee H. Hamilton (Ind.) also have expressed opposition to the legislation.

The Republicans, however, demonstrated tight party discipline in pushing the bills through committee and toward quick floor action, with support of such traditional foreign-policy moderates as Sens. Richard G. Lugar (Ind.) and Nancy Landon Kassebaum (Kan.)

Some of the proposed provisions reflect the search for new sources of revenue, and new places to cut spending, to meet coming balanced budget mandates.

For example, the Senate bill would require the director of the USIA—before his agency was abolished—to conduct a six-month experiment in which Voice of America, Radio Marti and other U.S. government broadcast networks would accept advertising.

The House bill would require the closing of some embassies, challenging Christopher's desire to maintain "the principle of universality" of U.S. presence.

Some provisions reflect members' desire to answer old questions or resolve long-standing issues. The House bill would prohibit aid to Nicaragua pending an investigation into whether the explosion of a clandestine arsenal there in May 1993 was related to the February 1993 World Trade Center bombing. The House bill also would prohibit spending taxpayer dollars to "further normalize" diplomatic relations with Vietnam until Vietnam "accounts for all American" prisoners of war and

those missing in action "from the Vietnam War," a task regarded by the Defense Department as impossible.

Some provisions were inserted to challenge specific policies of the Clinton administration.

The House version, for example, would prohibit use of U.S. funds to pay for sending refugees back to their countries of origin against their will, a provision that would reverse the administration's new policy of intercepting Cubans at sea and sending them home.

Another section would ban aid to any country selling weapons to a terrorist state, a provision that would shut down aid to Russia if it continues to sell submarines and other arms to Iran.

Both versions take aim at China on several fronts in addition to Tibet, the mountainous country of grand vistas and soaring Buddhist temples where an uprising against Chinese rule was crushed by the Chinese army in 1959. The United States recognizes Chinese sovereignty over Tibet, and any suggestion of U.S. support for independence would provoke outrage in Beijing.

Other provisions targeted at China:

- Both measures would grant political asylum to anyone subject to or fearful of involuntary sterilization or forced abortion, both of which China has been accused of using in its population control campaign.

- Both versions would require President Clinton to allow the president of Taiwan to enter the United States.

In the Senate version, the visit would occur this year and President Li Teng-hui would be received "with all appropriate courtesies" as a head of state. China claims sovereignty over Taiwan. The Clinton administration has refused to grant Li a visa for fear of offending Beijing.

- The Senate bill would impose fines of up to \$1 million for repeat violators of a ban on importing goods made by prisoners or "forced labor," another human rights violation of which China frequently has been accused.