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AGGIELAND



# Clinton approves defense appropriations bill

**□ The bill became law automatically after the president did not sign it.**

WASHINGTON (AP) — A \$243 billion defense budget became law today after President Clinton traded concern about higher military spending for Republican agreement to fund troops in Bosnia.

With the cost of the Bosnia peacekeeping mission rising to an estimated \$2 billion, Clinton reluctantly accepted a defense spending bill that contains \$7 billion more than he wanted.

Clinton, who was traveling in Northern Ireland, did not actually sign the bill Thursday. Rather it became law automatically as of today after a midnight veto deadline passed.

In accepting the spending bill, Clinton rejected the entreaties of liberal lawmakers and accepted the advice of congressional Republicans, centrist Democrats and top military officers.

"I made this decision because my administration has reached agreement with congressional leaders to provide funding, out of the funds contained in this bill, for the troop deployment and other efforts to secure peace in Bosnia," Clinton said in a statement.

A key Republican verified the elements of the deal.

"I'm pleased that the president has allowed this to become law," said Rep. Bob Livingston, R-La., chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. "If we need to find resources to fund Bosnia, this bill gives us more latitude to do so without affecting military readiness."

Representing about a quarter of every taxpayer's dollar, the defense appropriations bill got swept up in broader budget battles as well as international politics.

Clinton's opposition to budget cuts that hurt domestic programs made it difficult for him to accept more defense spending. At the same time, his need for congressional support for the Bosnia deployment made it difficult for him to veto a bill that provided extra defense dollars.

"I have expressed my strong concerns that this legislation contains excessive spending for projects that are not currently needed for our defense," Clinton said. "I will forward to Congress rescission legislation that would eliminate funding for those projects, and I urge Congress to act on it. We should spend no more than we need to at a time when we are determined to balance the budget."

**"I have expressed my strong concerns that the legislation contains excessive spending for projects that are not currently needed for our defense."**

— President Clinton

Specifically, Clinton is likely to seek to cut funding contained in the bill to begin expanding the B-2 Stealth bomber fleet beyond the 20 aircraft already purchased or on order: Clinton opposed the \$493 million item as the beginning of what could grow to a \$30 billion spending commitment.

Among other Republican additions to the bill are more than \$2 billion for two amphibious warships built in Pascagoula, Miss., hometown of Sen. Trent Lott, R-Miss., the Senate Majority Whip and a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and \$764 million for 22 warplanes not requested by the Air Force or Navy.

Rep. Bill Young, R-Fla., chairman of the

House Appropriations national security committee, defended the increases in the bill. He said about half the total goes for nuts-and-bolts items such as salaries, barracks improvements and medical benefits.

Recounting a meeting in the White House state dining room earlier this week with congressional leaders, Young said Sen. Sam Nunn, D-Ga., ranking Democrat on the Armed Services Committee, joined Republicans in urging Clinton to sign the bill, as did Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"This is a good bill, Mr. President, you should sign it," Young quoted the general as saying.

Young said the bill actually represents slight inflation-adjusted decreases in defense spending compared with last year, the 11th consecutive year that military spending has declined since the peak of the Reagan-era buildup.

"What we do this year is level that decline," Young said.

In addition to the overall spending level, Clinton criticized provisions advising the president to consult with Congress before committing troops to international peacekeeping operations, and banning abortions at overseas military hospitals.

Clinton's announcement came hours after budget talks on Capitol Hill broke down Thursday, with Republicans saying they would not give the president what he wanted in return for his signature, namely, billions of dollars extra for domestic programs.

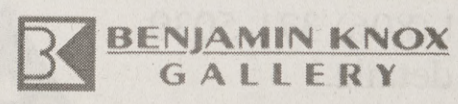
Instead of giving Clinton the money he wants for domestic programs, GOP leaders said they would consider easing planned cuts in education, job training and other administration domestic initiatives after the two sides strike a budget-balancing deal.

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## Toy Story sparks demand for classic toys

**□ The movie features toys that come to life when their young owner leaves the room.**

ROSEMEAD, Calif. (AP) — Matthew Rodriguez is hoping to find a splashy new video game under the Christmas tree. Don't tell him, but his mom went for Mr. Potato Head instead.

Thanks to the Disney hit movie *Toy Story*, parents across the country are revisiting the

toys they played with as children. The computer-animated film highlights such Baby Boom favorites as Mr. Potato Head, Slinky and Etch A Sketch.

At the Toys R Us in this Los Angeles suburb, the *Toy Story* section was nearly cleaned out by 11 a.m. Thursday.

Behind another shopping cart, Carol Roberts was loading a \$10.99 Etch A Sketch for her 7-year-old son Mitch. "If I hadn't seen the movie, I would have forgotten all about it," said Roberts, who twisted the dials of the drawing toy when she was

her son's age. *Toy Story*, which debuted over the Thanksgiving weekend as the nation's No. 1 movie, features toys that come to life when their young owner leaves the room. The lead characters, Woody and Buzz Lightyear, share a toy chest with a variety of old-fashioned toys, from Barrel of Monkeys to Twister to Slinky.

Betty James, whose James Industries has made Slinky for 50 years, said she is rushing to keep up with the demand for the coiled toy.

The tiny Pennsylvania compa-

ny (120 employees) is making new \$14.95 Slinky Dog copies from the film. The initial order for 50,000 Slinky Dogs, but James said the toy probably won't be available until after Christmas.

Hasbro's Mr. Potato Head, which debuted 45 years ago, has a special movie version. The standard Mr. Potato Head set for about \$6, but the new "Toy Story" model — featuring new parts and a bowler hat — set for about \$11. Hasbro expects Mr. Potato Head sales to go up at least 25 percent.

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