



DELEGATION URGES COURT TO UPHOLD REFORMS

From Congressional Media

■(WASHINGTON) Oklahoma Senators Jim Inhofe and Don Nickles and Representatives Bill Brewster, Tom Coburn, Ernest Istook, Steve Largent, Frank Lucas and J.C. Watts, Jr., have joined Sen. Orrin Hatch, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, in urging the Supreme Court to uphold the habeas corpus provisions of the recently passed Antiterrorism Bill.

In signing on to Hatch's friend-of-the-court brief, the Oklahoma Congressional delegation is calling on the justices to care-

fully consider the legal arguments on why the habeas corpus reforms do not violate the Constitution. The Court recently decided to hear a case, *Felker v. Warden*, in which the issue will be addressed.

Considered by many to be the most important part of the Antiterrorism Bill, the new habeas corpus provisions are designed to limit frivolous appeals by death row inmates and to help insure that death sentences in the most heinous crime cases are carried out in a timely manner.

"The Antiterrorism Bill," said Inhofe, "is designed to restore the concept of punishment as a deterrent to crime. This is what the families of the victims in Oklahoma City have worked so hard to achieve. I have every confidence that the Supreme Court will agree and uphold the constitutionality of these reforms."

Nickles said he was glad to join with other members of the Oklahoma delegation in the effort. "This hard won victory in Congress to end endless death row appeals has already been challenged in court. I am pleased to join my delegation colleagues and Sen. Hatch in this effort to preserve that victory for all the relatives and victims of the Oklahoma City bombing who worked so hard to make that victory possible."

Istook criticized what he called liberal groups "who run screaming to the courts whenever we try to get tougher on crime."

"These groups seem focused on coddling criminals. I wish instead they would focus on the rights of victims and of the citizens who want to avoid becoming victims."

Largent said the bill "addresses the silent pleas of all death row victims' families: how long must we wait for justice to be served? Justice delayed is justice denied. Surely justice will be served with the Supreme Court upholding this long needed and awaited reform."

"I trust the Court will rightly uphold habeas corpus reform, and affirm a victory for victims' rights in our judicial system," said Lucas.

Said Watts of the bipartisan effort, "It's great to work together to put justice back in the American judicial system."

INFANTS PRENATALLY EXPOSED TO COCAINE MAY BE MORE AFFECTED EMOTIONALLY THAN INTELLECTUALLY

From National Institute for Health

■(WASHINGTON) Infants who were prenatally exposed to cocaine may be more affected emotionally than intellectually, according to collaborating teams of pediatricians and psychologists from the Yale Child Study Center, led by Linda Myers, and from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), lead by Marc Bornstein. As infants, these children tend to be very easily over-stimulated and distressed by unfamiliar sights and sounds, but their ability to process information may not be as affected.

It is estimated that at least 50,000 and perhaps as many as 375,000 infants are born yearly in the United States to mothers who abuse cocaine or crack while pregnant. The investigators are studying the impact of cocaine on the mental and emotional development of these babies.

The work is described in several reports, the most recent of which appears in the current issue of *Development and Psychopathology*, which is devoted to and entitled "Regulatory Processes in Development." This article describes how researchers, who recruited women at Yale-New Haven Hospital, recorded the emotional reactions of 63 infants when they were presented with pictures of unfamiliar faces or objects. The mothers of 36 of these infants had used cocaine during pregnancy, and their babies' reactions were compared with those of 27 non-exposed infants from a similar socioeconomic background. The researchers conclude that cocaine exposed babies are more likely to respond to such novel images by fretting or crying than are children who are

not exposed to cocaine prenatally. In fact, some of the cocaine babies were so irritable that they couldn't be tested.

The Yale/NICHD teams believe that irritability and over-sensitivity to novelty have several important implications for the development of cocaine-exposed infants. Firstly, adults the world over, says Dr. Bornstein, in addition to comforting, often respond to crying infants by distracting them. This strategy is likely to make matters worse for cocaine-exposed babies. Secondly, a fretful, fussy baby is harder to care for and respond to, a problem that is compounded by the fact that these babies are not only born to but also often reared by substance-abusing mothers, whose addiction impairs their ability to interact with their infants.

Furthermore, over-sensitive to novelty is also likely to undermine a child's ability to explore and to learn, which may give rise to the impression that the child has a cognitive impairment. This may lead teachers and others to offer inappropriate remediation to these children, whose excitability threshold has been lowered by their cocaine exposure; teaching programs for these children should therefore be designed to minimize over-stimulation.

The NICHD is part of the National Institutes of Health, the biomedical research arm of the Federal government. Since its inception in 1962, the Institute has become a world leader in promoting research on development before and after birth; maternal, child, and family health; reproductive biology and population issues; and medical rehabilitation.

"The man who walks alone is soon trailed by the F.B.I."

*Wright Morris
A Bill of Rites, A Bill of Wrongs,
A Bill of Goods, 1967*