

Clinton faces vacancies in Cabinet

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Word of all four resignations came from officials who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The Cabinet changes could soon total six, aides said, as Clinton prepares his team for a second White House term.

O'Leary, her reputation smudged by excessive travel expenses, was "given the clear impression" that Clinton wants her out, one official said.

Even as Clinton wrapped up his successful campaign, Chief of Staff Leon Panetta was meeting one by one with Cabinet members to discuss their futures.

For some, like Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, Panetta offered the president's strong support. For others, he listed the president's grievances and hoped the secretary "would take the hint," said one administration official.

The next several days could witness behind-the-scenes power struggles as some secretaries fight to retain their posts and Clinton moves to replace some of them.

Kantor was said by some to be angling for a new administration post. Transportation Secretary Federico Pena has a shaky hold on his seat at the Cabinet table, but could still stay, the sources said.

Many at the highest levels of the White House would like Janet Reno to leave but it would be difficult to fire the popular attorney general, they said.

Reno "has said all along that if the president asks her, she is ready to go four more years," said Bert Brandenburg, the Justice Department's chief spokesman.

Panetta, who will soon leave the White House himself, hopes to announce the departures all at once to protect the egos of deposed members. The announcement is expected

sometime after a Cabinet meeting Friday evening.

Based on interviews with a half-dozen administration officials, here's a look at how the Cabinet is shaking out:

- Christopher tried to leave the Cabinet once before but was talked out of it. Christopher reportedly informed the president of his decision Tuesday night in Little Rock, Ark., as they savored Clinton's re-election victory.

- Perry, reluctant to take the job three years ago, opted out but will stay until the Senate approves his replacement.

- Reno said a few weeks ago she wants to stay. Her doctors say her mild case of Parkinson's disease is not an obstacle. She may be the victim of an old Washington game: If you can't fire somebody, make their life uncomfortable by leaking reports of presidential pique.

- Kantor wants to be attorney general or chief of staff. If Kantor could survive confirmation, Clinton would love to see him behind Reno's desk. Kantor is bored with his current job and would not mind returning to California.

- Pena left his meeting with Panetta convinced he could stay. But aides say Clinton was not impressed with his handling of the ValuJet crash and would like to give Chicago's Bill Daley, the brother of Mayor Richard Daley, the post he all but promised him in 1992.

- Shalala was told by Panetta she can stay. She will.

- Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros is a favorite of Clinton's. But he may depart over personal financial problems related to an independent counsel's investigation.

- Education Secretary Richard Riley is another Clinton favorite. Officials close to Riley say he probably will leave. White House officials say it is entirely up to him.

- Robert Rubin is on Clinton's list to be chief of staff, but the Treasury boss told Panetta he wouldn't take it. Aides expect him to stay at Treasury.

- Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt was on the outs after he battled Western constituencies. But one senior official said Babbitt had rehabilitated himself enough to remain in the Cabinet "if he threatens to fuss."

- Labor Secretary Robert Reich may leave on his own accord, but Labor Department officials said he has scheduled a meeting with department employees later this month to discuss the new term.

- CIA Director John Deutch is a top candidate to replace Perry.

- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman is safe.

Candidates to replace Christopher include former Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke, United Nations Ambassador Madeleine Albright, former Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell — now a Clinton envoy to Ireland — and Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, a longtime Clinton friend.

Senior aides said the president might turn to retired Gen. Colin Powell or Sen. Richard Lugar, R-Ind., in a show of bipartisanship.

Former Chief of Staff Mack McLarty is a strong candidate for Energy or Commerce. West Virginia Gov. Gaston Caperton has an inside track on Education if Riley wants to go.

Rep. Bill Richardson, D-N.M., is Clinton's dream prospect at Energy but he may be in for bigger things after successful diplomatic work in Burma and North Korea.

North Carolina businessman Erskine Bowles is considered the perfect candidate to replace Panetta, but he is reluctant to scuttle pending business deals to take the job.

Perry to talk with Clinton about future

OFFUTT AIR FORCE BASE (AP) — Secretary of Defense William Perry, who reportedly plans to resign, said Wednesday he will discuss his future with President Clinton later this week.

At a visit with U.S. Strategic Command officials, Perry was asked whether he planned to resign.

He responded: "I will be speaking with the president later this week about my plans for the next four years and his plans for me for the next four years."

"And until I have that discussion, with the president, I don't think I will discuss it in public," Perry said.

Military sources said Wednesday that the 69-year-old defense secretary planned to leave "for personal reasons," but would stay in office until a replacement had been named.

At a news conference held during his appearance at Offutt Air Force Base, Perry said he had not submitted a letter of resignation. When told that sources said he planned to resign, Perry said: "I have had discussions with friends and staff many times in which I have discussed with them what my future plans are. But I have not had a final discussion with the president, not made a final commitment, yet. That will happen later this week."

Perry, widely hailed as one of the president's most capable Cabinet officers, came under intense criticism in recent months over the June bombing of a U.S. barracks in Saudi Arabia in which 19 Air Force men were killed.

Winds delay first of 10 Mars treks

NASA must launch the Global Surveyor by Nov. 25 because of planet alignment.

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — High wind delayed the launch Wednesday of the Mars Global Surveyor, the first of 10 spacecrafts to be sent to the Red Planet by NASA over the next decade.

Launch officials said they will try again at midday today to dispatch the Global Surveyor on its 435-million-mile, 10-month journey to Mars.

Thick rain clouds scuttled the first launch attempt. The sky cleared just in time for the second, and last, attempt of the day, but the wind accelerated with just one minute remaining in the countdown.

"Hold! Hold! Hold!" launch engineer Dave Smith urged his colleagues.

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration has until Nov. 25 to launch the Global Surveyor on the Delta rocket. Otherwise it will have to wait two years until the planets are in proper alignment.

The probe is composed mostly of leftover parts from the Mars Observer, which fell silent just three days before it was supposed to arrive at the Red Planet in August 1993.

The Global Surveyor should reach Mars in September 1997 and begin mapping the planet six months later from a 235-mile-high orbit. Six science instruments will study the Martian surface and atmosphere for 687 days, or a full Martian year.

Three militia men convicted for conspiracy

MACON, Ga. (AP) — Three members of the 112th Georgia Militia were convicted of conspiracy Wednesday for stockpiling pipe bombs for use against the federal government.

A federal jury also found militia leader Robert Starr III and members Troy Spain and Jimmy McCranie guilty of possessing an unregistered destructive device. They were found innocent of other charges.

The three were accused of conspiring to use pipe bombs on roads, ve-

hicles, bridges, power lines and federal law enforcement officials.

Spain hatched a plan for financing their "war" against the government by robbing armories and drug dealers, prosecutors said.

Kevin Barker, a government informant and prosecution witness, testified last week that the three hoped to use the bombs at the Summer Olympics in Atlanta.

Defense attorneys argued that the three did nothing but talk about mak-

ing bombs and were lured into the conspiracy by government informants.

"What he did was play Army," said Spain's attorney, Greg Spicer. "He engaged in loose talk."

Starr's lawyers argued that he was running a sting operation to weed out extremists from his group.

Judge Duross Fitzpatrick said he would sentence the men in 60 to 90 days. Each had faced a maximum sentence of almost 22 years in prison.

All three were acquitted of one con-

spiracy charge. Starr and McCranie also were acquitted of threatening a federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms supervisor in Macon, and Starr was acquitted of possession of an illegal assault rifle.

Starr, 35, an electrician, and McCranie, 30, a plumber, both of rural Crawford County, were arrested in April when federal agents found buried explosives on Starr's property. Spain, 28, of Warner Robins, turned himself in a month later.

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