

Bush says Clinton waffles on NAFTA

DOVER, Del. (AP) — President Bush on Monday said rival Bill Clinton comes down "on all sides of every issue" and pointed to the Democrat's stance on a new free-trade agreement as an example.

Bush referred to the recently negotiated North American Free Trade Agreement. The pact will be initialed Wednesday in Texas by the trade representatives of the United States, Mexico and Canada, with Bush scheduled to witness the ceremony.

"Once upon a time he said he was for NAFTA," Bush told a rally in historic Dover Green. "Then the labor bosses told him they were against it so he said he wasn't sure he was for it or against it."

"Now he's looked at the polls and he sees the American people want NAFTA, so just yesterday he said he's for it," the president said.

"He saddled his support with all kinds of reservations and

qualifications," Bush said.

Clinton on Sunday endorsed the agreement, which establishes the United States, Canada and Mexico as the world's largest free trade zone. In endorsing the pact, Clinton said that additional steps should be taken to ensure the protection of American jobs and the environment as the agreement is implemented.

The three countries are to initial the agreement in San Antonio, but it cannot be signed by the United States until Congress has time to review it.

Bush flew by helicopter to Delaware, which has just three electoral votes, and, after his speech, had lunch with 75 contributors who paid \$1,000 each for the privilege.

He saw a few protesters, including some wearing Pinocchio heads and holding signs that said, "Read His Nose."

Bush's speech had been billed in advance as focusing on health care for children, but the president barely mentioned the subject. He did criticize Clinton's record in Arkansas on issues affecting children, citing the death rate for youngsters and child poverty.

"Maybe the children of Arkansas would be better off if he spent less time talking about it and more helping them," Bush said.

Clinton communications director George Stephanopoulos said Bush's domestic policy had neglected the nation's children and that now he was "trying to paint a different picture on the campaign trail."

Earlier Monday, Bush in a television interview repeated his charge that Clinton supported agricultural sales to Baghdad and met with Saddam Hussein's ambassador.

Polls show Perot no threat to Clinton

NEW YORK (AP) — Polls released Monday showed Bill Clinton maintaining a strong lead, with Ross Perot in single digits and President Bush losing the "bounce" he got after the Republican National Convention.

In a Harris Poll of 1,015 likely voters nationwide, 53 percent said they would vote for Clinton, 36 percent for Bush and 9 percent for Perot if the election were now. The ABC News-Washington Post poll had the candidates' percentages in the same order, 48-35-9, with the remainder uncommitted to any of the three.

Both polls were taken Friday through Sunday, after Perot re-entered the campaign. The margin of sampling error was plus or minus 3 percentage points for Harris, 4 points for the ABC-Post poll of 799 likely voters.

Perot's support was down from 19 percent in a Harris survey two weeks earlier. The poll indicated that further slippage of Perot's support could help Clinton, who was named by 56 percent of Perot backers as their second choice.

Overall, 31 percent of likely voters in the Harris Poll rated the job Bush is doing as excellent or pretty good, which is close to his July low point, after a rebound to 41 percent in August.

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