

Milosevic refuses to allow demonstration

■ The race for presidency continues as the country's president gets a second chance at candidacy.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia — Slobodan Milosevic's opponents appealed to the people of Belgrade to pour into the streets Wednesday, pledging to defend their apparent victory in the presidential election despite the regime's efforts to engineer a runoff.

Milosevic's police refused to permit organizers to use a central square for an evening rally and ordered workers to dismantle a stage erected there.

Police said the demonstration would disrupt the work of the State Election Commission, which is located in a nearby building.

It was unclear whether the move was intended to ban any demonstration or was simply part of a war of nerves between the opposition and the authorities. In response, opposition leaders moved the venue for the rally to another square in central Belgrade.

"They are just trying to increase tensions," opposition spokesman Cedimir

Jovanovic said.

In Washington, President Clinton dismissed Yugoslav government plans for a run-off as an apparent attempt to steal a fair election.

"It certainly appears from a distance that they had a free election and somebody's trying to take it away from them," Clinton said Wednesday at the White House.

His comments came a day after Milosevic defied international and domestic appeals to step down and instead announced a runoff election against challenger Vojislav Kostunica — who in turn insisted he won Sunday's election outright and rejected the possibility of a new race.

The election commission reported Tuesday that Kostunica finished first with 48.22 percent while Milosevic earned 40.23 percent. A runoff is required since no candidate received more than 50 percent. It is set for Oct. 8.

Opposition results showed that with 98.7 percent of the ballot counted, Kostunica had 52.54 percent of the vote to Milosevic's 32.01 percent, Jovanovic said. The figures are said to be based on reports by the opposition's poll watchers who monitor the count at the precinct level.

"Elections are not car races in which a contestant can catch up in the second round. Our victory is not negotiable."

Cedomir Jovanovic
opposition spokesman

"Elections are not car races in which a contestant can catch up in the second round," Jovanovic said. "Our victory is not negotiable."

A runoff would give Milosevic time to maneuver, create more favorable conditions for himself, clamp down on opposition media and activists and resume his nationalist campaign portraying Kostunica as a "NATO lackey and Western stooge."

Earlier Wednesday, opposition activists distributed 10,000 baby rattles in downtown Belgrade, asking people to attend the rally and remind the Yugoslav president that he was "busted" by shaking the toys. A similar gathering was announced in Nis, Serbia's third-largest city.

An opposition delegation went Wednesday to the Yugoslav parliament in an attempt to inspect the returns. They claim the returns are short 400,000 pro-

Kostunica votes.

The guards, however, allowed only one member to enter briefly.

"There is great fear among the commission," delegate Nebojsa Bakarac said after coming out.

Bakarac said he could not single-handedly inspect more than 5 million ballots and called on commission members to "publish the real results and act according to their conscience, without creating tensions."

In addition to Clinton's remarks, other international officials on Wednesday reiterated calls for Milosevic to accept an opposition victory.

British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook said there was no point in holding a runoff. "All that is necessary is for Milosevic to get out of the way. He has been knocked out, he has now been counted out, now he should get out," Cook said.

Congress' aid to help with farmers' losses

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — More than \$2 billion in government aid will be needed from Congress to compensate farmers and ranchers for damages from drought and other weather problems this year, Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman said Wednesday.

Some \$1.4 billion would cover losses from crops, while another \$800 million would go to livestock producers, many of whom have lost pasture to drought.

"Those numbers could rise as we watch and see what happens" with the fall harvest, Glickman told the House Agriculture Committee.

Most farmers have enjoyed good weather this year. Growers are expected to harvest record amounts of corn and soybeans, the nation's two biggest crops, but several states, including Nebraska, Kansas, Texas and Georgia, have been going through a severe drought.

Nebraska lawmakers have been seeking more than \$500 million in aid for their state alone.

Lawmakers are planning to include money for disaster payments in the final version of a pending appropriations bill for the Agriculture Department. The Senate version of the bill earmarked about \$1 billion for disaster assistance; the House version had none.

The money is intended to compensate producers for losses that aren't covered by federally subsidized crop insurance.

The government is trying to get more producers to buy the insurance. Congress passed legislation earlier this spring that would provide \$8.2 billion over the next five years to reduce premiums and expand the coverage to more crops.

"By and large this is a good deal for American farmers," Glickman said.

But he told the committee that private companies that sell and service the policies are making excessive profits in comparison to other lines of insurance. Glickman, who leaves office in January, said his successor should renegotiate the terms of the government's contract with the companies.

Last year, companies had an operating profit of \$276 million on the insurance and received another \$500 million to cover their administrative expenses. Some 18 companies now sell the insurance.

Clinton pushes anti-hate crimes bill

■ Presidential candidates are hesitant to announce stance on the bill before November elections.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Clinton accused congressional Republicans Wednesday of ducking a gay-rights bill out of fear it might anger some of the party's bedrock supporters.

"The Republican majority does not want a bill that explicitly provides hate crimes protections for gay Americans," Clinton said at the White House.

"I think they think it will split their base or something," he said.

Clinton is pushing an anti-hate-crimes bill that would define crimes against homosexuals in much the same way as racially motivated crime.

Clinton said the legislation is not complicated, and could be attached to any number of bills now moving through Congress.

"All the surveys show that over two-thirds of the American people believe that no one should be subject to crime because of who they are. I just hope and pray we can do it."

President Clinton

A spokesman for Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott angrily denounced Clinton's remarks as "demagoguery at its worst."

"Pitting one group against another in order to gain personal electoral advantage is bad, even for President Clinton," Lott spokesman John Czwartacki said, adding that it "is certainly not our inclination" to put the bill to a vote.

"We do not have an interest in telling the families of some crimes that

their sons or daughters are less important in the eyes of the federal government than the victims of other crimes," Czwartacki said.

Clinton's plan would add crimes motivated by sexual orientation, gender or disability to the list of offenses already covered under a 1968 federal law, and allow federal prosecutors to pursue a hate-crime case if local authorities refuse to press charges.

The legislation also provides assistance to local law enforcement agencies in investigating hate crimes.

Earlier this month, the House, in a nonbinding 232-192 vote, agreed to make hate-crimes legislation part of a defense appropriations bill. The Senate voted 57-42 in favor of the hate-crimes provisions in June.

"All the surveys show that over two-thirds of the American people believe that no one should be subject to crime because of who they are," Clinton said. "I just hope and pray we can do it. If we can't do it, what did that Senate vote mean? Was it just some stunt?"

Movie-marketing plan pitched to deter youth

■ Lawmakers blast Hollywood's effort that would end advertising of R-rated films to young audiences.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Hollywood executives refused to guarantee to lawmakers Wednesday they would end all marketing of R-rated films to underage audiences.

Some acknowledged trying to market adult movies to children, an effort one studio chief called "a judgment lapse."

A day after the industry released its 12-step plan to stop "inappropriately specifically" targeting children in advertising R-rated movies, lawmakers derided the effort as insufficient and pressed for firmer commitments.

"I don't understand this language. It is filled with loopholes," said Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John McCain, R-Ariz., who convened the hearing of eight top studio representatives.

Both the Democratic and Republican presidential campaigns weighed in, urging movie makers to take more action.

"To put it as bluntly as I can, they have not done enough," said Democratic vice presidential nominee Joseph Lieberman. "They would not say explicitly that they would stop marketing adult-rated products to our children."

Lynne Cheney, wife of GOP vice presidential candidate Dick Cheney, took aim at both the industry and the Democratic ticket, for its fund-raising efforts in Hollywood.

Vice President Al Gore and Lieberman decry the industry's practices during the day, but "another message is delivered at night with a wink and a nudge," she said.

She also suggested that the election prompted Tipper Gore to abandon her prior battle against explicit lyrics in music.

"To put it as bluntly as I can, they have not done enough. They would not say explicitly that they would stop marketing adult-rated products to our children."

Sen. Joseph Lieberman
Democratic vice presidential candidate

In the hearing room, lawmakers grilled the executives about their practices and plans for change.

Mel Harris, president of Columbia Pictures' parent company Sony, called efforts to try to advertise a violent PG-13 film to a young TV audience "a judgment lapse." The film was "The Fifth Element," an action science fiction story starring Bruce Willis.

Motion Picture Association of America chief Jack Valenti acknowledged in a committee appearance two weeks ago movie executives had made missteps by showing R-rated movies to focus groups including children as young as 10.

The executives were asked pointedly whether they would limit not just their marketing of R-rated but also of PG-13 movies to viewers younger than that.

"We are going to review the appropriateness of all advertising," said Rob Friedman, vice chairman of Paramount's Motion Picture Group, and Warner Bros. president Alan Horn called it an inefficient use of advertising dollars to target PG-13 to underage viewers.

But senators were frustrated in their attempts to pin down commitments.

Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., went down the table, asking the industry executives one by one whether they would market R-rated films on Web sites popular among children under 17.

Gaza bomb injures two soldiers

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NETZARIM JUNCTION, Gaza Strip — Two roadside bombs exploded next to a convoy of Jewish settlers in the Gaza Strip Wednesday, a settlement leader said.

Channel 2 television reported two soldiers were wounded, one seriously.

The convoy was accompanied by Israeli military vehicles and headed for the isolated settlement of Netzarim, south of Gaza City, said Netzarim spokesman Shlomo Kostiner.

Netzarim, and the road leading to it through the Palestinian-controlled Gaza Strip, have been constant flashpoints with assailants attacking the vehicles with firebombs and rocks.

Kostiner said the convoy was making a routine trip when two bombs exploded nearby and the vehicles were fired on. Israel television's Channel 2 said two soldiers were injured, one seriously. The Israeli military

refused to comment.

Shlomit Ziv, a settler at Netzarim, said one settler was slightly injured in the attack. She told The Associated Press her husband planned to take the next convoy home.

Armed convoys leave every 40 minutes to and from Netzarim, where 60 Israeli families live in the settlement atop a sandy hill. The settlers are banned from entering or leaving without a military escort.

After the attack, the Israeli military closed off the area and prevented reporters and Palestinian police from approaching the scene.

Palestinians demand all Israeli settlements be removed from Gaza. Most of them are along the Mediterranean coast, but several, like Netzarim, are isolated and surrounded by Palestinian-controlled territory. Israel controls about one-third of the territory, where about 6,500 settlers live. More than one million Palestinians live in Gaza.

World/Nation

The Associated Press

■ Washington D.C.

McCain blocks vote for auto-safety nominee

Sen. John McCain is blocking a vote on President Clinton's nominee to lead the government's auto safety agency, saying Sue Bailey did not completely disclose to his committee all the contributions she has made to Democratic campaigns.

Bailey wrote McCain, chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee, on Wednesday to apologize for the "most embarrassing oversight." She included a complete list of her political giving.

"I always intended to provide a complete list of information about my 10 years of contributions, and it was an oversight that that didn't happen," said Bailey, the former assistant secretary of defense for health affairs who is in line to head the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

■ New York

Support for Hillary Clinton reaches 50 percent

ALBANY — Hillary Rodham Clinton has reached the 50 percent support level for the first time in her Senate race against Republican Rep. Rick Lazio, according to a major statewide independent poll released Wednesday.

Among the likely voters questioned, Lazio trailed with 43 percent, according to the poll issued by the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute.

A Sept. 12 poll by the institute had the first lady leading the congressman from Long Island by 49 percent to 44 percent.

"We know this race is going to be close, but it's nice to hit the big five-oh," Clinton spokesman Howard Wolfson said.

Lazio's campaign played down the new results.

■ Washington D.C.

Bill to make telemarketers show number on caller ID

The House voted Wednesday to ban telemarketers from blocking their identity on caller ID boxes.

The Know Your Caller Act, approved by a 420-0 vote, would make it illegal for anyone making a telephone pitch to interfere with or try to get around caller identification devices.

The Senate has not yet considered the bill.

People who use caller ID devices to screen or trace calls had complained that many telemarketers' numbers did not appear on the devices.

Without the name of a company or the number, the person targeted by a telemarketer could not follow up with a complaint.

■ Washington D.C.

Mayor opposed to building Reagan monument

The mayor of the nation's capital is cool to the idea — backed by the Republican Congress — of building a monument to Ronald Reagan on the National Mall, which he called crowded enough.

Mayor Anthony A. Williams said Wednesday that what he called the nation's most hallowed real estate should be preserved to honor events of defining significance in the nation's history and people of equal significance to their eras.

Without saying so, he made it clear he did not put Reagan in that category.

Monuments to Abraham Lincoln and Franklin Delano Roosevelt honor great personalities of their respective centuries, he said.

He adding that a monument to the nation's contributions to victory in the Second World War is also worthy.

The Mall site of a World War II monument is to be dedicated by President Clinton in November.

"World War II, like the Civil War, is a defining moment," Williams said in an interview with Associated Press reporters and editors.

Weather

TODAY
Partly cloudy
high 79, low 60

TOMORROW
Partly sunny
high 77, low 57

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The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, 20 Nebraska Union, 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 \$60 for one year.
Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, 20 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448. Periodical postage paid at Lincoln, NE.
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