

Perot visits Capitol Hill, sharply criticizes lawmakers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ross Perot, bearing sharp words for both Congress and the White House, exhorted lawmakers Tuesday to abandon lives of "opulence" and accused President Clinton of surrounding himself with aides "who never created a job or ran a business."

The 1992 independent presidential candidate told a House-Senate committee on congressional reform that he intended to begin citing a "pork-of-the-month" project to highlight wasteful spending.

"You must eliminate all of the perks and practices that have caused the American people to lose confidence in Congress," Perot told the panel. "The White House must do the same," said Perot, who visited Capitol Hill on the same day as President Clinton. They did not encounter one another.

The fiery Texas billionaire, whose independent challenge won him 19 percent of the vote, was cheered by supporters and students as he entered a packed hearing room. Perot then proceeded to lecture lawmakers about congressional perquisites and to cast doubt on the ability of Clinton's economic plan to create many jobs.

Perot said Congress should clean up its act. It should do away with all its fringe benefits, end "the junkets, the trips," slash the number of committees and ban all foreign lobbying, he said.

"Do you really believe that most of us here are crooks?" asked Rep. Lee Hamilton, D-Ind. "Are we really that bad?"

The Dallas businessman said that Americans felt Congress "is not responsive to the people. It is responsive to the special interests." And, he added, "We get funny

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— Ross Perot,
1992 independent presidential candidate

talk we don't understand."

Perot got a standing ovation from the audience, which included many of his supporters, as he began his testimony and was at first treated deferentially by committee members of both parties.

But, as he heaped criticism on both the Clinton White House and Congress, some of the exchanges between Perot and the committee became testy.

Perot voiced clear skepticism about Clinton's \$30 billion stimulus package the White House claims will create 500,000 jobs over the next few years.

"The government does not have a good record creating jobs," Perot said, adding that Clinton should get someone on his staff that knows how to make things work.

He said Clinton had "a tremendous and creative team (but) none of them ever created a job or ran a business."

That brought protests from both Sens. David Pryor, D-Ark., and Harry Reid, D-Ariz., who noted that Clinton's chief of staff, Mack McLarty, was a self-made mil-

lionaire businessman from Arkansas.

"OK, fine, you've got one in the barrel," Perot said. "I hope they'll listen to him."

Perot suggested that McLarty had not been all that successful as a businessman — bringing further complaints from Pryor and Reid. McLarty was former chief executive officer of Arkla Inc., a Fortune 500 gas utility with 1992 operating revenues of \$928.1 million.

When McLarty left Arkla last year, the company had just reported a \$27.6 million third-quarter loss. Supporters say Arkla had problems adjusting to industry deregulation under McLarty's predecessor and McLarty moved quickly to sell off assets and reduce expenses.

"He is a fine fellow," Perot said sarcastically of McLarty. "I regret that anything came up that people would have to fall on their swords to defend him."

Reid claimed Perot used misleading facts and figures in condemning Congress and the administration on its efforts to get spending under control. "Get your facts straight," Reid told Perot.

Perot said Congress — and the administration — must start calling a tax a tax, decrease the influence of lobbyists and wasteful spending, and streamline both branches of government.

"The American people cannot be expected to sacrifice while their elected servants continue to live lives of far greater opulence than they," Perot said.

Lawmakers have come under fire for their perquisites, including their gyms, haircutting shops, pharmacy, physician's office and reserved parking at Washington National Airport.

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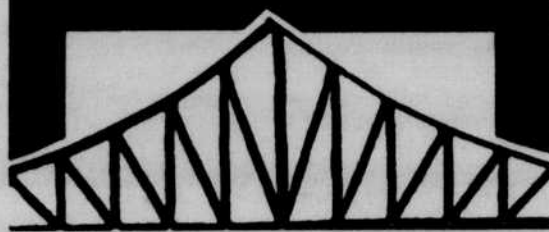
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The Oregon Daily Emerald is published by a non-profit corporation which operates independently of the University. The primary purpose of the ODE is to provide education and training for students in all aspects of newspaper operation by serving a campus audience with news, editorial and advertising content.

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Interested parties should pick up an application packet, which includes a job description, at the ODE front desk in Suite 300 EMU or call 346-5511 for more information.

Completed applications must be returned to the ODE Board of Directors in the ODE office by 5:00 p.m., Friday, April 2, 1993. An individual will be selected by the Board on April 20, 1993.

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Cuts may threaten Indian aid

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — Jane Witter says her 3-year-old Navajo foster son takes short trips in his walker unaided, thanks to the help she got from a program the Indian Health Service has been trying to scuttle since 1985.

A therapist with the Indian Children's Program suggested a walker and leg braces for Toby, giving him the push he needed to make real progress, Witter said.

Now, she's worried because the federal government is going to the U.S. Supreme Court on Wednesday in an effort to cancel the program.

Ending the program "would be a disaster" for hundreds of disabled Indian children, said Dr. Stanley Handmaker, director of New Mexico's University Affiliated Program, which handles the Indian Children's Program in the state under a contract through Utah State University in Logan.

The program is designed to reach children in Indian communities in New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado — isolated rural areas where services are hard to get.

The Indian Health Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs started the program in 1979 and served 2,400 children before abruptly canceling it in 1985 in a round of budget cuts.

Indian families in New Mexico and Arizona sued in 1986, arguing that children were being "irreparably harmed."

A federal judge and an appeals court ruled for the families and the program was reinstated two years ago.

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