

Dispute could delay production of abortion pill

NEW YORK (AP) — Widespread distribution of the French abortion pill in the United States could be delayed until next year because a European company balked at producing the pill, its American sponsor said Wednesday.

Negotiations were still continuing between the unidentified company and the New York-based Population Council, which holds the U.S. rights to produce mifepristone, known as RU-486.

"We had thought we'd be able to get all of this done by the end of the year," said council spokeswoman Sandra Waldman. "But this development will cause some delay. How much, we don't know."

The council's commercial partner, Advances-Neogen, was speaking with other manufacturers in case the European company backs out, Waldman said. "But not a lot of companies are knocking on the door looking to do this," she added.

The American groups would not discuss why the European company had wavered on producing pills that offer an alternative to surgical abortions. Anti-abortion groups have promised a boycott of any company producing the pill, and no U.S. companies are willing to risk their wrath.

The Abortion Rights Mobilization, which is currently dispensing RU-486 in seven U.S. cities in a test program, refused to identify the plant that produced its pills because it feared reprisals against the manufacturer.

Gloria Feldt, president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, said the latest delay was frustrating but expressed optimism that the pill would soon be available domestically.

"It will be just one more stumbling block on the path, but I don't think it will stop the progress," she said.

McVeigh's parents recall 'a happy Tim'

DENVER (AP) — Timothy McVeigh wiped his eye as his parents pleaded for his life Wednesday, using home movies to remember him as a good son, "not the monster he has been portrayed as."

Jurors sat grim-faced through the testimony, the last in the trial's penalty phase. After closing arguments Thursday, jurors will begin deliberating whether McVeigh should die by injection for the April 19, 1995, bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building that killed 168 people.

"I still to this very day cannot believe he could have caused this devastation," Mildred Frazer said as she read from a brief statement. "He was a loving son and a happy child as he grew up. He was a child any mother could be proud of."

Choking back tears, she read on: "He is not the monster he has been portrayed as. ... Yes, I am pleading for my son's life. He is a human being just as we all are."

McVeigh clasped his hands tightly in front of him and listened intently as his mother spoke, moving only to wipe his hand under his right eye, even though no tears could be seen.

He swiped at his eye again as his father, William McVeigh, took the stand and introduced a poignant 15-minute videotape showing still pictures and home movies of his son as a child, happily climbing onto Santa's lap, playing with toy trains and riding on a tractor.

Defense attorney Richard Burr asked him to comment on a picture of the smiling father and son arm in arm several years ago.

"It's a happy Tim. It's the time I remember most of my life," William McVeigh said.

McVeigh's sister, Jennifer, who sat near her brother inside the courtroom, wept throughout the testimony, and as she left she told reporters through tears: "I just want him to live."



PHOTOGRAPH: Pat James

Going Solo Mark Whiteman plays his trumpet during a performance by Throwaway People. The show was put on by MSC Town Hall at the Rec Center Wednesday.

Ending the impasse

Republicans back down on disaster relief bill, agree to negotiate 'clean' legislation

WASHINGTON (AP) — Signaling retreat, congressional Republicans said Wednesday they stand ready to scrap or soften provisions that sparked President Clinton's veto of an \$8.6 billion disaster-aid bill.

Determined to prevail, Democrats brought the Senate to a standstill for the second straight day. "We want people to know we're not going to give up" until there is agreement on a replacement bill, said the party's leader, Sen. Tom Daschle of South Dakota.

Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, in comments backed by House leadership aides, said he was ready to drop a provision designed to avert a government shutdown and handle it in separate legislation.

On a second contested provision, House Republicans said they were hoping to reach a compromise with the White House on a proposal to ban sampling in the 2000 census, but it wasn't clear whether that issue would survive in any form in the replacement measure.

Negotiations were also under way on the price tag of a new bill. Lott at one point suggested \$3.9 billion, but White House officials, publicly at least, were holding out for the-

tyre \$8.6 billion contained in the vetoed bill. Whatever the outcome, there were unmis-

“There is another time, another bill, for these provisions.”

House Republicans calling on Speaker Newt Gingrich to allow amendment of the disaster-aid bill

takable signs of restlessness in the GOP ranks over their leadership's handling of an issue that Democrats have gleefully likened to the two government shutdowns of two winters ago.

"Finally, I think they're getting the message that this isn't serving anybody's interests," South Dakota Republican Rep. John Thune said of his own party's leadership.

Twenty moderate House Republicans

signed a letter, written on Delaware Rep. Mike Castle's letterhead, calling on Speaker Newt Gingrich to allow a disaster-aid measure to come to the floor without the disputed items.

"There is another time, another bill, for these provisions," they wrote of the anti-shutdown and census controversies. They added that disaster victims were "losing faith in the federal government's ability to respond to their emergency needs."

With a majority of only 11 seats, the GOP would lose if Castle and his 19 co-signers joined with Democrats to try and force passage of a bill stripped of the contested items.

At the White House, press secretary Mike McCurry said, "We just are waiting for the Republicans to come to their senses and present to the president a good, clean bill that gets the funding where it needs to go and doesn't gum up the works with extraneous measures."

Lott and Gingrich both said they hoped for a swift resolution of the issue.

Gingrich said he hoped for agreement by the end of the day, although he coupled his comments with a denunciation of Clinton's veto. "I don't know why the president wants to preserve

the right to shut down the government," he said.

But efforts to work out an accommodation were complicated by divisions among Republicans. Lott and his Senate colleagues were the main supporters of the anti-shutdown proposal. Gingrich and the House leadership were adamant about salvaging at least some compromise on the census controversy, as evidenced by a trip by Commerce Secretary William Daley — whose department oversees the Census Bureau — to the Capitol to meet with a key House Republican.

The issue of cost loomed large in the House, as well, with leaders fearful that conservatives would vote against a measure that spent too much, while Democrats would band together and oppose a bill that spent too little.

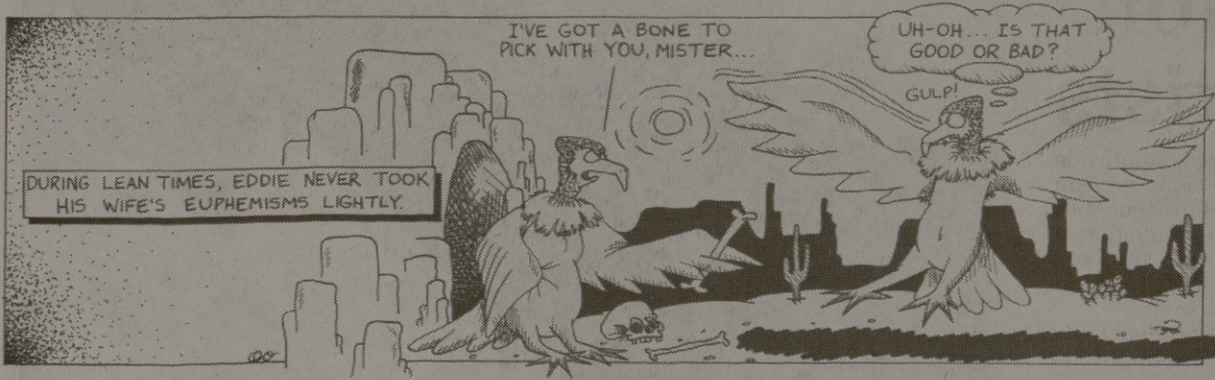
There was little controversy in the vetoed measure over the aid provisions. These included \$5.6 billion for victims of natural disasters in 35 states, including devastating springtime flooding in the Dakotas and Minnesota. The bill also included \$1.9 billion for the Pentagon for operations in Bosnia and elsewhere.

WEATHER OUTLOOK

SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY
Partly cloudy High: 94° Low: 75°	Partly cloudy High: 94° Low: 75°	Partly cloudy High: 94° Low: 75°

Sketch

By Quatro



Internet giants ally for online privacy

WASHINGTON (AP) — Microsoft Corp. and Netscape Communications Corp., two of the Internet's biggest rivals, today announced a stunning alliance aimed at more tightly controlling the personal information that businesses collect about World Wide Web users.

The teaming of the two software competitors reflected the heightened concern in the business community that government regulators may impose rules to crack down on privacy intrusions by Internet companies.

Microsoft today joined a plan that was first proposed by Netscape and two other Internet software companies, Firefly Network Inc. and Verisign Inc., two weeks ago.

Their "open profiling standard" envisions new Web software that would allow computer users to determine what sort of personal information they are willing to share and with which Web sites.

At the heart of the concern are so-called "cookies," which can track a computer user's recently visited Web sites, the pages the user looked at, and even their hobbies — and then link that information to the user's name and address.

The owners of Web sites can then sell that information to advertisers and other interested parties without the consent or knowledge of the computer user.

The proposal would not do away with "cookies," but would create a format useable on either the Netscape Navigator or Microsoft's Internet Explorer browser, which would allow computer users to spell out what information they leave behind at a Web site.

On other fronts, Microsoft and Netscape are locked in a fierce battle for supremacy on the Internet with each company trying to make their own software standards prevail.

But the companies' level of concern has been heightened this week during hearings before the Federal Trade Commission where regulators and privacy advocates have expressed skepticism over voluntary guidelines that businesses have announced to try to head off possible government rules.

Of all the proposals presented to the commission this week, the Netscape-Microsoft agreement may stand out because of the unprecedented nature of the alliance.

Microsoft and Netscape officials said in a telephone interview today that they have submitted their plan to the World Wide Web consortium, an industry body that sets standards for Internet technology.

The FTC plans to use its findings gathered from this week's hearings to determine whether it needs to recommend to Congress that it should enact online privacy laws.

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THEFT OF MEDICAL EXAM FOILED IN S.F.
17-year-old With Nonfunctioning Gun Beaten by Students

By H. K. Lee and C. Bowman, Chronicle Staff Writers

A young masked gunman burst into a room full of students taking a medical exam Saturday in San Francisco and demanded a copy of a test section but was thwarted when several outraged proctors and would-be doctors punched him out, police said yesterday.

Police said the youth grabbed a green folder at the front of the room, disappeared into a bathroom and then re-emerged, cursing. He then confronted a proctor, demanding the Physical Sciences portion of the test. As the proctor fumbled for the test section, the youth may have been careless with his gun—the proctor grabbed it, and suddenly the intruder found himself at gunpoint.

The youth then apparently smacked the proctor in the face. Enraged, at least five proctors and test-takers surrounded the suspect and threw punches at him, drawing blood, witnesses said...

The San Francisco Chronicle.
Monday, August 19, 1996

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