

Lawmakers seek late adjustments as spending measure nears passage

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lawmakers struggled to win last-minute changes in a huge \$500 billion spending measure or to end out precisely what was in it as Congress prepared for its likely passage Tuesday.

White House officials and congressional leaders agreed to the package last Thursday after a week of bargaining. But lawmakers spent Monday resolving lingering disputes over extending some tariffs and buttressing the Medicare home health-care program. Many members of Congress and aides pressed ignorance about a measure that some officials said would number about 4,000 pages.

"The first thing I want to do is end out everything that's in it," Rep. Michael Castle, R-Del., said. There was little suspense about

"It's (the spending bill) definitely a mixed bag."

— Marty Dannenfeler
Government relations director
Family Research Council

the ultimate outcome: Congress was expected to ship the measure Tuesday to President Clinton for his signature. To give him time to sign it the following day, Congress planned to send him a measure letting agencies stay open through Wednesday, the fifth such stopgap bill since fiscal 1999 began Oct. 1. Even the likeliest pocket of op-

position — conservative House Republicans — was said to be split over a bill that gave that group victories such as restrictions on Internet pornography, but defeats such as \$20 billion in so-called emergency spending to be paid for out of expected federal surpluses.

"It's definitely a mixed bag," Marty Dannenfeler, government relations director for the conservative Family Research Council, said.

Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss., was hoping his chamber could approve the measure by voice vote. That would make it unnecessary for senators — most of whom left Washington a week ago — to return to the Capitol, since its passage would mark the end of Congress' legislative work for the year, save a few lesser bills.

Antitrust trial against Microsoft begins

Government accuses computer corporation of intimidating competition

WASHINGTON (AP) — Government lawyers opened their landmark antitrust trial against Microsoft Corp. on Monday by accusing the software titan of a carefully crafted, no-holds-barred campaign to illegally "crush" a rival company.

The hard-core tactics alleged by the government included Microsoft using its money and influence as the maker of the hugely popular Windows operating system to intimidate computer makers and entice other companies to distribute Microsoft's own

Internet software over that of Netscape Communications Corp.

The government contended Microsoft launched its war with Netscape after a controversial June 1995 meeting at which Microsoft allegedly proposed, unsuccessfully, to divide the market for Internet software. Microsoft has denied making such an offer, which would be illegal under antitrust laws.

"What you see is a consistent pattern of Microsoft doing this, using its monopoly power, using its leverage, using everything it has," Justice lawyer David Boies told U.S. District Judge Thomas Penfield Jackson.

Microsoft's lawyers were expected to make their opening ar-

guments Tuesday.

The outcome of the trial — expected to last six weeks — could dramatically change the computer industry as it becomes increasingly important to virtually every facet of modern life.

The contested 1995 meeting is crucial to the government's effort to show that Microsoft so feared the potential of Internet software to threaten its lucrative Windows system that it acted unfairly to guard it.

The government used videotape excerpts from pretrial interviews with Microsoft's billionaire chair, Bill Gates, to try to show him Monday as reluctant to discuss the meeting, which he did not attend.



GATES

Israel halts all but security talks following attack

QUEENSTOWN, Md. (AP) — Israel suspended negotiations with the Palestinians on all issues but security Monday after a bloody attack at a busy Israeli bus stop threatened already lagging Mideast peace talks.

A senior Palestinian official, Esser Abed Rabbo, dismissed the Israeli move as "cheap blackmail."

President Clinton said the grenade attack was a "complicating factor" in the talks, which entered their fifth Monday. But he returned as planned to the secluded conference along the Wye River to try to

coax Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat to conclude a land-for-peace deal.

White House spokesman Joe Lockhart said Clinton was beginning his fourth day of mediation by meeting jointly with Israeli and Palestinian security experts, then planned brief back-to-back sessions with Netanyahu and Arafat and expected to wind up with a three-way dinner.

He declined to say how long the already extended summit would last.

Netanyahu consulted Monday with senior Cabinet officials, then declared that "for progress to be achieved on other issues, we must first focus on security and terrorism. We are awaiting answers from the Palestinians today."

The Israeli leader said he would not stay on Maryland's Eastern Shore "for an unlimited period of time" and that the United States and the Palestinian delegation had been notified that Israel was postponing discussion of a projected opening of a Palestinian airport in Gaza.

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