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WASHINGTON

Senate to debate rebuking Clinton on FALN clemency

China continues bid for WTO

U.S. official says 'a lot of work' remains to be done

By Julie Schmit
USA TODAY

AUCKLAND, New Zealand — The United States and China have agreed to continue talks on China's bid to enter the World Trade Organization after two days of negotiations.

White House economic adviser Gene Sperling described the talks as "positive and constructive in tone," but cautioned Monday: "There remains a lot of work to do."

China hopes to join WTO, which sets trading rules, in time to join the next round of global trade talks beginning in November. The WTO discussions took place on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, which concluded here Monday.

APEC, a gathering of leaders of 21 economies, including the USA, was formed to push for free trade. But it has been widely viewed as ineffectual. This year, the crisis in East Timor, Indonesia, overshadowed trade issues. Still, world leaders, including President Clinton, agreed on a few trade moves, including the need to:

► Push for a three-year limit on the next round of global trade talks so that measures agreed to are implemented in a timely matter.

► Negotiate lower tariffs on industrial goods, in addition to tariffs on agricultural products and services, and to abolish agricultural export subsidies.

► Commit to better banking practices in much of Asia, where loose lending contributed to the now easing economic crisis.

The U.S. and Vietnam did not sign an agreement, reached in July, to create normal trading relations between the two countries.

White House National Security Adviser Sandy Berger said Monday that he still expects it to be signed, but that APEC was too tight of a deadline. The Vietnamese only recently got the agreement fully translated. Last week, some technical details remained unresolved.

The Senate voted 93-0 Monday to consider a nonbinding resolution that would denounce President Clinton's offer of clemency to 16 terrorists whose militant Puerto Rican nationalist organization, FALN, was responsible for more than 130 bombings from 1974 to 1983.

Senate Democrats opposed the wording, but the lopsided vote to proceed with debate on the resolution indicated compromise language was in the works.

The House passed the condemnation 311-41 last week. Critics say the clemency sends the wrong message to terrorists. Some also accuse Clinton of making the offer in order to help his wife, Hillary Rodham Clinton, woo Hispanics to her New York Senate campaign.

After criticism of the offer, the first lady said she disapproved of clemency in those cases because they were slow to accept the condition that they renounce violence. Most eventually accepted the terms and were freed from prison.

POWER PEOPLE: Former House speaker Newt Gingrich is the only contemporary congressional leader to make the Roll Call list of the century's most influential members of Congress. The Capitol Hill newspaper said the Georgia Republican, who was speaker for only four years, nevertheless "had a huge impact on the Republican Party, the House as an institution and the entire political landscape of the last decade."

The other nine: Rep. Joe Cannon, R-Ill.; Sen. Everett Dirksen, R-Ill.; Sen. Hubert Humphrey, D-Minn.; Sen. Lyndon Johnson, D-Texas; Sen. Robert LaFollette Sr., R-Wis.; Sen. Mike Mansfield, D-Mont.; Rep. Sam Rayburn, D-Texas; Sen. Richard Russell, D-Ga.; and Sen. Robert Taft, D-Ohio.

No current member of Congress made the list, which was based on cumulative votes of 10 policy experts or past members of Congress who each compiled a top 10 list.



Gingrich: On list of top lawmakers

OIL ROYALTIES: Senate opponents of a proposed change in the way oil is taken from federal lands fell five votes shy of the 60 needed to proceed with debate. It was the third defeat of their efforts to block the Interior Department from revamping the way it collects fees for the millions of barrels of oil taken each year from federal land and offshore. The impasse could delay indefinitely a \$14 billion spending bill needed to run the Interior Department in the fiscal year beginning Oct. 1.

GETTING OUT THE VOTE: Getting more people to vote might be as simple as going to their homes on Election Day. Researchers Alan Gerber and Donald Green of Yale University report on a Connecticut experiment in which turnout increased 6% when people were asked in person to vote. "Just knocking on someone's door, maybe a minute of conversation, can have a significant effect on political behavior," Gerber said. Only about 36% of eligible voters turned out for the 1998 election.

N.Y. POLITICS: Republican New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani has a 4-point edge over first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, 48%-44%, in a Zogby Poll of the New York Senate race. Statistically, it's a dead heat because of the margin of error.



Cuomo: N.Y. governor in 2002?

► Former senator Bill Bradley of New Jersey appears to have gained on Vice President Gore among New York Democrats, a poll for the New York Post found. It has Gore with a 6-point edge; 42% for Gore and 36% for Bradley. That's within the margin of error. In May, the spread was 15 points, 46%-31%.

► Housing and Urban Development Secretary Andrew Cuomo, the son of former New York governor Mario Cuomo, is himself interested in running for governor in 2002, an associated said. Former state Democratic chairman John Marino said he's had several talks with Cuomo about the race and "I believe he wants to run for governor." Cuomo spokesman David Egner said Cuomo is concentrating on his present job and "has no plans to run for anything."

MISSILE PROLIFERATION: Pakistan has obtained M-11 short-range ballistic missiles from China, U.S. intelligence officials said in a report. The finding could renew debate over whether the Clinton administration should impose sanctions on China. The United States twice imposed mild sanctions for transferring M-11 components, but Washington lifted them when Beijing agreed to, but did not sign, an international accord that seeks to control the spread of missiles that can carry weapons.

CORRECTION: Texas Gov. George W. Bush was reared in the Episcopal Church and became a Methodist when he married. His first religion was incorrect in a story Friday.

Written by Paul Leavitt with staff and wire reports.

Court overturns ruling that Starr's office be prosecuted

By Judy Keen
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — A federal appeals court overturned on Monday a judge's ruling that independent counsel Ken Starr's office should face criminal contempt proceedings for allegedly leaking secret grand-jury information to reporters.

The unanimous ruling by three members of the U.S. District Court of

David Kendall, Clinton's personal lawyer, will ask the full nine-member appeals court to review the decision. Kendall said the ruling is "inconsistent with the precedents of the Court of Appeals."

The court panel struck down U.S. District Judge Norma Holloway Johnson's appointment of the Justice Department to prosecute Starr's office on the contempt charge. The judges said Johnson, who oversaw

the Lewinsky grand jury, used the wrong standard when she ruled there was evidence of illegal leaks.

Kendall had accused Starr of leaks to several media organizations, but Monday's ruling dealt only with a story in *The New York Times* on Jan. 31, 1999. That report said Starr's office had concluded that a sitting president could be indicted. Johnson concluded the disclosure violated grand jury secrecy rules.

The court said, "Internal deliberations of prosecutors that do not directly reveal grand jury proceedings" are not covered by those rules.

The documents released Monday reveal that in July, Johnson ordered Starr's office and Charles Bakaly, the independent counsel's former spokesman, to face prosecution in a single proceeding.

Bakaly left Starr's office after the independent counsel's internal in-

vestigation into the alleged leak.

The Justice Department and Starr objected to Johnson's rulings, the documents released Monday show. Justice argued there was no factual basis for including Starr's office in a proceeding against Bakaly.

Starting in February 1998, Kendall complained that many news accounts of the Lewinsky probe came from anonymous sources in Starr's office. Johnson had identified 24

news stories she said likely came from Starr's staff. It's possible some of those leaks are still under investigation in a sealed inquiry. However, Monday's appeals court ruling suggested that the appellate judges' definition of illegal leaks may be stricter than Johnson's.

"This office has abided, and will continue to abide, by the rules regarding grand jury secrecy," Starr said Monday.

Federal aid found to be failing poor students

By Tamara Henry
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — Poor, urban students are not getting the help they need to reach the academic achievement of their peers because of the "shortcomings" of an \$8 billion federal program created to narrow the gap, says a report out Monday.

The Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights, a coalition of groups, cites what it considers numerous flaws in Title I, the federal government's largest aid program for education from kindergarten to 12th grade. The biggest complaint focused on what the coalition calls a lack of commitment to the program's new mission.

Title I was created 33 years ago to bridge the learning gap between the haves and have-nots by offering remedial programs, mainly in reading and math. Academic standards and expectations were set lower for kids in the programs because it was believed that poor diets and lack of health care put most of those students at a disadvantage.

The program's mission changed in 1994, when states were pressured to set equally high standards for all children. But the report criticizes the Clinton administration for giving too much latitude in adopting standards, "paving the way for the perpetuation of the very same dual standards for poor and non-poor the new law intended to cast aside."

The Education Department insists it is upholding the Title I mission. Spokesman David Frank says 48 states have set standards. Iowa and Idaho have not. "Some are more rigorous than others, but the administration has strongly supported greater accountability and learning to high standards for Title I and all students," he says.

Despite the problems, commission vice chairman William Taylor says, "Title I done right is a powerful tool for revitalizing the public schools." He says the report should assist school improvement efforts, as well as influence congressional debate this session over reauthorization of the program.



Starr: Office accused of leaks

In a statement, Starr said he was gratified that the court rejected Clinton's lawyers' "public campaign alleging illegal disclosures of grand jury information. ... The president's lawyers were wrong."