

Clinton faces opposition to surgeon general selection



NATIONAL

Nashville today to affirm White House support for Dr. Henry Foster Jr.

Gore, a former Tennessee senator, was meeting with the obstetrician and participants of his "I Have a Future" program for young people in two Nashville housing projects. The White House, battling opposition to Foster's abortion record, wants to shift the focus to the 10,000 babies he delivered and his efforts to reduce teen-age pregnancy.

The unusual show of support is the latest in an aggressive set of moves to save the troubled nomination. While most nominees are held from public view until their confirmation hearings, Foster has defended himself in a Georgetown speech, a *Washington Post* article and a national television interview.

Heightening the campaign today shows just how concerned the White House is about losing the confirmation battle.

"We will fight for this nomination," White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta said Sunday.

"I don't think he will be confirmed,"

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — Trying to salvage the chances of his surgeon general nominee, President Clinton sent Vice President Al Gore to

said Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, responded.

Despite growing opposition from anti-abortionists, moderate Republicans and even some Democrats, the White House still hopes to win Senate confirmation of Foster by framing the debate as a referendum on abortion rights.

The selection is facing stiff opposition from anti-abortion groups, who are pressuring Republican senators. Foster says he has performed 39 abortions and supervised a drug trial in which 55 more women ended their pregnancies.

The White House complicated matters when it understated Foster's abortion total twice last week.

The selection hit another snag when it was revealed Friday that Foster performed hysterectomies on severely retarded women to sterilize them or eliminate their menstrual periods. Although records show a low number of hysterectomies — perhaps only four — on retarded women, the revelation was criticized by Republicans, and caused some raised eyebrows in the women's movement.

"The routine performance of abortion, the performance of involuntary sterilization procedures, and the fact that he has not been able to get his facts straight as to what he has done ... means that he is not going to be able to do the job," Gramm

said later on CNN's "Late Edition."

"This is a litmus test, not on abortion; this is a litmus test on the truth," Sen. Dan Coats, R-Ind., said on CBS' *Face the Nation*.

The White House and its supporters said Republicans were using the staff snafus and the hysterectomies as excuses to deride the selection without taking what could be an unpopular stand against those who support abortion rights. Opinion polls show that the majority of Americans favor a woman's right to choose.

"The faxes are flying from the radical right on this issue," said Sen. Christopher Dodd of Connecticut, who also chairs the Democratic National Committee. "It is about abortion."

Panetta, appearing on NBC's *Meet the Press*, said Foster will be confirmed on his qualifications unless senators cater to "the extreme right, who are basically saying, 'We want to make illegal a woman's right to choose.'"

Foster, in a column in today's *Washington Post* on why he wants to be surgeon general, wrote, "I believe that I can draw attention and help develop lasting solutions to the tragic public health problems confronting us — from the epidemic of violence to the spread of AIDS to the terrible problem of substance abuse." But he said he would be giving his "greatest attention to ... the epidemic of teen preg-

nancy in this country."

Admitting that his staff messed up last week, Panetta assigned a special team to get Foster's record before the public and persuade people that the nominee is dedicated to delivering healthy babies to healthy mothers. As part of that effort, scores of articles and speeches written by Foster began circulating on Capitol Hill and to media outlets over the weekend.

The documents detail Foster's opinions on a variety of topics, including abortion counseling for pregnant women with sickle cell disease, fears that family planning is tantamount to "black genocide," and health care perils facing poor Americans.

In another new strategy, Panetta took a swipe at Democrats who expressed anger at the White House for sending them another controversial nominee. After reviewing critical remarks by Democratic Sens. Joe Biden of Delaware and Barbara Mikulski of Maryland, he said sarcastically, "God forbid that we ought to make senators uncomfortable about having to deal with issues like this."

While his selection dominated Sunday TV news shows in Washington, Foster attended church at home in Nashville, and asked the congregation to pray for him. The Rev. Sherman Tribble's sermon at First Baptist Church deplored "the high-tech lynching" of public servants.

Gingrich to concentrate on Republican agenda

SMYRNA, Ga. (AP) — Newt Gingrich said today he won't run for president because he wants to "focus on what I am doing" in the House.

The House speaker said Dan Quayle's departure from the Republican field of candidates prompted him to seriously ponder entering the race, but he decided against it.

Talking at a gathering of business leaders in this Atlanta suburb, Gingrich said he discussed the possibility with his wife and supporters over the weekend. He said he agreed with those who urged him to continue concentrating on getting the Republicans' "Contract With America" through Congress.

"I think I should stay and focus on what I am doing and

get things done," he said. "I hardly need to run for president to get my message out."

Cobb County Commission chairman Bill Byrne, a friend of the Georgia congressman, said after the meeting that he was among those whom the speaker called seeking advice. "He was giving serious thought to it," Byrne said.

Byrne said he advised Gingrich against a presidential bid, saying the Republican legislative program was a higher priority.

"He has a responsibility to see it through," Byrne said.

There has been occasional speculation about Gingrich's political aspirations since the Republican gains in November put him in line to be speaker.

Bad movie nominations announced

LOS ANGELES (AP) — O.J. gets a Bronx cheer for his big screen performance in *Naked Gun*. And a nomination as worst screen couple goes to ... Brad and Tom?

It was a good year for bad movies with the 15th Annual Golden Raspberry Award Foundation dishonor nominations announced Monday.

Macaulay Culkin got no less than three worst-actor nods, for *Getting Even With Dad*, *The Pagemaster* and *Richie Rich*. The worst-movie nominees were dominated by two Bruce Willis box office washouts: *Color of Night* and *North*.

Even Elizabeth Taylor made the list, for *The Flintstones*.

Nominees for Hollywood's annual spoof of the Academy Awards were announced by foundation President John Wilson on the eve of Tuesday's Oscar nominations announcement.

Simpson was nominated for *Naked Gun 33 1-3*, released

before he was charged with murder.

"For O.J., this could work to his benefit in his defense. We are saying he's not an actor," Wilson said.

Color of Night led the field with eight nominations, from worst picture to worst couple: "any combination of two people from the entire cast."

Winners of the \$1.97 Razzie trophies, determined by more than 375 people, will be announced during "spectacularly spiffy ceremonies" on March 26, a day before the Oscars.

The nominees were:

—Worst movie: *Color of Night*, *North*, *On Deadly Ground*, *The Specialist* and *Wyatt Earp*.

—Worst remake or sequel: *Beverly Hills Cop III*, *City Slickers II*, *The Flintstones*, *Love Affair* and *Wyatt Earp*.

—Worst actor: Kevin Costner, *Wyatt Earp*; Culkin, *Getting Even With Dad*, *The Pagemaster* and *Richie Rich*; Steven Seagal,

On Deadly Ground; Sylvester Stallone, *The Specialist*; and Willis, *Color of Night* and *North*.

—Worst actress: Kim Basinger, *The Getaway*; Joan Chen, *On Deadly Ground*; Jane March, *Color of Night*; Sharon Stone, *Intersection* and *The Specialist*; and Uma Thurman, *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues*.

—Worst screen couple: *Color of Night*; Dan Aykroyd and Rosie O'Donnell, *Exit to Eden*; Costner and any of his three wives, *Wyatt Earp*; Tom Cruise and Brad Pitt, *Interview with the Vampire*; Stallone and Stone, *The Specialist*.

—Worst supporting actor: Aykroyd, *Exit to Eden* and *North*; March (as Richie), *Color of Night*; William Shatner, *Star Trek Generations*; Simpson, *Naked Gun 33 1-3*; Rod Steiger, *The Specialist*.

—Worst screenplay: *Color of Night*, *The Flintstones*, *Milk Money*, *North* and *On Deadly Ground*.

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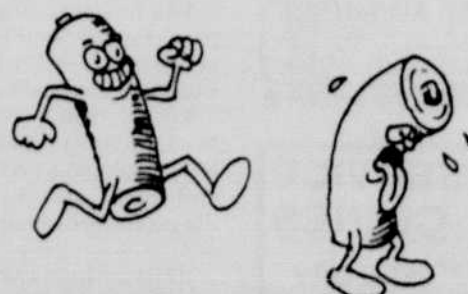
8:00 p.m., Feb. 19, Hult Center



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