

Sen. Clinton sparks ethics debate

■ The former first lady's acceptance of gifts has led to the proposal of a rule that would prevent such cases in the future.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The chairman of the Senate Rules Committee is proposing senators-elect abide by Senate ethics laws rather than wait until they are sworn in, a rule that might have stopped New York Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton from accepting some gifts as first lady. She supports the change, a spokesman said.

Sen. Mitch McConnell's measure would make senators subject to Senate rules — including a \$50 limit on gifts — as soon as they are certified the election winner. Currently, senators come under the rules only after they are sworn in, some two months later.

Also Thursday, Sen. Clinton agreed to co-sponsor legislation that would change the presidential pardon system, a measure inspired by her husband's actions just before leaving office.

The Clintons were criticized earlier this year when they left the White House with \$190,027 worth of furniture and other gifts. It is not known whether any of those gifts arrived in November and December, while she was a senator-elect.

Some of the gifts were returned after questions arose over whether the items were intended as personal gifts or donations to the White House.

A McConnell aide said Thursday that the Kentucky Republican made his proposal without any particular lawmaker in mind. Clinton spokesman Jim Kennedy said she supported the idea.

McConnell quietly signaled his intention to change the rule last week as the Senate began debating campaign finance

reform legislation. His spokesman Robert Steurer said it was now unlikely McConnell would push the change as part of the ongoing campaign finance debate but could seek the change at a later date.

A change in Senate rules requires approval from two-thirds of the members.

"We think it's a great idea," said Gary Ruskin, executive director of the Congressional Accountability Project, a Washington, D.C.-based watchdog group that has called for stricter Senate ethics guidelines.

The former first lady also faced criticism for the \$8 million memoir deal she signed as a senator-elect. Even if the McConnell provision had been in place, it would not have applied to her book deal because Senate rules exempt royalties from the chamber's ban on outside income.

The pardons bill by Sen. Arlen Specter, R-Pa., would require those pressing for presidential pardons and commutations to reg-

ister as lobbyists. The bill also would require disclosure for those who donate more than \$5,000 to presidential libraries.

Clinton's spokesman said she believed Specter's measure was a "common sense disclosure bill" and decided to support it.

Specter's legislation comes after congressional hearings into former President Clinton's last-minute decision to grant a pardon to fugitive financier Marc Rich.

Rich's ex-wife, songwriter and socialite Denise Rich, contributed at least \$109,000 to Sen. Clinton's Senate bid. She also gave \$450,000 to former President Clinton's library foundation, prompting critics to question whether there was a money-for-pardons deal.

Sen. Clinton also became embroiled in the pardon controversy when it was revealed that her brother, Hugh, was paid more than \$400,000 for lobbying to secure a pardon and a commutation. He later agreed to return the money.

World/Nation

The Associated Press

■ New York

Combs to drop 'Puffy' name with release of new album

NEW YORK — Sean Combs says he's not blowing smoke — he's getting rid of his much played-upon "Puffy" moniker.

The rap mogul, who was acquitted earlier this month of bribery and weapons charges, told MTV News on Wednesday that he's dumping the nickname when he comes out with a new album.

"I'm not doing it as serious as Prince. I'm not just going to be crazy with it," he said. "I just need a fresh start. That's all."

So what will be his new rap name? Actually, he said he would just take one of his other nicknames — P Diddy. The rapper said he could even envision a name change ceremony, with another beleaguered celebrity helping him out.

"So probably, like, the first week in June we are going to have a name change ceremony. Clinton is probably going to change my name. Bill Clinton, I like his style," Combs said. "He is a survivor; they went at him, he is still standing."

■ New York

McVeigh: Bombing was to avenge Waco, Ruby Ridge

BUFFALO — Detailing his motives in the Oklahoma City bombing for the first time publicly, Timothy McVeigh said he pulverized the building to avenge Waco and Ruby Ridge — and he regretted having killed children because it undercut his cause.

"I recognized beforehand that someone might be ... bringing their kid to work," he says in a new book. "However, if I had known there was an entire day care center, it might have given me pause to switch targets. That's a large amount of collateral damage."

In 75 hours of prison interviews, McVeigh talked to Lou Michel and Dan Herbeck, reporters for The Buffalo News, near his hometown of Pendleton, about how and why he bombed the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building. The April 19, 1995, attack killed 168 people, 19 of them children.

In the interviews, which began in May 1999, McVeigh got choked up while talking about killing a gopher but did not express remorse for the bombing.

"I understand what they felt in Oklahoma City. I have no sympathy for them," he told the authors of "American Terrorist: Timothy McVeigh and the Oklahoma City Bombing."

■ Florida

Florida bill keeps autopsy photos closed to the public

TALLAHASSEE — Standing beside Dale Earnhardt's widow, Gov. Jeb Bush signed a bill Thursday to keep autopsy photos closed to the public unless a judge approves their release.

The law sprang from an outcry over the Orlando Sentinel's request to see Earnhardt's autopsy photos. Teresa Earnhardt led the protests, saying she wanted to protect her family's privacy.

The measure, passed unanimously in the Senate on Thursday, makes it a felony to improperly release the records, with a maximum sentence of five years in jail and a \$5,000 fine.

Bush thanked the Legislature for handling the bill in what he called record speed.

"A tribute to the speed of Dale Earnhardt," the governor said.

■ Mexico

Rebels appeal for rights, head back to the jungle

MEXICO CITY — Cheered even by critics, the Zapatista rebels made an appearance before Congress to appeal for Indian rights, then announced they were headed back to the jungle.

The 24 masked rebel leaders depart — possibly Thursday — with major political victories. And they leave behind a gift for President Vicente Fox: an agreement to begin the contacts he has repeatedly sought.

Zapatista Comandante Esther said Wednesday that Fox had given "a signal of peace" by meeting the rebel demand to close seven army bases near their strongholds.

Senate votes to protect money ban

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Senate voted Thursday to protect a soft money ban at the heart of campaign finance legislation from court rulings affecting other provisions, handing a major victory to supporters of the bill.

In a 57-43 vote, the Senate defeated an amendment providing that all the major sections of the bill would be nullified if the Supreme Court struck down any one section over First Amendment free speech rights.

Sens. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Russ Feingold, D-Wis., pleaded with their colleagues to defeat the proposal.

"This vote on this amendment will decide whether this terribly unfortunate and corrupting system continues or not," said Feingold. "This is the soft money vote, this is where the Senate takes a stand, this is the test."

The vote cleared the path to final passage of the bill, possibly as early as Thursday night.

The outcome was undecided until the last moment, with some Democrats joining Republicans in arguing that the "non-severability" clause was necessary to maintain the delicate balance in political power between parties and interest groups.

If the courts approve only the ban on contributions to political parties, said Sen. Bill Frist, R-Tenn., author of the amendment, the money "is going to all flow to the area of least resistance, and that is the special interest groups and that is the unions, and that is the corporations."

The vote came after nine days of debate during which McCain and Feingold had successfully managed to ward off other challenges to their bill, which would ban the largely unregulated soft money donations that unions and corporations make to political parties. It also would restrict some issue ads by private groups on radio and TV 60 days before an election.

President Bush, who has opposed the ban on soft money, repeated Thursday that he was open to signing "a good piece of legislation." He said the McCain-Feingold measure "is a bill in progress, it is a bill that continues to change, and I'll take a look at it when it makes my desk."

The Senate earlier on Thursday rejected by 72-28 another challenge to the bill. It would have eliminated a provision restricting late-campaign political broadcast advertising.

Weather		
TODAY	TOMORROW	SUNDAY
Mostly cloudy	Showers	Showers
High 56, low 38	High 53, low 28	High 52, low 36



Sen. Strom Thurmond, (R-S.C.) gets an escort from an unidentified man as he leaves the White House on Wednesday in Washington, D.C. Thurmond was attending a meeting between President Bush and Republican leaders.

Palestinians ignore Israeli abuse

■ Israelis continue to torture Palestinians, but Yasser Arafat insists that the Palestinians hold their ground.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERUSALEM — A defiant Yasser Arafat on Thursday dismissed Israeli helicopter raids and warned that the Palestinian uprising would press ahead. In renewed clashes, three Palestinians were killed.

After a week filled with suicide bombings and airstrikes, Israeli soldiers shot and killed two Palestinian rock-throwers, ages 13 and 17, near the Erez crossing point from northern Gaza into Israel. Eight other teen-agers were wounded.

A Palestinian policeman was killed in a clash near the isolated Jewish settlement of Netzarim, south of Gaza City.

Also, one Palestinian was killed and another wounded when Israeli forces opened fire as they tried to enter Gaza by climbing a border fence dividing a refugee camp between Gaza and Egypt, Palestinians said. The Israeli military said it was checking the report.

In Washington, President Bush, referring to a string of bomb attacks and shooting, called on the Palestinians to "stop the violence. I can't make it any more clear." He also asked Israel to show restraint and ease restrictions on the Palestinians.

Returning from a two-day Arab

summit in Jordan, Arafat inspected the ruins of his Force 17 guard headquarters in the West Bank city of Ramallah, hit in a nighttime raid by Israeli helicopter gunships. Arafat said the Palestinian uprising would continue despite Israeli measures.

Palestinian radio stations reverted to nationalistic songs and calls for a popular uprising, a tone that had faded after the first few weeks of the current conflict, which began Sept. 28 after Ariel Sharon, now Israel's prime minister, visited a disputed holy site in the Old City of Jerusalem sacred to Muslims and Jews and claimed by both sides.

Palestinians were defiant after the Israeli helicopter assault, the first military action ordered by Sharon since he took office March 7.

Arafat said Israeli military measures would not bend the will of his people. He said the uprising would continue "until we raise the Palestinian flag in every mosque and church and on the walls of Jerusalem."

Ahmed Qureia, speaker of the Palestinian legislature, charged that Israel was "waging a war against the Palestinian people, against its institutions, against its security forces."

In Israel, the mood was a mixture of sorrow, shock and anger after a series of Palestinian attacks this week in which a baby and two teen-agers died.

Sharon, who says Arafat is responsible for the violence, referred to a long-range campaign to end the bloodshed.

"Restoring security ... cannot be done overnight or in one day."

Ariel Sharon

Israel's prime minister

Sharon appealed to his people to show patience. "Restoring security ... cannot be done overnight or in one day," he said.

In Hebron, where a 10-month-old Israeli girl was killed Monday by a gunshot from a Palestinian-controlled hill, Jewish settlers clashed Thursday with Palestinians and cursed their own soldiers for trying to stop them.

Rejecting Jewish law that requires quick burial, and rebuffing an appeal from Sharon, the parents of the dead baby have refused to bury her until Israel recaptures the Abu Snehneh hill, where the Palestinians live.

Israeli tanks blasted a building in the Palestinian neighborhood after soldiers saw armed Palestinians there, the military said, but there were no signs that Israel planned to retake the hill, part of the Palestinian-controlled area of the divided city.

A 1997 interim accord split Hebron into Israeli and Palestinian zones because about 450 Jewish settlers live in the center of the city in homes that were owned by Jews before they were driven out during riots in 1929.

Reporter killed in Kosovo

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KRIVENIK, Yugoslavia — Mortar shells struck a village just inside Kosovo on Thursday, killing at least two civilians including an Associated Press Television News journalist, as fighting intensified between Macedonian forces and ethnic Albanian militants.

NATO-led international peacekeepers set up a field hospital to treat at least 16 wounded, and American soldiers searched for other possible victims in Krivenik, just three-quarters of a mile inside Kosovo's border with Macedonia.

The attack on the village came as Macedonia's government said a successful army offensive had driven back the rebels, who maintain they were fighting for greater rights and recognition for ethnic Albanians in the Slav-dominated country. But the

rebels suggested they were merely regrouping in the largely inaccessible hills.

One of those killed in the mortar shelling was APTN producer Kerem Lawton, a 30-year-old British national based in Kosovo's capital, Pristina. He died of shrapnel wounds suffered when a shell hit his vehicle as he arrived in the village at midmorning to cover the deployment of NATO-led peacekeepers monitoring the fighting.

Sylejman "Suki" Kllokoqi, an APTN cameraman who had left the car to photograph refugees, said he heard an explosion and saw a plume of smoke.

"I saw people lying on the ground. I started shouting, 'Kerem! Kerem!' Then I saw Kerem in the car," Kllokoqi said.

Lawton was the 26th AP journalist to die in the line of duty since the news cooperative was founded in 1848.

Daily Nebraskan

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