

# News Digest

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## Defense: No grounds for impeachment

WASHINGTON (AP) — Opening a final, impassioned defense against impeachment, President Clinton's legal team told the House Judiciary Committee on Tuesday that Clinton's conduct was "misleading, even maddening" but did not warrant removing him from office.

"Nothing in this case justifies this Congress overturning a national election," White House special counsel Greg Craig told the committee. "There are no grounds for impeachment."

He also questioned the truthfulness of Monica Lewinsky, the former White House intern whose account of an affair and cover-up put the Clinton presidency in jeopardy. "We think in some areas she provided erroneous testimony that is in disagreement with the president's testimony," Craig said under questioning.

Craig said he did not believe Oval Office secretary Betty Currie or Clinton's friend Vernon Jordan, who also gave testimony that conflicted with the president.

Committee Republicans frequently

expressed dismay that Craig refused to say Clinton had lied under oath and that the White House didn't summon any witnesses with direct knowledge of the case.

After months of relentless attacks on Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr, the White House took a gentle approach toward the evidence he turned over to the impeachment committee. Craig promised a "powerful case" against impeachment that includes testimony from 14 witnesses over two days. The committee will then vote on articles of impeachment.

Rep. Marty Meehan, D-Mass., lamented that a committee vote in favor of impeachment was "a foregone conclusion" regardless of the hearing testimony.

"The will of the American people is about to be ignored in the hope that the people won't care enough to say anything," he said, adding that the hearing was important nonetheless to help sway 20 or 30 Republican members of the full House who are undecided on impeach-

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MARTY MEEHAN  
Democratic representative

ment. One of the first witnesses, Yale University Law Professor Bruce Ackerman, offered the White House a possible legal challenge to impeachment. He argued that if the House voted before year's end to remove Clinton from office, the new Congress could not act on articles of impeachment approved by the previous one.

The vote on impeachment "loses its constitutional force with the death of the House that passed it," he testified. He added that the new Congress that convenes in January, in which the GOP majority is slimmer, would have to vote

again on impeachment before a Senate trial could begin.

That testimony conflicts with a Congressional Research Service memo stating that an impeachment proceeding may be continued from one Congress to the next.

Away from the historic proceedings, the president kept his public focus elsewhere. He kicked off a two-day conference on reforming Social Security and then departed for a Tennessee memorial for former Sen. Albert Gore Sr., the vice president's father, who died Saturday.



### Court decision prohibits car searches after ticketing

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a rare win for privacy rights, the Supreme Court ruled Tuesday that police cannot search people and their cars after merely ticketing them for routine traffic violations.

Such a search is unreasonable and unconstitutional, the court ruled unanimously in an Iowa case.

The justices said police unlawfully searched an Iowa man's car after he was stopped for speeding. The search turned up marijuana and a pipe in Patrick Knowles' car.

The decision amounted to "a pretty resounding no" to police, said Knowles' lawyer, Paul Rosenberg. Allowing the search would have created a "very big category of permissible searches," he said.

"Which of us has not at some point gone over the speed limit or made an illegal left turn?" added Brooklyn Law Professor Susan Herman, who signed a friend-of-the-court brief on Knowles' behalf.

The ruling disappointed the National Association of Police Organizations. Traffic stops are "one of the least predictable and most dangerous duties of a law enforcement officer," said Robert Scully, the group's executive director.

### U.S. agrees to aid Netanyahu during mounting tensions

JERUSALEM (AP) — The United States agreed to key symbolic concessions Tuesday on President Clinton's visit to Israel and the Palestinian areas, extending a helping hand to an Israeli prime minister under political siege.

New clashes erupted in the West Bank as domestic pressure mounted on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to abandon the Wye River land-for-security agreement with the Palestinians.

The violence and Israel's political turmoil came just five days before the start of Clinton's visit to Israel and the Palestinian areas.

The trip had been intended to shore up the latest Mideast peace agreement.

In one of several bouquets to Netanyahu, Clinton's top envoy to the region reversed earlier claims and said the president had initiated the upcoming visit.

Earlier, the U.S. claims that Netanyahu had suggested the visit at October's Wye talks angered right-wingers in Netanyahu's Cabinet and helped lead to a vote Monday in parliament for a no-confidence motion, to take place in two weeks.

### U.N. inspectors search for banned weapons in Iraq

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) — U.N. inspection teams launched an intensive search Tuesday for banned Iraqi weapons despite angry assertions from Baghdad that the searches amount to harassment.

"We are undertaking a very intensive schedule," said Caroline Cross, the spokeswoman in Baghdad for the U.N. Special Commission, which oversees the inspections. "We have several teams in town. We need to test Iraq's pledge to comply."

Baghdad did not hide its anger as the weapons inspectors speeded up their probe. State-run newspapers quoted Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, currently on a visit to Moscow, as saying there was a limit to Iraq's compliance.

### Iran activists slain during killing wave

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — After Dariush Foruhar and his wife were found stabbed to death under mysterious circumstances, dissidents began to more openly question a string of slayings of critics of the Iranian government.

A friend found the couple's bloody bodies in their home last month. Foruhar had been stabbed 15 times in the heart. His wife, Parvaneh, also was stabbed to death.

There was no sign of burglary, and it seemed like a professional killing. Both husband and wife had been sprayed with some unknown substance, knocking them out so they couldn't scream for help.

The slayings were chilling in their familiarity: At least nine political activists, whose actions angered Iran's clerical rulers, have been killed over the past decade. Many were stabbed to death like the Foruhars.

Dissidents and newspapers are beginning to question the slayings, emboldened by the promise of political freedoms offered by President Mohammad Khatami, a moderate cleric elected last year.

Others killed include a Tehran University professor, a magazine editor, a publisher, three Christian priests and two Sunni Muslim preachers who spoke out against Iran's Shiite Muslim leaders.

In none of the earlier slayings are the perpetrators known to have been found or brought to justice.

Police said they have made several arrests in the slaying of the Foruhars, after Khatami condemned the killings and ordered an investigation. But no findings have been made public.

New York-based Human Rights Watch expressed concern "that the killing of the Foruhars is part of a long-standing pattern of harassment and persecution of government critics in Iran."

Parvaneh Foruhar had told Human Rights Watch that she and her husband feared for their lives.

The political killings have not been limited by Iran's borders. More than 60 Iranian exiles have been slain while abroad since 1979.

## FBI releases file on Sinatra

### Singer volunteered to work undercover, was refused

WASHINGTON (AP) — Francis Albert Sinatra — special agent for the FBI?

It would have happened if Ol' Blue Eyes had his way, according to a cache of confidential documents from Sinatra's FBI file, made public Tuesday. Sinatra in 1950 volunteered to work undercover for the feds — an offer they could (and did) refuse.

That same year, according to a confidential federal informant, Sinatra smuggled \$1 million cash into Italy for mobster Charles "Lucky" Luciano. Such tales are the stuff of The Sinatra Files, a mishmash of facts, allegations and plain rumors.

The papers offered few nuggets of new information. There were vague

allegations of mob ties and communist sympathies, but little evidence of either.

There's no mention of Judith Exner, Sinatra's acquaintance who allegedly had simultaneous affairs with President Kennedy and Chicago mobster Sam Giancana. No tales of the Rat Pack rampaging through Las Vegas. And only passing mentions of mob bosses such as Carlo Gambino, with no smoking guns.

Rather than flashes of the infamous Sinatra temper, the documents include a variety of threats against the singer — everything from extortion to death threats. A Sept. 7, 1950, confidential memo showed Sinatra offering his assistance to the FBI. The Hoboken, N.J., native told FBI officials that he felt there was an opportunity to "do some

good for his country under the direction of the FBI," the memo said.

The singer, the memo continued, was "willing to do anything even if it affects his livelihood and costs him his job."

The FBI started its Sinatra file in February 1944 after a gossip columnist passed along a tip that the thin singer had paid a doctor \$40,000 to give him a phony 4-F draft rating.

That charge was baseless, but the file filled up over the years.

According to the FBI, Sinatra saw the material after filing his own requests in 1979 and 1980. The FBI came up with 1,300 pages on Sinatra, and they released all but 25 of the pages after requests from news agencies.

## San Francisco blackout affects 938,000

### A 'simple human error' left thousands in the dark, in the city and in suburbs.

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A city-wide blackout cut off power to nearly a million people Tuesday, halting trains, planes and cable cars, closing shops and offices and leaving pedestrians scrambling. The mess was blamed on a mistake by electrical workers.

Virtually the entire city and several suburbs to the south were blacked out, and neighborhoods were only gradually coming back on line this afternoon.

The outage happened when a construction crew at a power substation in

suburban San Mateo County made a mistake involving a temporary ground, said Gordon Smith, Pacific Gas & Electric president and chief executive officer. Other links in the grid shut down automatically to limit the damage, he said.

"It appears at this time that simple human error may have been to blame," Smith said. "Procedures appear not to have been followed to the letter."

Power went out just after 8 a.m. Electricity was beginning to be restored to the 375,000 affected customers by midmorning, but the work was expected to last into the late afternoon, PG&E spokesman Corey Warren said. That number of customers — homes and businesses —

equates to roughly 938,000 people.

Shauwana Horn, two months pregnant, was stuck in an elevator with another woman until an elevator company worker rescued them. "We were in there for an hour and a half. It was dark," she said. "I just want to go eat now."

The power went out just as the San Francisco Examiner was starting its first press run, with a front page that was immediately out of date. Scrambling to publish without power or phones, the afternoon paper's staff managed to put out an expanded edition two hours later using a combination of 21st-century technology, "chewing gum, glue and spit," Executive Editor Phil Bronstein said.

## Daily Nebraskan

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