

Clinton seeks authority to close military bases

Congress twice rejected earlier administration attempts to initiate rounds of base closings

By Robert Burns
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Clinton intends to ask Congress for authority to close more U.S. military bases starting in 2001 to help offset the cost of military force improvements, officials said Tuesday.

Congress approved several rounds of base closings earlier this decade but since the last round in 1995 has rejected two attempts by the Clinton administration to further shrink the far-flung network of bases developed during the Cold War.

Clinton will include his base-closure plan in the fiscal 2000 budget proposal he sends to Congress in February, said Robert Bell, senior director of defense programs at the White House's National Security Council. Clinton announced last weekend that his budget plan will include a \$12 billion defense spending increase.

Bell said it would take about a 10 percent cut in the overall U.S. military base structure to make it fit today's smaller military, which has shrunk steadily since the end of the Cold War. He would not say how many bases Clinton wants to close.

The key point, Bell said, is that the Pentagon needs to be able to cut its costs. "It's going to be incumbent on Congress to cooperate and give us that authority," he said.

Without explicit authority from Congress, the Pentagon cannot close bases of substantial size.

The administration hopes it can win congressional approval by arguing an urgent need to achieve more defense savings and by pointing to examples in which communities have turned the setback of a base closing into long-term economic gain, officials said.

On Capitol Hill, the nation's top military officers pressed the case for more base closings.

"Getting rid of the excesses that we have now ... would be very beneficial," Army Gen. Henry H. Shelton, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told the Senate Armed Services Committee. He said the savings could amount to up to \$15 billion over the next five years.

Bell said Clinton's fiscal 2000 budget proposal would include a request for Congress to authorize two more rounds of base closings starting in 2001. He said the administration is counting on savings from new base closures of \$2 billion to \$3 billion through 2005.

Clinton has come under attack from many congressional Republicans for allowing the state of readiness of U.S.-based troops to deteriorate in recent years. Bell, in remarks to reporters at the White House, said one reason for this erosion of military readiness is Congress's repeated refusal to allow savings from new base closings.

"It's not easy for them to, just out of spite, or whatever is motivating this, decide not to take an obvious source of \$2 billion or \$3 billion in savings," Bell said.

Last year, Defense Secretary William Cohen asked for congressional authority for base closings in 2001 and 2005, and in 1997 he proposed closings in 1999 and 2001. In both cases Congress said no.

Some in Congress favor more closures, but many fear a political backlash from the economic pain that can be experienced in communities dependent on the military.

Clinton has been accused by some in Congress of having manipulated the 1995 base-closing process for his political advantage, particularly with bases in vote-rich California and Texas.

In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on Tuesday, the top military brass welcomed Clinton's announcement Saturday that he would seek military spending increases of more than \$100 billion over the next six years in his new budget, beginning with a \$12 billion boost next year, although they said more was needed.

"There is still another \$30 billion to \$40 billion in requirements that are not met," said Shelton. Still, he testified, "it will meet our most critical needs."

Republican members of the committee complained that Clinton's request was inadequate.

"I desire to add funds to the president's mark," said the committee's incoming chairman, Sen. John Warner, R-Va. He said the difference between what the chiefs wanted and what the president was requesting was significant.

Need part- or full-time work? Want weekends and holidays off?

Apply now - Springfield Public Schools is filling immediate openings for regular and substitute food service, custodial and transportation staff. Most custodial positions are 8-hour evening shifts; food service hours vary. Benefit packages for 4- to 8-hour regular employees.

- Custodians start at \$8.75 (regular, non-sub)
- Custodial substitutes start at \$8.33
- Food Service substitutes start at \$7
- Transportation substitutes (bus drivers) start at \$7.43

Applications are available at Springfield Public Schools Administration Building, 525 Mill Street, Springfield. More information may be obtained by phoning 726-3203.



WINTER TERM SCHOOL SPECIAL

20% OFF

W/ YOUR (UofO) STUDENT I.D. CARD

OREGON ART

SUPPLY

**1020 PEARL ST.
EUGENE, OR 97401**

683-2787

LIMITED TO STOCK ON HAND. NOT VALID ON SALE ITEMS. SPECIAL ENDS 1/17/99.

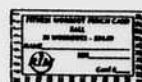
WINTER IS HERE!

Get active!



	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI
12:00-12:50	Basic Step 220 GER Dee	Low Impact Aerobics 220 GER Kim	Basic Step 220 GER Dee	Low Impact Aerobics 220 GER Kim	Basic Step 220 GER Kim
1:00-1:50					Body Sculpt 220 GER Dee
2:00-2:50					Low Impact Aerobics 220 GER Kim
5:00-5:50	Floor Aerobics 220 GER Kat	Body Sculpt 220 GER Dee	Floor Aerobics 220 GER Maggie	Body Sculpt 220 GER Dee	
6:00-6:50	Intermed. Step 220 GER Kat	Intermed. Step 220 GER Maggie	Intermed. Step 220 GER Dee	Intermed. Step 220 GER Maggie	

- A maximum of 45 participants may enter a workout
- In order to enter a workout, the participant must present both their punch card and photo ID.
- Classes last 50 minutes.



RIM Fitness Program has a format to provide better service. We have developed a PUNCH CARD system! This will allow you more flexibility in planning your fitness workouts. It also allows greater variety.

REGISTRATION - 102 Esslinger

Registration begins Monday, Jan. 4th, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
CLASSES RUN FROM Jan. 11th to March 5th, 1999 (8 weeks).
For more information call 6-4113 or drop by 102 Esslinger.

CHECK US OUT! <http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~pars>

COST:
10 punch card \$15
20 punch card \$25
30 punch card \$30
Unlimited card \$35

TONITE!

KZEL WELCOMES

Kenny Wayne Shepherd Band

+ SWAMP BOOGIE QUEEN
WED. JAN. 6
8 PM/ALL AGES



RE-INVENTING
BLUES GUITAR
FOR A NEW
GENERATION

TICKETS AT FRED MEYER FASTIXX OUTLETS, E.M.U., HULT CENTER
OR CHARGE-A-TICKET 800-992-TIXX
STUDENT DISCOUNT TICKETS AVAILABLE WITH VALID UofO STUDENT I.D.
PRODUCED BY DOUBLE TEE