

News Digest

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 1998

PAGE 2

Starr Report Aftermath

"We are here because circumstances and our Constitution have thrust upon us an onerous duty — one that requires us to summon the courage and the means to defend the rule of law."

Rep. Henry Hyde, R-Ill., House judiciary chairman

"There's going to be some sort of sanction here. The question is what — from impeachment to censure to rebuke to condemnation or what."

Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, Senate judiciary committee chairman

"This is not politics. This is not spinning. This is not polling. This is not a lynch mob. This is not a witch hunt. This is not trying to find facts to support our already reached conclusions. This is a constitutional test."

Rep. Richard Gephardt, D-Mo., House minority leader

"Based on a preliminary review of the narrative and statement of grounds submitted by the independent counsel, it is clear that there is disturbing evidence that the President may be guilty of perjury, obstruction of justice and witness tampering. If proven, such conduct would constitute grounds for impeachment."

Rep. Charles Canady, R-Fla.

"There is a presumption of innocence until proven guilty."

Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee, D-Texas

"The report lays out a clear case that the president committed obstruction of justice, and other offenses that strike at the heart of our legal system. Over the next several days, I will be carefully analyzing the supporting material from Judge Starr to determine if the evidence fully and completely supports a case for President Clinton's impeachment."

Rep. Bob Barr, R-Ga.

"The impeachment process can reestablish the moral authority of the office. It's clear we need to do something so that we have a president with some strength."

Rep. Chris Cannon, R-Utah

"If congressmen get impeached for misleading statements or lying, we are all done for."

Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich.

State supporters still back Clinton

By TODD ANDERSON
Senior staff writer

Nebraskans who showed support for President Clinton by donating to his public defense fund hope the nation's leader will serve his full term and want to see an end to the Kenneth Starr investigation that has lasted more than four years.

And as the Judicial Committee of the House of Representatives reviews the Starr report, many supporters remain loyal to the president.

When Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr began his investigation more than four years ago, a public fund opened to help pay for Clinton's defense expenses.

Since then, more than 20 Nebraskans have contributed \$5-\$1,000 each to the special fund. The contributors interviewed by the Daily Nebraskan all said they still supported the president after the release of the report.

Dan Crawford, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln visiting philosophy professor, said he gave \$1,000 to the fund because he thought the investigation had gone too far.

"I didn't think it was fair for him to go hundreds of thousand of dollars in debt for charges that were politically motivated."

Charles Keenan, a retired priest from Lincoln who donated \$25, said the entire investigation stemmed from manipulation of politics.

"There's no morality, no sex," he said. "Just all politics."

Walter Malson, a Lincoln tax auditor who gave \$25, agreed and said he thought the Starr investigation was motivated by hatred and revenge.

Malson and Marilyn Riechel, a college instructor from Omaha, said they want to contribute more money to the defense fund now that the Congress is considering impeachment.

"I never doubted that (President Clinton) was a human being and could make mistakes," Riechel said.

Riechel said she did not approve of Clinton's extramarital affair with Monica Lewinsky, but blamed the media and Republican leadership for delving into Clinton's personal matters.

"The actual disgrace to our country is what they've made out of this," she said.

Crawford said it would be a "great tragedy" if Clinton were to resign and Riechel said it would be a "very sad day" for America.

Riechel said she thought Clinton would serve out his term because of his ability to side-step past controversies.

"I never doubted that (President Clinton) was a human being and could make mistakes."

MARILYN RIECHEL
Omaha college instructor

"They've gone after him with such ferocity and such intensity," Riechel said. "That really speaks well for Clinton," she said.

But Crawford said he was pessimistic about the outcome of the investigation.

"I'm afraid this whole incident is going to cripple his presidency and make him ineffective," Crawford said. But Sharon Parcel, a retired customer service representative from Omaha, said she would react with indifference if Clinton resigned or was impeached by Congress.

"I see he's under a lot of stress," Parcel said.

"I could just see it might take pressure off him," she said.

Crawford and Malson both said they trust congressional leaders to decide whether to impeach Clinton, but hoped such a process wouldn't start.

"Like it or not, we've got to deal with these charges," Crawford said.

"We're going to have to trust the House of Representatives to ... apply the process and constitutional procedure fairly," he said.

"I'm pleased that the American people are able to keep his private life separate from his political life," Crawford said.

He and Malson said Clinton did not commit a high crime that would justify impeachment.

"The man didn't steal any money, he didn't break any laws except for his own moral values with his wife," Malson said.

Malson said he wrote to all of the national representatives from Nebraska and encouraged everyone to do the same, no matter what their opinion.

"Get out and talk to the people we voted for."

Congress considers impeachment, censure

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House of Representatives is increasingly likely to vote for a formal impeachment inquiry in the next few weeks, congressional officials said Sunday, a step that could ratchet up the political jeopardy confronting President Clinton.

Officials in both political parties, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that if it takes such a step, the House would not necessarily limit its inquiry to Kenneth Starr's review of Clinton's sexual relationship with Monica Lewinsky and Clinton's attempts to deny it under oath.

Instead, these officials said, the House Judiciary Committee might be empowered to range over numerous other issues, from Whitewater to Clinton's involvement in questionable campaign fund raising in 1996.

Attorney General Janet Reno has steadfastly refused to appoint an independent counsel to review campaign fund-raising.

Congressional Democrats, including Democratic Sen. Bob Kerry, joined by a top Republican senator, spoke Sunday of a punishment short of impeachment for President Clinton and

demanding his lawyers end "legal hairsplitting" as they rebut Kenneth Starr's report.

"There's going to be some sort of sanction here," said Sen. Orrin Hatch, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee. "The question is what — from impeachment to censure to rebuke to condemnation or what," the Utah Republican said.

Rep. David Bonior of Michigan, the second-ranking House Democrat, said: "I think in the days and months ahead you will find people talking about the middle option, that of a public rebuke for his personal behavior."

Clinton skipped church services during the day, remaining out of the public eye in the White House.

But with his presidency clearly in peril, his lawyers and aides fanned out across the Sunday television talk shows to declare that whatever his transgressions, Clinton committed no impeachable offenses.

Starr's report, released Friday, cites 11 potentially impeachable offenses, all stemming from Clinton's sexual relationship with former intern Monica Lewinsky — described in explicit detail —

and his later denials under oath.

Clinton's lead attorney, David Kendall, argued fiercely in an appearance on ABC's "This Week" program: "The president did not commit perjury. Starr's report is full of graphic and unnecessarily salacious material. It is not relevant."

That style of defense drew dismissive reaction from Kerrey. "The president's going to lose if they continue to do that," Kerrey said, appearing alongside Hatch on CBS' "Face the Nation."

"He is being very badly served with this legal hairsplitting," agreed Hatch. "I think the president has a chance of getting through this, if he'll quit splitting legal hairs, if he'll quit playing this legal game."

At the same time, the White House's counterattack against Starr was achieving success among the public. A CBS poll, taken Saturday, found 60 percent of those responding believed Starr included numerous lurid sexual details in his report to embarrass the president. Only 33 percent believed it was to prove perjury.

Hatch said he talked with Clinton by phone Sunday. Asked whether the president told him he might admit perjury and accept censure, Hatch replied, "No,

he did not."

Andrew Jackson is the only president to be formally censured by Congress, and the 1834 vote was later expunged by the Senate.

Clinton's political fate will begin to come into clearer focus at the beginning of the week, when lawmakers return to Washington from a weekend of campaigning and testing public opinion in their home districts.

The first few polls taken in the wake of Starr's report suggested the public continues to give Clinton high marks for job performance, yet wants to see him punished in some way.

A narrow majority in an ABC News poll, 53 percent, said they favor impeachment hearings. A majority in a CBS News poll, 56 percent, and the CNN poll, 59 percent, said they favor censure for the president.

The ABC phone survey of 508 adults on Saturday had a margin of error of plus or minus 4.5 percentage points. The CBS phone survey of 680 adults and the CNN phone survey of 902 adults, both on Saturday, had margins of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points.

Legal team argues offenses not impeachable

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton's initial defense seems to be that though he may have been wrong and misleading, he did not commit any crimes.

The White House's 73-page response to Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's report does not deny that Clinton had a relationship outside of marriage, or that the president did not give full and complete answers to Paula Jones' lawyers in the sexual harassment lawsuit against him.

Rather, the president's lawyers argue that Clinton's actions do not meet the legal standards for perjury — or impeachment. It is a strategy designed to reduce the chance that the House will move to impeach the president.

"Impeachment is both a legal and a political proceeding," said former Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman, D-N.Y., who served on the House Judiciary Committee when it approved articles of

impeachment against President Nixon. "It really has to be built on public support."

The White House response, written by Clinton's private attorney, David Kendall, and presidential counsel Charles Ruff and their associates, does not deny that the president did not provide the full story of his relationship with Monica Lewinsky to Jones' lawyers. Under the law, he does not have to, they argued.

"If answers are truthful or literally truthful but misleading, there is no perjury as a matter of law, no matter how misleading the testimony is or is intended to be," the lawyers wrote. "The law simply does not require the witness to aid his interrogator. The referral seeks to punish the president for being unhelpful to those trying to destroy him politically."

Clinton's lawyers argued that the "high crimes and misdemeanors"

"Impeachment is both a legal and a political proceeding. It really has to be built on public support."

ELIZABETH HOLTZMAN
representative D-N.Y.

referred to in the Constitution regarding impeachment does not include extramarital relations.

"Private misconduct, or even public

Please see REBUTTAL on 3

Daily Nebraskan

Editor: Erin Gibson
Managing Editor: Chad Lorenz
Associate News Editor: Bryce Glenn
Associate News Editor: Brad Davis
Assignment Editor: Kasey Kerber
Opinion Editor: Cliff Hicks
Sports Editor: Sam McKewon
A&E Editor: Bret Schulte
Copy Desk Chief: Diane Broderick
Photo Chief: Matt Miller
Design Chief: Nancy Christensen
Art Director: Matt Henry
Online Editor: Gregg Stearns
Divisions Editor: Jeff Randall

Questions? Comments?
Ask for the appropriate section editor at
(402) 472-2588
or e-mail dn@unlinfo.unl.edu.

General Manager: Dan Shattil
Publications Board: Jessica Hoffmann, (402) 466-8404
Chairwoman: Don Walton, (402) 473-7248
Professional Adviser: Nick Partsch, (402) 472-2589
Advertising Manager: Andrea Oeltjen
Asst. Ad Manager: Marni Speck
Classified Ad Manager:

Fax number: (402) 472-1761

World Wide Web: www.unl.edu/DailyNeb

The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, Monday through Friday during the academic year; weekly during the summer sessions. The public has access to the Publications Board. Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by calling (402) 472-2588.

Subscriptions are \$55 for one year.

Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln NE 68588-0448. Periodical postage paid at Lincoln, NE.

ALL MATERIAL COPYRIGHT 1998

THE DAILY NEBRASKAN