

Clinton approves legislation aimed to bring down Castro

WASHINGTON — Rushing to punish Cuba, Congress and President Clinton agreed Wednesday on new sanctions that would bridle foreign investment with the goal of removing Fidel Castro.

"Farewell Fidel. That's the message of this bill," said Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman Jesse Helms, R-N.C., the legislation's Senate sponsor.

The White House, seeking to avoid a veto, accepted controversial language in the sanctions bill that will allow American citizens to sue foreign investors who make use of property in Cuba confiscated during the 3 1/2 decades of Castro's rule.

It also denies entry into the United States to anyone who traffics in confiscated property and codifies into law all previous executive orders on America's 34-year-old embargo on Cuba.

"This is going to have a tremendous impact on Fidel Castro and his ability to stay in power," said Rep. Dan Burton, R-Ind., the House sponsor of the legislation.

After agreement was reached with the White House, House and Senate negotiators quickly approved the "Libertad" (Liberty) bill. It is expected to go to the House and Senate floors by early next week for certain decisive approval.

The White House threatened to veto the bill last fall when it passed both chambers because of the lawsuit provision. But Clinton was reluctant this time to stand in the way

of passage after Cuba's downing over the weekend of two American planes, presumably killing four Cuban-Americans.

The Clinton administration maintains the planes were shot down in international airspace. Cuba says they were within its territorial limits.

In a compromise, the president was given authority to waive the litigation right, but for no more than six months at a time, when the national interest is involved.

"The president, in light of the incident Saturday, believes tightening the embargo on Cuba is a necessary step now, both to deal with this incident and promote our overall goal of democratic change in Cuba," White House press secretary Mike McCurry said.

The lawsuit provision and the entry ban are certain to draw fire from other Western countries that trade with Cuba and have long rejected participating in the U.S. embargo. Canada and other countries have voiced displeasure over the idea of unilateral U.S. action restricting their rights to invest in Cuba. Opponents in Congress say the lawsuit provision also could cause a serious logjam in U.S. courts.

Backers of the bill, which has strong congressional support, insist it could provide the pressure finally to bring down the Castro government. Rep. Benjamin Gilman, R-N.Y., chairman of the House International Relations Committee, con-

"Farewell Fidel. That's the message of this bill."

JESSE HELMS

Senate sponsor of the bill

tended it would "bring an early end to the Castro regime by cutting off capital."

"We are in the very last stages of this confrontation," said Rep. Robert Torricelli, D-N.J. He called for the "purest, hardest and most determined form" of legislation.

Sen. Claiborne Pell, D-R.I., ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said he would vote against the bill because it would worsen living conditions for the Cuban people, "alienate our allies and tie the administration's foreign policy hands."

Supporters said the interests of other countries were secondary to driving Castro from power. "The United States cannot continue placing American lives at the hands of foreign interests," said Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, R-Fla., a Cuban-American representing Miami.

The bill urges the president to seek an international embargo against the Castro government and authorizes him to assist the democratic movement there.

GOP lead jumbled as stretch of dozen states approaches

WASHINGTON — With the deep-pocketed Steve Forbes back in the hunt, the Republican presidential race careens through a dozen states in the next week, a dizzying stretch of opportunity and peril for the three candidates atop the pack.

This next stretch — from South Carolina and Georgia to Maine, Massachusetts and Connecticut, then on to Maryland and Colorado — will, for the first time, subject the candidates to a range of diverse electorates all at once.

Heading into South Carolina's vote on Saturday, Forbes, Pat Buchanan and Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole were clustered at the front. Forbes is the leader in delegates, but it is truly a race without a front-runner and one in which no prediction seems safe.

Here is a candidate-by-candidate look at the terrain for the contests just ahead:

BOB DOLE: South Carolina is a must-win primary for a boost heading into Georgia next Tuesday. If Dole wins South Carolina, the next task will be to deny Forbes momentum heading into the March 7 New York primary. That would require wins almost everywhere on March 5, when Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Vermont hold primaries.

Still, Dole, once the overwhelming front-runner, has yet to win outside of his native Midwest.

"In a two-way race with Buchanan, Dole would benefit because Buchanan motivates people who want to vote against him," said Goetas. "But in a three-way, Dole is going to have to motivate his own vote, something he

has yet to prove he can do."

PAT BUCHANAN: A disappointing third in Arizona makes a South Carolina win critical if he is to compete for the nomination and not just delegates. In South Carolina and Georgia, Buchanan is banking on deep support from Christian conservatives active in GOP affairs.

He hopes to lure "textile Democrats" into the South Carolina primary with attacks on free trade deals. Buchanan failed to make the Rhode Island ballot, and Tuesday brought this sobering news: Exit polls show half of voters believed Buchanan too extreme, suggesting a solid ceiling to his growth potential.

STEVE FORBES: Forbes will spend heavily for New York's March 7 primary — along the way nudging Dole ever closer to the primary spending limit he faces because he accepts government matching funds.

While the South is tough territory for Forbes because of his views on social issues, Colorado, Maryland, and the New England primaries offer a chance to target more upscale, moderate-conservative voters with the flat tax and other Forbes proposals. A March 5 win or two would help heading into New York.

ALEXANDER AND LUGAR: Alexander needs to beat Dole somewhere soon, either in South Carolina or Georgia. Indiana Sen. Dick Lugar will advertise only in Vermont between now and March 5, believing one win will bring him a second look if the race stays so topsy turvy. If he doesn't win Vermont, Lugar will pack it in.

Legislature puts forth euthanasia bill

A bill that would allow physicians to carry out the wishes of terminally ill patients was introduced to a legislative committee Wednesday.

Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha introduced LB1259 to the Judiciary Committee with the knowledge that the bill was not ready to advance, but he said he wanted to get the concept across.

In the last Judiciary Committee hearing of the session, no action was taken on the bill.

Many of the elderly citizens on hand to testify left before the committee got to the bill, but a few testifiers waited almost five hours for testimony to begin.

Christopher Caudill, the president-elect of the Nebraska Medical Association, said his organization would not support legislation that would permit a physician to terminate a patient's life.

The Lincoln cardiologist also outlined the American Medical Association's statement on euthanasia and said it was a good summary of the

NMA's position.

The statement said that although life became more preferable than death in extreme cases, "permitting physicians to engage in euthanasia would ultimately cause more harm than good."

Carl Schmitthausler, president of Hemlock Nebraska, said doctors could help ease suffering by expediting certain death.

"We've had patients for days, weeks and months waiting to die," he said.

— Ted Taylor

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Marriage

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Opposition to the bill was based largely on religious grounds.

Doug Patton, executive director of the Nebraska Christian Coalition, called Chambers' proposal "a mockery" of the institution of marriage.

"Where do we draw the lines? Today we mock the bonds of matrimony with this travesty, tomorrow ... what?" he said.

"Propitiate? Bestiality? Necrophilia? To what depths will we sanction our national descent into deviancy?"

Jim Cunningham, executive director of the Nebraska Catholic Conference, said marriage was not an issue of individual rights, but of institutional definition.

"It is about launching Nebraska into a major social experiment," he said. "To reformulate the basic structure of society by attempting to make relationships which aren't marriages into marriages."

But Chambers said his bill had positive legal and economic aspects for homosexual couples wishing to be married.

He outlined government benefits, including social security and Medicare, joint insurance policies and legal rights in medical issues.

Job called the issue one of basic civil rights.

"I am an obvious minority, and I am denied my most basic civil rights," she said. "These are not wants, these are needs."

Barbara DiBernard, a UNL English professor and director of Women's Studies, said she couldn't understand how senators could vote no, after seeing the passionate testimony from homosexual couples.

"Being in that room, and listening to those people testify," she said, "it would be hard to vote against it."

She said she didn't expect the bill to be advanced by the committee, but said it would open the door for discussion in the future.

The committee took no action on the bill.



Legislature '96

Law & Order

A LOOK AT CRIME ON CAMPUS AND IN THE COMMUNITY

ASSAULT

Police arrested a Lincoln woman on suspicion of assault Sunday night after she pulled a gun on her husband.

Pamela Grundman, 26, was arguing with her husband, Jason, 24, at their residence on the 5100 block of West McGuire Road, Heermann said.

Pamela Grundman went downstairs to her bedroom and returned with a .22-caliber revolver, Heermann said.

She allegedly pointed it at her husband, cocked the hammer and told him to leave, Heermann said.

Jason Grundman knew the gun was loaded and grabbed it between the hammer and frame to prevent it from firing, Heermann said.

After a brief scuffle, police said, he retrieved the gun and called police. Pamela Grundman was ar-

rested on suspicion of third-degree assault.

ROWDY CROWD

Lincoln police issued 45 tickets Tuesday evening at the White Zombie concert at Pershing Auditorium. About 5,700 fans attended the show.

Tickets were issued for the following:

- Five for procuring alcohol for minors.
- 11 for minors in possession of alcohol.
- 12 for consuming alcohol in public.
- Four for possession of marijuana.
- Five for possession of drug paraphernalia.
- Four for urinating in public.
- Two for disturbing the peace.
- Two arrests for outstanding warrants.

BOMB THREAT

A University of Nebraska-Lincoln freshman was faced with a bomb threat Tuesday night while working at The Gallup Organization.

Tiffany Jahn, 19, was working at Gallup, 301 S. 68th St., when she received 15 threatening phone calls around 8:15 p.m.

A male caller asked if she was ready to die, Lincoln police Sgt. Ann Heermann said.

During one of the calls, the person said there was a bomb in Jahn's car, which was parked outside, Heermann said.

Lincoln Fire Department searched the car for explosives but found none.

Police think the calls came from out-of-state, possibly South Carolina.

— Chad Lorenz

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