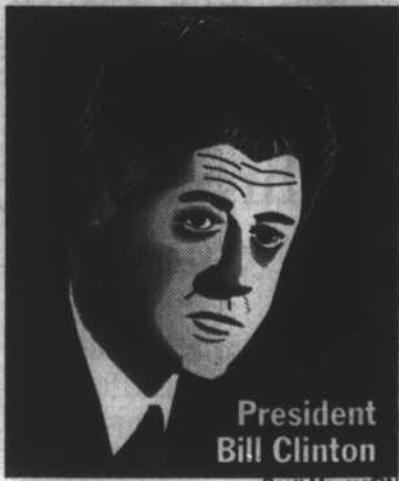


## Clinton's lobbying to sell economic plan might pay off



President  
Bill Clinton

Scott Maurer/DN

WASHINGTON — President Clinton lobbied intensely to persuade Congress to support his economic plan, courting special interests at private White House meetings while the Democratic National Committee mobilized voters to influence their lawmakers.

The campaign-style drive, involving virtually every arm of the administration and party, was continuing right up to the last minute with Clinton personally calling wavering lawmakers Thursday to shore up support.

The effort was so far-reaching that even a Republican congressional staffer was asked to call a Democratic congressman to ask for support.

"It seems like everybody down

there is in the selling game," said William Pitts, a senior aide to House Republican Leader Robert Michel. Pitts was solicited by the Democratic Party by telephone at his home last week.

The Clinton effort appeared poised for victory Thursday with the House expected to approve his economic package with no significant changes and favorable Senate action expected next week.

"I think at this point you've got to give the guy an A-plus," said Gregory Lebel of George Washington University's graduate school of political management. "I would put him on a par with Ronald Reagan, which is to say superb."

— "It seems like everybody down there is in the selling game."

—Pitts  
Michel's aide

to influence members of Congress on pending legislation.

"While I can sympathize with your desire to create a lobbying network on behalf of your legislative proposals, there is a clear line of appropriateness," Michel wrote in a letter this week to the White House.

"... It seems that your own White House staff is in violation" of the law, "and that these efforts should cease immediately," he wrote.

White House communications director George Stephanopoulos said he did not know if Michel's letter had been reviewed. But he asserted, "No member of the White House is breaking the law."

## House makes strong moves to close out Reaganomics

WASHINGTON — The House moved Thursday to close the book on Reaganomics and embrace President Clinton's economic prescription for new spending to create jobs coupled with long-term budget cuts and tax increases to whittle the deficit.

"It is clear that the time has come to make a fundamental change in policy and direction," Clinton told Treasury employees.

Democratic leaders predicted that in a long day of debate, they would steamroll Republicans and approve two of Clinton's economic recovery measures.

One would lay the blueprint for future bills trimming the deficit by \$510 billion over the next five years, to be split evenly between spending cuts and tax increases. It resembled a plan the Senate was also debating.

The other would pump \$16.3 billion in new spending into community

development grants, small business loans and other job-creating projects. The administration says the measure would create 219,000 jobs this year and more later.

On a tally 295 to 135, the House killed a GOP budget that would have cut spending by \$429 billion over the next five years.

"We've had no-pain presidencies for 12 years, and now the pain facing the American people is greater than anything we could have possibly imagined," said Rep. John Bryant, D-Texas. "A president that's willing to... say we need to make cuts and we need to increase taxes in certain areas is a president with courage who deserves to be followed."

"They think a large federal government is the answer," said Rep. John Kasich, R-Ohio. "We believe empowering the individual and getting government off individuals' backs

is the answer."

Taking no chances, Democrats even limited the number of amendments GOP lawmakers could offer.

"We were royally zapped," Rep. Robert Walker, R-Pa., moaned in an interview.

Democratic leaders were piecing together an amendment trimming the jobs package by about \$10 million. Its goal was to remove projects that Republicans had chided as ludicrous wastes of money: \$3.2 million to produce atlases about fish populations and \$800,000 to get America's whitewater canoeing team ready for the 1996 Olympics.

"The goal here is to have the fewest number of Democrats defect," said Rep. Philip Sharp. "We're interested in demonstrating we have the capacity to govern."

## Serbs block U.N. convoys and brutally assault Sarajevo

SARAJEVO, Bosnia-Herzegovina — Serbs blocked vital U.N. convoys to desperate Srebrenica and two other Muslim enclaves Thursday, and subjected Sarajevo to one of the worst assaults of the Bosnian war.

Intense artillery fire hit central Sarajevo and continued for a second day in suburbs around the airport, providing a grim welcome for Gen. Lars Erik

Wahlgren, the new U.N. commander in former Yugoslavia.

Under U.N. pressure, Bosnian Serbs allowed three blocked aid convoys into Bosnia Wednesday and Thursday. They then stopped all three, signaling they were determined to cement their hold over much of eastern Bosnia regardless of international criticism and peace

talks in New York.

"The main message from here is that someone has to stop the Serbs from advancing," said Larry Hollingworth, a U.N. refugee official, by ham radio from Srebrenica. "Like some evil Jabberwocky, they must be stopped."

In a French TV interview relayed to Zagreb by ham radio operators, Gen. Philippe Morillon, the U.N. commander in Bosnia, said the stalled Srebrenica convoy should arrive Friday.

"It has been agreed for the convoy to be tomorrow at 8 a.m. on the demarcation line and at 8:30 it should enter Srebrenica," Morillon was quoted as saying. He said 12 women and children were to be evacuated.

Bosnia's U.N. ambassador accused four Serbian planes of bombing villages near Srebrenica on Wednesday night, even as the U.N. Security Council was condemning a bombing raid four days earlier.



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## Tobacco tax revenues going up in smoke

It seems to make perfect sense — if cigarettes rob Americans of their health, why not tax them more to help pay for health insurance?

One answer: Because revenues from tobacco taxes are crumbling like the ash on a cheap cigar, along with the percentage of Americans who smoke.

They're butting out for health reasons or because tax increases make it too expensive. Either way, the public treasury is taking a hit.

A 50-state survey by The Associated Press found 20 states reporting tobacco product tax revenues in decline and 11 others that were in decline until they raised their excise tax. The rest generally were static.

The same goes for federal tobacco revenues, which fell until the excise tax went up from 16 cents to 20 cents

a pack in 1991. This year it went up to 24 cents.

While tobacco taxes yield lots of ready money at first, they're unlikely to provide long-term funding for something huge and growing like universal health care.

Call it The Incredible Shrinking Tax Base.

In 1965, the year after the first U.S. surgeon general's report linked smoking to cancer, 42.4 percent of Americans over 18 smoked. By 1990 that figure had dropped to 25.5 percent.

Accordingly, government treasuries have eased their dependence on tobacco.

Among the states, tobacco taxes peaked in 1968 in providing 5.2 percent of state revenues. That share has fallen to 1.9 percent. Smokers' current \$5.8 billion contribution to the

federal pot is 0.4 percent of all revenues, a mere puff compared to the 1.39 percent in 1968.

This pattern of sliding revenues has two chief causes, economists say.

Tobacco taxes don't grow with the economy, necessitating regular hikes. And when tobacco taxes get high enough, some smokers quit and would-be smokers don't start.

The Minnesota Revenue Department offered this equation: For every 10 percent increase in the price of cigarettes, sales fall 4.5 percent.

The tax on smokers is "a mechanism to limit consumption," Mark Muchow, chief tax analyst for the West Virginia Division of Tax and Revenue. "Every time the cigarette tax is increased, a few more people say, 'It's time to quit.'"

## Experts clear actor of abuse charges

NEW HAVEN, Conn. — A team of child sexual abuse experts cleared Woody Allen of Mia Farrow's charge that he molested their adopted 7-year-old daughter, the filmmaker and actor said Thursday.

Allen said he would seek custody of the girl and his other children.

Farrow had accused Allen of sexually abusing the child, Dylan, in August at Farrow's Bridgewater home. Farrow had been Allen's companion and favorite leading lady for 12 years until a bitter split last summer, when he disclosed that he was romantically involved with Farrow's 22-year-old

daughter.

Allen and Farrow arrived separately Thursday at Yale-New Haven Hospital and were briefed together by three child sexual abuse experts on a report they compiled as part of a state police investigation of the allegations.

Allen emerged from the 2 1/2-hour meeting and told reporters and photographers that the report found "I never ever used my daughter, that no sexual abuse took place." Allen said the meeting was unemotional and uneventful. "There were no tears," he said.

Of Farrow's allegations, Allen said:

"A terrible, terrible crime has been committed against my daughter."

Farrow wouldn't comment on the report, except to say, "I'll always stand by my children."

Her attorney, Eleanor Alter, said Farrow felt the Yale team's findings were "incomplete and inaccurate."

The Yale group, despite Ms. Farrow's request, declined to meet with people whose information would've been vitally important to their findings, including Ms. Farrow's older children and an eyewitness to part of the abuse, Alter said.

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