

News Digest

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House hears final arguments

WASHINGTON (AP) — In somber silence, the House Judiciary Committee weighed final arguments Thursday over alleged "high crimes and misdemeanors" by President Clinton.

Speaker Newt Gingrich notified the full House to prepare for a historic impeachment vote next week.

Republican counsel David Schippers said Clinton's perjury, obstruction of justice and abuse of power left lawmakers with the "sorrowful duty" of seeking his removal from office.

Democratic lawyer Abbe Lowell countered: "Listen to the American people, who are asking you to find a truly bipartisan way to avoid the course you are about to undertake."

But by all accounts, Republicans were ready to approve at least one article of impeachment.

At the White House, spokesman Joe Lockhart insisted the GOP charges "fall well short of impeachment," but the president's Democratic defenders expressed increasing concern about the vote on the House floor next week.

Several official sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Democrats laboring to gain support for censure from pivotal GOP moderate lawmakers were ready to demand a financial payment from Clinton as well as his signature on a written condemnation of his conduct.

Each lawyer relied on late 20th cen-

Clinton under fire

tury technology to argue a case that arises from the 18th century constitutional remedy of impeachment.

Lowell made liberal use of snippets of videotape and audio tape to bring Clinton, Monica Lewinsky, Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr and other major figures in the drama into the committee room.

A few hours later, Schippers did likewise. At one point, he queued up a videotaped segment that showed Clinton saying, "I don't recall" whether he and Lewinsky were ever alone together in the White House.

In fact, the two had multiple sexual encounters in the area around the Oval Office over a period of several months.

The 37 members of the Judiciary Committee, 21 Republicans and 16 Democrats listened intently to the two legal presentations.

Committee votes are set for Friday, possibly spilling over until Saturday. House Judiciary Committee Chairman Henry Hyde has pledged to give Democrats a vote on censure at the end of the proceedings, but in the committee, at least, that proposal is doomed to failure.

Gingrich's "Dear Colleague" letter to fellow lawmakers did not use the word "impeachment." Instead, it noted

that the Judiciary Committee was on the verge of wrapping up work on "this matter," and lawmakers should prepare for a debate on the House floor beginning next Thursday.

It will mark the first time since 1868 that the House has ruled on a presidential impeachment. President Andrew Johnson was impeached, then survived a Senate trial by a one-vote margin.

Latest video release shows Clinton 'lying'

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton, his dark suit a blot against the bare white wall, avoids looking his lawyers in the eye. The judge offers him a second look at the tricky definition. He declines.

"I have never had, um, sexual relations with Monica Lewinsky. I've never had an affair with her," he swears, looking down at the polished stone conference table.

Perhaps the last secret of the Lewinsky affair — the videotape of Clinton's deposition in the Paula Jones lawsuit — was televised for the first time Thursday for the House Judiciary Committee and the nation to judge.

"I'd like you to listen to the president's deceptions for yourself," Republican investigator David Schippers said as he cued

an aide at the VCR. More than a dozen snippets showed Clinton hedging, stammering and scratching his head.

He stared straight down, nodding again and again as his lawyer, Robert Bennett, read Lewinsky's denials of a sexual affair. Asked to vouch for her affidavit, the president leaned forward for emphasis: "That is absolutely true."

He blinked rapidly, his lips tight in silence, as Bennett interpreted the affidavit to mean "there is absolutely no sex of any kind, in any manner, shape or form."

Off-screen, Schippers concluded for the panel: "He's lying."

White House spokesman Joe Lockhart decried the showing of Clinton's deposition, which had been kept under wraps by a judge's order, as partisan "theatrics."



Judge charges Pinochet with genocide, torture

MADRID, Spain (AP) — The judge driving efforts to extradite Augusto Pinochet to stand trial in Spain for crimes committed during his 17-year rule Thursday issued his indictment of the former Chilean dictator.

In the 300-page document, Judge Baltasar Garzon charged Pinochet with genocide and torture in the deaths and disappearances of more than 3,000 people during his virulently anti-Communist regime.

Garzon also requested a freeze of the former dictator's world assets and asked that he remain under police guard in Britain to prevent any attempt to flee.

The indictment came the day after British Home Secretary Jack Straw ruled that Spain could begin extradition proceedings against Pinochet, who was arrested Oct. 16 in a London clinic, where he was recuperating from back surgery.

Legal experts expect it will be months or even years before it is finally decided whether Pinochet will actually be extradited.

Downtown, university construction plans intertwine

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Kappa Epsilon Fraternity house on University Terrace, McDermont said.

In the core of campus, the Kauffman Center, an honors residence for computer science and business majors, will be built in the existing parking lot north of the Nebraska Union, said Margaret Miller, facilities planning manager.

Across the street, Lyman Hall and Bancroft Hall will be razed, and one large building built in their place, which will house Teachers College classrooms, Miller said.

The College of Journalism and Mass Communications will move into the Security Mutual Life Insurance Co. building on Centennial Mall within the next couple years. Avery Hall will receive nearly \$11 million in renovations before the math and computer science departments move in.

A new chemical engineering building, paid for by the \$125 million

Topp Othmer endowment, will be built in the parking lot south of the Walter Scott building, at 17th and Vine streets.

Richards Hall will be completely gutted and restored by next summer at a cost of about \$8 million, McDermont said.

"Richards Hall is the kind of building when you walked into there, it was operating at less than its full capability," McDermont said.

The temperature and ventilation system in Hamilton Hall will be repaired, with a cost of about \$12 million, McDermont said. Those types of systems need to be repaired every 25 years or so, he said.

The unfinished skyboxes in Memorial Stadium, which now serve as cheap seats for construction workers during NU football games, will soon be completed, McDermont said.

Most of these projects fit into the goals of the campus Master Plan, which will be presented to the NU Board of Regents on Saturday.

John Benson, director of Institutional Research and Planning, said most construction will occur from 1999-2005. The other phases are 2006-2011 and then 2011 and beyond.

During the first phase, the grassy mall extending from Memorial Stadium to the Beadle Center will be constructed as far east as 15th Street. The mall will be built after the Alpha Chi Omega Sorority house is demolished and relocated.

Large parking garages on all four corners of campus will replace lost parking lots, with construction slated to start soon on the structure at 14th and Avery streets.

UNL will do everything it can to coordinate projects so the entire campus is not torn up at one time, McDermont said.

"We will try to see that the university is disturbed as little as possible and get information out to everyone," he said.

Downtown debris

While the university is renovating and restructuring campus, Lincoln will be working to revitalize the downtown area.

Several major projects are already in the works, and many more planned to follow.

Lincoln's Antelope Valley Development plan will route traffic around campus and alleviate the flood plain between campus and the Malone neighborhood.

"The Antelope Valley Plan will give the university room for future development without harming nearby neighborhoods," said Polly McMullen, Downtown Lincoln Association president.

"It is important that the neighborhoods near us (downtown and the university) remain viable."

Under the Antelope Valley plan, 16th and 17th streets will be routed around campus along an expanded Antelope Creek drainage creek in the east.

On the north side of campus, pedestrian and vehicle traffic will be diverted over the Burlington Northern railroad tracks, which currently block traffic four hours a day.

The new traffic system will help make City Campus a contained unit, which the university is planning to take advantage of with projects in its Master Plan.

At the same time, downtown Lincoln will undergo major changes sponsored by the Downtown Lincoln Association and the city to attract private investment, which will diversify and strengthen downtown.

One of the most visible of these ongoing projects is the \$42 million Embassy Suites Hotel at 12th and P streets.

"Success breeds success," McMullen said. "The momentum is growing downtown, and people want to be where the action is."

That momentum is built upon other projects just completed, and some to be finished in the next few years.

A 16-screen multiplex Douglas Theatre Co. movie theater is also being planned for an undetermined place downtown.

Recently P Street has become the center of the city's plans to develop a marketplace area similar to Omaha's Old Market.

Though the city's efforts to change the direction of traffic on P Street to two-way were vetoed by public outcry, the city remains committed to the marketplace concept.

Dallas McGee, with the city's Urban Development Department, said the goal is to create a place with a variety of different businesses where people will want to hang out.

The city has worked to improve the streetscape along P Street with trees, benches and new pavement.

Within the past year, the Star City Dinner Theater and Arturo's Restaurant and Cantina opened in the Haymarket.

All of these new business investments are part of what the city wants to attract to downtown.

McGee said the goal is to diversify downtown with many different businesses as well as more residential housing.

In an investment plan for downtown done by Leland Consulting Group, planners cite residential areas as important to vibrant downtown areas.

"We want to encourage a mixed use of downtown and develop the services of a neighborhood," McGee said.

Another major project that will change the look of the downtown area is the Centennial Mall redesign.

The entire mall will be unearthed and redesigned block-by-block over seven years. Planners hope to start construction within the next two years.

Tale of two plans

The million-dollar revitalization of downtown and academia will involve a careful blending of time frames, goals and coordinating construction to minimize frustration among downtown pedestrians and students.

"The city, the university and downtown have the strongest partnership they've had in 25 years," McMullen said.

The huge pedestrian population on campus as well as downtown may be interacting more than they ever have in the past, she said.

Many of the downtown developments such as the marketplace are geared toward attracting the campus audience.

The two major forces in downtown Lincoln are working toward the same goal of fostering a pedestrian-friendly atmosphere where students will enjoy strolling downtown after class without even realizing that they have left campus, university and city planners said.

"The campus plan sounds like a great complement to the things we are doing," McMullen said. "Our fates are very intertwined."

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