

## Government debate opens

# SALT II FACES TOUGH GOING IN THE U.S. SENATE

President Carter faces an uphill battle to get the SALT II "arms limitation" treaty passed in the Senate.

Debate opened in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on July 9. The SALT II controversy reflects the growing struggle in U.S. ruling circles over how the U.S. should deal with Soviet expansionism and declining U.S. imperialist influence. Some elements believe that the U.S. should play a more aggressive role in the world. Others hope that measures like SALT II will appease the Soviets and thus restrain them from further aggression.

### **Equality and verification**

There has been growing opposition to SALT II since Carter signed the treaty with Soviet President Brezhnev on June 18 in

Vienna. Most of the concern centers on the treaty's weighted advantage to the Soviets, and the U.S.'s ability to verify Soviet compliance.

Lt. General Edward L. Rowny, who represented the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the SALT negotiations, resigned from the U.S. Army, and is expected to testify against the treaty during the Senate hearings.

Senator Howard Baker came out against SALT II on June 27. As the influential Senate Republican leader, Baker's opposition to SALT was a blow to White House hopes. Baker said he would oppose an unamended treaty because it gives a military advantage to the Soviets. Baker pointed out that the treaty allows the U.S.S.R. 308 heavy missiles, while the U.S. is allowed no equivalent numbers. The

U.S.S.R. is also free to produce its long-range Backfire bomber, while the U.S. has scrapped its plans for the B-1 bomber.

Even Senator Alan Cranston, who supports the treaty, said on July 6 that he wants amendments.

Senator Henry Jackson, one of the treaty's strongest opponents, said "It's all reminiscent of Great Britain in the 1930's, when one government pronouncement after another was issued to assure the British public that Hitler's Germany would never achieve military

equality, let alone superiority."

Another common objection to the treaty is the U.S.'s ability to verify Soviet compliance. The U.S. lost two CIA observation posts on the Iranian-Soviet border last year, and the Turkish government is leaning against allowing U.S. U-2 planes to fly over Turkish airspace. The U.S. had counted on these sources as means of verifying the number and locations of Soviet strategic arms.

### **Soviets: no amendments**

Two-thirds of the Senate must

vote for SALT II in order for it to be ratified. SALT needs 67 "yes" votes; 34 "no" votes would kill it. At this time only 50 Senators firmly support it and 25 already firmly oppose it. Quite a few are leaning against it, and others are undecided, including Senate majority leader, Robert Byrd.

One factor influencing those still undecided is the Soviet Union's insistence that it will reject any amendments to the treaty. Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko said that any attempts to amend or change SALT II "would be the end of the negotiations. It would be impossible, whatever amendments might be added."

After being considered in Senate committees this summer, debate will open in the Senate this fall. It may be 1980 before it comes to a vote.

## Arms race unrestrained by SALT II talks

