

Clinton, Bush trade personal insults, spar on economy

Bill Clinton and George Bush clashed over the economy on Thursday, and swapped uncommonly personal insults in their run for the White House.

Bush also stressed over and over that the economy is on the road to recovery. "Not as sick as the opposition would have you believe," he said.

Clinton delivered a speech on the economy in Michigan and had another one on AIDS scheduled for later in New Jersey.

Clinton said Bush says "incredible, incredible dishonest things," and aides said he was referring to radio commercials the Republican president is airing in several states.

Bush denied Clinton's accusations, and criticized the media liberally for what he said was overly pessimistic reporting on the economy.

As for the economy itself, he said: "A lot of people are hurting, but we're growing. And that is the key factor," he said in an appearance on CBS' "This Morning."

"That's a pretty darned good turnaround here, pretty beginnings, not robust growth, but it's far more impressive than, obviously, all these economists had been predicting," Bush said.

Bush pressed his underdog's campaign in part by mentioning his dog. "My dog Millie knows more about foreign affairs than these two bozos," he said in Michigan and his running mate.

Clinton said, "We are 18 months after the bottom of the recession and we are still doing worse than at any comparable period since before World War II."

Ross Perot's name turned up in the strangest place. Vandals doctored the 50-foot letters of a sign that says HOLLYWOOD in the hills above Los Angeles to read: PEROTWOOD.

Most public polls showed Clinton with a lead in single digits. His aides insisted their margin was holding. "We've got a November surprise

Perot stayed out of public view in preparation for an evening appearance on CNN's "Larry King Live."

His spokeswoman, Sharon Holman, complained that the news media was inaccurately depicting the race as a two-way competition between the president and his Democratic challenger.

"The American people do not consider this only a Bush-Clinton race," she said.



CIA refused to share information on Iraqi firms, documents show

WASHINGTON—The CIA knew before the Gulf War that at least five recipients of U.S. exports to Iraq were defense industries, but it did not tell the Commerce Department, which approved the sales, documents show.

information to the Commerce Department because it was never asked to do so.

Complaints about the CIA's reluctance to share information with other government agencies are legion. The problem was recently underscored in the case of an Italian bank branch in Atlanta that approved unauthorized loans to Iraq.

The Commerce Department approved some \$1.5 billion in exports to Iraq from 1985 to 1990, saying most were not designated for military use.

On Jan. 29, 1991, the senior congressional investigator met with CIA officials to ask what the agency had known about 25 of the Iraqi end users listed on U.S. export licenses, and whether the agency had notified the Commerce Department.

In a message to agency employees this week, CIA Director Robert Gates said he had asked his inspector general to examine the records system of the Directorate of Operations and to recommend changes that will "put an end to difficulties in responding promptly to congressional and other inquiries."

Information revealed Thursday on both sides of the Atlantic indicated that the CIA had information about Iraqi defense industry purchases both in the United States and Britain.

F. Douglas Whitehouse, who headed the CIA's committee on technology transfer, said he had run a computer check comparing the 25 end users against a CIA data bank, according to the notes made by the investigator, who also was interviewed on the grounds that he not be identified.

Critics of the CIA argue that the agency has an instinctive mistrust of sharing information with outsiders, partly out of fear of compromising its sources, and that no amount of records reforms will help.

Many of the Iraqi companies that bought U.S. technology legally turn out to have been military industries with innocuous sounding names that didn't set off alarms at the Commerce Department. In any case, the department was under White House orders to encourage trade with Iraq.

Whitehouse said he had come up with "about five hits" — five companies about which the CIA had information, said the investigator. He said the CIA told him it did not supply the

The CIA, and possibly the Defense Intelligence Agency, knew the true

Cleaner, costlier gasoline required for urban drivers

WASHINGTON—This winter automobiles in most American urban areas will be polluting less, thanks to a cleaner burning, peppier gasoline required by the government.

over a four-to-seven-month period depending on the severity of air pollution. The EPA estimates that the new gasoline will result in a drop of about 20 percent in carbon monoxide emissions from cars and trucks.

As a result of the regulation that takes effect Sunday, carbon monoxide emissions from automobiles and small trucks will be sharply reduced in 39 urban areas from Boston to San Diego, say air quality experts.

Carbon monoxide is emitted when a vehicle's engine is warming up, and is a greater problem in winter and in high-traffic areas. Even in relatively mild concentrations, it can cause dizziness, headaches and problems for elderly people with heart conditions.

"This is the first big program under the Clean Air Act to go into effect," said Dick Wilson of the Environmental Protection Agency.

The new "oxygenated" gasoline blends cut down on carbon monoxide emissions because the gas burns cleaner during warm-up, say EPA officials.

Under the two-year-old law, service stations in the 39 areas, which don't meet carbon monoxide health standards, will be allowed to sell only gasoline containing an additive that provides more oxygen, thereby allowing it to burn cleaner.

Oil companies say it costs 3 to 4 cents more a gallon to produce the oxygenated fuel. Motorists also may have to buy more gasoline because the new blend is less fuel efficient.

The new blend must be used

Horse race campaign Pre-election polls play increasing role

It's an old complaint: Pre-election polls are turning the Republic's greatest deliberative exercise into something as unseemly as the fourth race at Aqueduct.

cratic process," executive editor Michael R. Fancher wrote in a column this month. He admits, "readers love to talk about them."



This season the charge has new urgency, as poll results dominate the closing days of the presidential campaign and threaten to shape the very outcome of the race.

That doesn't mean everyone wants to talk to the pollsters. For those who don't, Daniel S. Greenberg, a syndicated columnist specializing in scientific issues, has a homemade remedy: When the pollster calls and asks for your opinion, preference or plans, simply respond: "None of your business, thank you."

Don't believe these crazy polls! Don't believe these nutty pollsters!

— Bush

On Thursday, President Bush's rise in the polls was all over the airwaves and across Page One in New York's tabloids. "CLOSER" reported Newsday, while the New York Post had Bush "BREATHING DOWN BILL'S NECK." The president, headlined the Daily News, had pulled off "A LATE POLL VAULT."

It's all part of what University of Virginia political scientist Larry Sabato has called "the worst orgy of polling in American history."

Even the candidates can grow impatient at the barrage of polling. Earlier this month, when many polls had Bush with a double-digit deficit, he told a crowd in Cornelia, Ga: "Don't believe these crazy polls! Don't believe these nutty pollsters!"

Two television networks update their election polls daily, giving a fresh answer to the one question that matters most in a political campaign: Who's ahead?

On Thursday, Bush said in Michigan, "I'm encouraged by the way these polls that we live and die by are shaping up."

The number of national presidential election campaign polls increased from three in 1972 to 259 four years ago. This year, a half-dozen polling organizations are dialing tens of thousands of people across the nation in the two weeks before the election, and hundreds of state and local news organizations and candidates are conducting their own polls.

"We're seeing an excessive amount of horse race analysis," said Lee Miringoff, director of the Marist Institute for Public Opinion and normally an exuberant advocate of polls and polling.

The Seattle Times is not among them. "Who's ahead" polls are "the junk food of our demo-

"There might be some front-runner voters out there who want to vote for a winner, but there aren't many," says Guy Molyneux, coordinator of polling for Cable News Network. "And they would only add a bit to a winner's margin of victory."

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