

# Clinton readies voters for attacks



PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Bill Clinton urged voters on Monday to reject a "flag of fear" that he said would be raised against him in attacks at the Republican National Convention.

"They're going to tell you every reason in the wide world why you ought to be afraid of Bill Clinton and Al Gore," the Democratic nominee told a thousands-strong rally at Independence Hall.

He said the Republicans were planning their convention, beginning next Monday in Houston, to "tell you how bad we are. We're against family values, we're against work, we're going to tax and spend to death."

Voters should look more critically at the Republicans instead, Clinton suggested.

He poked fun at President Bush for not saying yet how he stood on a plan, proposed by Housing Secretary Jack Kemp and other conservative Republicans, calling for what Clinton contended would be \$80 billion a year in new tax cuts for the wealthy.

"Even in their own party, they can't hold things together," Clinton said, referring to the conservatives' memo.

"Let's ask the president, before he spends all of the next two weeks jumping on Al Gore and Bill Clinton, where do you stand on your own leadership? ... What are you going to do for America if

you win?"

Earlier Monday, Clinton addressed one issue on which he has been criticized by Republicans — lack of foreign policy experience. He said that as governor of Arkansas he "didn't have any problem" authorizing force by the national guard and had also dealt often with international economics.

Asked what credentials he would bring to any decision to send Americans into combat situations, Clinton responded that he had made tough military calls in deploying his state's troops.

He said he had sent the national guard to train in Central America; had authorized force to quell a riot of Cuban refugees in 1980, and had used the guard to remove extremists from armed camps in Arkansas.

"I didn't have any problem doing that," he said. And when called upon to make military decisions as president, he said, "I'll make the best judgment I can based on the expert advice I get from military leaders and based on what needs to be the right thing to do for the American people at the time."

Clinton commented during a two-hour appearance with Gore on "CBS This Morning."

Later, in Philadelphia, he urged voters to ignore what they hear out of Houston for the next two weeks.

"When they raise their old flag of fear, you tell them, 'No thanks, this time, we're going to vote on our hopes,'" Clinton said.

# Class helps with drawl withdrawal

GREENVILLE, S.C. (AP) — Stories told in David Pence's class are often tragedies on a small stage. If they sound comic, you must not be from around here.

The class is called "How to Control Your Southern Accent."

There was the story of the Southern auto racer, trying to buy clothing in California, who couldn't make the vendor understand that "rice wire" translated to "race wear."

There was the pair of travelers, far from their home in the Piedmont, who ordered "ahss tay." The waitress begged their pardon. "Ahss tay, plaze," they repeated, meaning the cool drink made from steeped tea leaves. The waitress tapped her pencil on the order pad.

"Finally they said, 'Can we have a soda?'" explained Pence, a speech pathologist by day who has taught the evening course at Greenville Technical College for 3 years.

He smiled in telling the iced tea saga but said accents are not a laughing matter. A student in his first class burst into tears.

"All these handkerchiefs came out," he recalled, as the woman sobbed, "I've been harassed about my accent so much ... You don't know how upsetting it is."

The Encyclopedia of Southern Culture says Southerners are "often schizophrenic about their speech" — proud of its color and expressiveness, but "insecure" about being heard outside their region. Some parents, it adds, try to expunge Southern features from their children's speech.

The goal of Pence's six-week, \$65 class is straightforward but hardly simple: to give his students a choice in how they communicate, especially with non-Southerners.

"If people start listening to how you're saying something, instead of what you're saying, then you're losing effectiveness," he said.

# Attorney general declines probe of pre-war Iraq ties

WASHINGTON (AP) — Attorney General William P. Barr on Monday denied a congressional request for an independent counsel's probe of alleged Bush administration misconduct in its policy toward Iraq before the Persian Gulf war.

Barr said there is not enough hard, specific evidence to warrant an independent investigation and said the Justice Department is qualified to handle the matter.

Democrats immediately accused Barr of a cover-up aimed at helping a politically ailing President Bush.

Barr said a month-old request by Democrats on the House Judiciary Committee "contains no specific information or allegation concerning any person. It also does not specify any conduct that is alleged to constitute a crime."

He said the committee's "vague and general allegations" are not enough to trigger the independent counsel law, enacted in the aftermath of the Watergate scandal 20 years ago.

"Every prosecutor reviewing this matter at every level of the (Justice) department is of the view that the criteria for invoking the statute are not present here," said Barr.

Rep. Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., chairman of a House Judiciary subcommittee, accused Barr of "attempting to sweep the whole issue under the rug. It is hard to imagine him making such a decision were this not an election year and were the president not 20 points behind in the polls."

House Banking Committee Chairman Henry B. Gonzalez called Barry's decision "a desperate effort" to protect the administration. "The attorney general is the giant boulder holding the administration's stonewall together," Gonzalez said.

"It is stonewalling, pure and simple," said Rep. Jack Brooks, D-Texas, chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

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