

Bush gives Cheney final say in base closings

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bush said Monday it is "highly unlikely" he'll reject an independent panel's report closing 36 military installations.

But Bush left open the possibility he might change the list if Defense Secretary Dick Cheney tells him there are targeted bases that must be kept open for national security reasons.

"I'm not going to go in there and override some decision on a

political basis. These are tough calls," Bush said at a news conference in Kennebunkport, Maine, the day after the panel released its final list.

Cheney, meanwhile, indicated



George Bush

he would lend his support to the independent panel's choices.

"It looks to me as though they approved about 90 percent of our recommendations," Cheney told reporters in an impromptu meeting outside the Pentagon. "I want to have the opportunity to sit down and talk at least with the chairman of the commission before I make a final recommendation to the president, but overall it looks to me like they did

good work that I am hopeful we'll be able to support."

The Defense Closure and Realignment Commission, headed by former Rep. James Courter, finished work late Sunday and forwarded its report to Bush.

Texas bases on the closing list include Carswell Air Force Base in Fort Worth, Bergstrom Air Force Base in Austin, and Chase Field Naval Air Station in Beeville.

Asked if he would reject the commission's list, Bush said: "it is highly unlikely, but I will rely heavily on what Secretary Cheney tells me."

The president said his major concerns are ensuring the military is properly prepared, and saving money.

If Bush rejects the package — he must deal with it as a whole instead of making substitutions — the commission has 30 days to

review the president's recommendations. Whatever happens, Bush must act by July 15.

If Bush approves the package, it will be sent to Congress where lawmakers have 45 days to approve or reject the entire list.

Courter, appearing at a press conference, defended the panel's work, saying, "data was scrubbed carefully, decisions made carefully."

Shell Oil plans reduction of workforce by 15 percent

HOUSTON (AP) — Shell Oil Co., responding to disappointing financial results this year, announced Monday plans to reduce its U.S. workforce by up to 15 percent.

Shell employs about 31,000 people in the United States, meaning as many as 4,650 people could be affected by the reductions.

"Shell's business reviews indicate the need for workforce reductions," Shell spokesman H.R. Hutchins said. "Our best estimate today is that reductions could reach 10 to 15 percent overall nationwide. They will be done over a 12- to 18-month period beginning immediately.

"It's a response to disappointing financial results," Hutchins said.

The Houston-based petro-

chemical company, a wholly owned subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell Group, said it first will seek to reduce the workforce through voluntary retirements, attrition and cutting down on the use of contract workers.

"The first thing is to offer voluntary severance plans to certain employees," Hutchins said. "Once those all are identified, then there still may be some involuntary layoffs. We also will reduce the use of outside contractors where practical and hope that natural attrition will also play a factor here."

Hutchins said involuntary layoffs are likely. He declined to say what Shell divisions would be most severely affected by the layoffs.

Algerian unrest persists President deploys army to restore order

ALGIERS, Algeria (AP) — The army moved on Monday to silence the opposition and restore order, occupying the headquarters of the main Muslim fundamentalist party and detaining hundreds of people.

The actions came a day after the arrests of the two top leaders of the powerful Islamic Salvation Front, which is challenging President Chadli Bendjedid's government.

Sporadic unrest was reported Monday, and tanks and soldiers with automatic weapons were deployed in the capital. But there was no widespread violence.

During the weekend, at least four people, including a policeman, died in anti-government clashes in the capital and elsewhere. Forty people have died in unrest in Algeria since June 4, when the Muslim protests turned violent.

Military authorities said 700 people were arrested Sunday and Monday. Fundamentalist Muslim sources put the figure at 2,500.

Officials also closed two mosques that are considered centers of fundamentalist activity.

Armed soldiers on Monday guarded the headquarters of the Islamic Salvation Front following the arrests Sunday of its president, Abassli Madani, and vice president, Ali Belhadj.

The two men were accused of "fomenting, organizing, triggering and leading an armed conspiracy against the security of the state," a military communique said.

"The attempt at dissension to gain power, for which they are responsible, has cost human lives as well as the destruction of much property, and has not definitively

ended," the communique said. It said the men would be put on trial.

Madani and Belhadj called Friday for a "jihad," or Islamic holy war, unless the government lifted the state of emergency. They defied summonses served after their speeches.

Premier Sid Ahmed Ghazali said the Islamic Salvation Front posed "a very serious threat for safety, stability and national unity." The Cabinet, which met with President Bendjedid, called for "calm and confidence."

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Trade growth carries possible dangers

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Southwest border can expect a mixed blessing from a U.S.-Mexico free trade agreement, says a report Monday that warns economic expansion may be accompanied by environmental decay, crumbling social services and rapid growth.

The report, a series of studies on the impact of a free trade agreement on the "borderlands" of the Southwest, predicts there will be increased investment in the economically impoverished region that stretches from San Diego to Brownsville.


But the increase in trade could also spur urban sprawl, pollution and increased demands on already strained water supplies, housing, transportation, schools, health care and social services.

The result could be a "situation of economic overheating," the report said.

"This will act as a constraint on growth, and will dictate a barely acceptable quality of life for the poorest residents in both countries," said one of the academic studies, which were compiled by Baylor University for

Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas.

The report said the population expansion in the region could both outstrip the supply of homes and overwhelm already strained social services.



"Transborder aquifers are drying up, and the use of the Rio Grande is at capacity," one study said. "There is no additional wa-

ter available — conservation and reclamation are the only answers. Without water there is no possibility of border growth."

The study also notes that outside investment in border communities could drive up property costs and displace small businesses and low-income households. Small retailers that depend on Mexican shoppers and U.S. banks that depend on Mexican depositors could also be hurt if their products or services can be provided south of the Rio Grande.

Judge stops euthanasia Husband of brain-damaged woman has right to keep her on respirator, judge says

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A judge on Monday turned down doctors who wanted to unplug the respirator of an elderly, severely brain-damaged woman despite the wishes of her husband.

"I think she'd be proud of me," Oliver Wanglie said when a judge granted him power to make medical decisions for his wife of 54 years, Helga.

Doctors at Hennepin County Medical Center had asked District Judge Patricia Belois to appoint an independent conservator to decide the fate of the 86-year-old woman.

They hoped a conservator would permit them to take her off the machine that has helped keep her alive since May 1990, when she fell into a persistent vegetative state after a respiratory attack.

Belois ruled that such decisions are best left to family members when they are competent.

"Except for unconvincing testimony from some physicians and health care providers at the Hennepin County Medical Center, there is no evidence that Oliver Wanglie is unable to perform the duties and responsibilities of a guardian," the judge wrote.

"He is in the best position to investigate and act upon Helga Wanglie's conscientious, religious and moral beliefs."

William Miller, an attorney for the county-owned hospital, said there likely will be no appeal.

Doctors at the hospital routinely yield to family wishes about life-support systems, but rarely do families disagree when doctors recommend terminating care, said Dr. Ronald Cranford, a medical ethicist at the hospital.

Doctors sought a conservator in the case because they believed Wanglie did not fully understand his wife's hopeless condition. Cranford said it is morally wrong to use a respirator on a severely brain-damaged person who has no hope of recovery.

"Society will have to look at whether it should support spending \$800,000 for the care of someone in a persistent vegetative state when there are 37 million people in this country who are under- or uninsured and without adequate medical care," Cranford said.

"Perhaps what you should do if you want maximum care in this country is fall into a persistent vegetative state."

Wanglie's medical costs have been paid in full under the family's insurance policy.

States attempt to balance late budgets

The Associated Press

State workers in Maine rallied outside the capitol Monday, demanding paychecks and a state budget, after the governor shut down all non-essential services in a fiscal showdown with the Legislature.

At least eight other states entered the new fiscal year without budgets. In Connecticut, the governor threatened to follow Maine's example.

"We want to be paid! We want a budget!" shouted some of the 200 or so idled Maine workers who were held back from the office of Gov. John R. McKernan by two police officers.

Deriding the governor, they also chanted, "Stop hiding, Jock" and "Impeach McKernan."

Budget negotiations continued in Maine, Connecticut, California, Ohio, Massachusetts, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, North Carolina and Illinois.

Nevada, New Jersey, Washington state and New York City reached agreement on budgets within minutes of their midnight Sunday deadlines.

Late budgets are a tradition in some states, but this has been a particularly difficult year for most. Debates have raged over such tough choices as imposing new taxes, cutting welfare benefits and laying off workers.

The Senate approved an interstate trash ban proposal by Sen. Dan Coats, R-Ind., last year on a 68-31 vote, but the measure died in a House-Senate conference committee.

Coats is again pushing his legislation, which would permit states to ban out-of-state trash after they adopt 20-year plans for managing wastes generated within their own boundaries.

Midwestern states complain about trash

WASHINGTON (AP) — Garbage is creating a stink in Congress.


More and more, Midwestern states are complaining to the House and Senate about trash from New York and New Jersey going to landfills across state lines.

"The prairie is America's bread basket, not its waste basket," several heartland lawmakers wrote their House colleagues recently, urging support for legislation to let states block interstate dumping.

"You don't have to live on the prairie to suffer from this problem," their letter said. "As long as it is cheap and easy to ship waste to other states, no state

will be forced to deal responsibly with the trash it generates."

The states with surplus trash do not see it that way.



Sen. Bill Bradley, D-N.J., warned that a ban would force his state to reopen environmentally unsafe landfills. He said New Jersey needed more time to implement a new waste management initiative, including a goal of 60 percent recycling by 1995.

Currently, states cannot stop the flow of trash from outside their borders because the courts have ruled it would interfere with interstate commerce. The main defense for most states is to enforce their laws governing proper operation of waste dumps.

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