

Clinton aims to help victims of military cuts



President Bill Clinton
Scott Maurer/DN

Companies urged to make products for civilian uses

BALTIMORE — Looking to wean the nation off Cold War military budgets, President Clinton on Thursday promised help to people and places hurt by deep Pentagon cuts and a new round of base closings.

He also pledged to spend billions of dollars to promote civilian uses of military technology.

"The world's finest makers of swords can and will be the world's finest makers of plowshares," the

president told enthusiastic workers at a Westinghouse Electronic Corp. plant, one day before the scheduled announcement of a new round of base closings.

Clinton plans to ease the pain of military cuts with a five-year "defense conversion" budget of \$19.6 billion, a fraction of the \$112 billion he plans to slash from the Pentagon budget during the same period.

Republicans said the conversion program would fail to provide enough help to victims of Pentagon cuts.

"I think it is a political effort to try to cover and make excuses for the incredible slashing that they're doing in this Pentagon, because they don't have the guts to cut anywhere else,"

said Rep. John Kasich, ranking Republican on the House Budget Committee.

Clinton said, "I don't pretend that this will be easy, and all of it will take some time."

Clinton's first-year budget contains little new money, and most of the programs announced Thursday have been on his agenda since the presidential campaign. But the Westinghouse plant — with its electric cars and high-tech civilian radar — was a fitting backdrop for unveiling his repackaged defense conversion program.

Nearly 4,500 plant employees have been laid off since 1991, but company officials said hundreds of jobs were

saved when the firm began using its technology to create products for civilian and military uses.

Clinton wants to use federal money to help more defense-oriented companies develop similar "dual-use" programs.

The first money for Clinton's package comes from a \$1.4 billion appropriation approved by Congress last year but not spent by the Bush administration. Reiterating a promise he made last month, Clinton said he would take another \$300 million from other federal programs to make \$1.7 billion available for defense conversion in the fiscal year that ends Sept. 30.

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Police: No conspiracy in clinic shooting

PENSACOLA, Fla. — Investigators found no evidence Thursday of a conspiracy in the shooting death of a doctor outside his abortion clinic. The anti-abortion demonstrator who reportedly confessed was ordered held without bond.

In the wake of what's believed to be the nation's first killing stemming from an abortion demonstration, clinics around the country tightened security and women's groups urged Congress to approve legislation making the blocking of clinics a federal crime.

At conservative Pensacola's two abortion clinics, police increased security.

"The whole community feels vio-

lated by the killing," Mayor Jerry Maygarden said.

A candlelight vigil in Gunn's memory was planned in Pensacola for Thursday night.

Michael Frederick Griffin, once described by his wife as suffering "great fits of violence," was ordered held without bond. A day earlier, he shot Dr. David Gunn, calmly surrendered and confessed, authorities said.

"At this time we have no evidence to indicate a conspiracy exists," police Sgt. Jerry Potts said. "The case is not closed, but I can't say we anticipate additional arrests."

In Washington, several national groups urged an FBI investigation of

"anti-choice violence."

The shooting, abortion rights advocates said, is indicative of growing extremism in the anti-abortion movement.

"The government needs to ensure that vigilantes, terrorists and religious extremists do not take away our basic right to choose," said Kate Michelman, president of the National Abortion Rights Action League.

Randall Terry, a leader of the anti-abortion group Operation Rescue, called the killing an "inappropriate, repulsive act," but he also called Gunn a murderer of babies.

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Cult leader Koresh releases 3 followers from compound

WACO, Texas — Domsday cult leader David Koresh agreed to let three men leave his armed compound, the FBI said, but dozens of followers remained locked in a standoff with federal agents for a 12th day Thursday.

The three men, whose exit was promised in a phone call early in the day, had not left the Branch Davidians' rural compound near Waco by mid-afternoon.

Also Thursday, a 12-year-old girl who lived with the cult for four years said that while there, she was taught to put a gun in her mouth and instructed how to commit suicide by taking cyanide.

Two women and 21 children were allowed to leave last week. The last was a young girl last Friday. Ninety adults and 17 children are still believed to be in the compound.

More than a week ago, Koresh reneged on a promise to surrender the entire cult once a radio station played a lengthy statement of his on the air.

FBI spokesman Dick Swensen called Koresh's latest promised release a positive signal in negotiations to end the stalemate, which began Feb. 28 when an attempted raid by federal agents turned into gun battles. Four federal agents and at least two cult members died.

But Swensen also cautioned, "Until they come out, we won't be comfortable that they are coming out."

Koresh, an apocalyptic preacher who has called himself Jesus Christ, has said earlier that he was injured in the gun battle. Since Tuesday, he has complained of a headache and left negotiations to other cult members, led by aspiring preacher Steve Schneider.

Communist lawmakers further diminishing Yeltsin's powers

MOSCOW — The Communist-dominated Congress whittled away more of President Boris Yeltsin's powers Thursday and canceled a national referendum he had sought to cement his authority.

The criticism was so biting that Yeltsin walked out of the Grand Kremlin Palace before the Congress of People's Deputies adjourned its second day of an emergency session.

The votes cutting his power were preliminary but potentially damaging to Yeltsin, who has haggled for months with Parliament Speaker Ruslan Khasbulatov over who should wield supreme power: the president or parliament.

Without his present power to issue decrees, Yeltsin loses the ability to implement market reforms over the heads of obstinate officials and pro-

Communist lawmakers. And without the threat of the proposed April 11 referendum, lawmakers may be emboldened to attack Yeltsin further.

Yeltsin's supporters in the 1,033-member Congress claimed the restrictions, if given final approval, could make Yeltsin a lame-duck president. The resolution was sent to an editing committee — which includes Yeltsin and Khasbulatov — and could be presented for a final vote Friday.

"After this Congress, the reforms could be finished," said Leonid Gurevich, a pro-Yeltsin lawmaker.

In Washington, Secretary of State Warren Christopher expressed confidence Yeltsin could emerge in a stronger position, saying that "the end of the story has not been written."

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