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Bush unveils new defense plan
GOP hopeful announces \$20 billion military budget, rev

WASHINGTON (AP) — Promising a "new architecture of American defense," Republican presidential candidate George W. Bush said yesterday he would spend \$20 billion more on futuristic weapons research, build a national defense against ballistic missiles as quickly as possible and cut back on overseas peacekeeping by American troops.

Speaking at The Citadel military academy in Charleston, S.C., Bush accused the Clinton administration of breaking faith with service men and women by deploying them too frequently and paying them too little.

He said the administration has failed to use America's technological prowess to create a more lethal and mobile military.

"The last seven years have been wasted in inertia and idle talk," Bush, who served in the Texas Air National Guard during the Vietnam War, said.

Bush, who holds a large lead in the polls, said the Clinton administration had weakened the nation's defenses by embarking on "vague, endless and aimless" missions abroad.

Slovenia and ends with Slovakia, and even these have proven to be too much of a challenge," Chris Lehane said.

Many of Bush's prescriptions for a healthier military are similar to those pursued by President Clinton, including pay raises for troops and innovations to make U.S. forces more adaptable and easier to deploy on short notice.

Their differences are mainly a matter of degree. Bush, for example, would spend \$5 billion more on pay raises over the coming five years, and he would commit more quickly to deploying a national defense against missile attack.

Rice, the candidate's top foreign-policy adviser, said Bush's intent to move the military out of the Cold War-era structure by emphasizing next-generation technologies.

Bush said, for example, that he would increase at least 20 percent of the Pentagon's procurement budget for programs that produce "generations ahead" in military technology.

He mentioned such possibilities as "ship" packed with long-range missile-manned aircraft capable of long-range strikes.

"The last seven years have been wasted in inertia and idle talk."



— GOV. GEORGE W. BUSH

As president, Bush said, he would order a top-to-bottom review of the military — its structure, strategy and spending priorities — and give his secretary of defense a mandate: "Challenge the status quo and envision a new architecture of American defense for decades to come."

The Texas governor spoke to an overflow audience of about 600, including about 400 cadets in gray uniforms. Several cadets pumped their fists in the air as he was introduced.

"With that kind of reception, you've got amnesty," Bush told the cadets. "I don't care what the general says."

Bush's address — part of a series of speeches designed to spell out his presidential agenda — is an answer to critics who say Bush is not ready to be president and that his views on public policy are undeveloped.

A spokesperson for Vice President Al Gore, who is seeking the Democratic nomination, made light of Bush's foreign policy credentials and his history of confusing names of countries. "The governor's foreign policy expertise begins with

"At the earliest possible date," his administration would deploy anti-missile systems to protect not only U.S. troops abroad and allies but also to shield the U.S. homeland from "attack and blackmail."

He did not spell out how extensive the national system would be, but aides said it would be more complete than Clinton envisions.

The Clinton administration plans to decide as early as June 2000 whether to deploy a limited national defense system.

Bush said he would have the United States withdraw from the 1972 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Russia if Moscow refused to accept amendments allowing the testing and deployment of a national missile defense.

The Clinton administration is pressing Moscow to accept such changes and has said withdrawal from the treaty remains an option.

A key distinction emphasized by Condoleezza

Saddle Tramps may go coed
Texas Tech organization accused of discrimination

LUBBOCK (AP) — They hoot when the Red Raiders win and holler like maniacs after a loss.

For 64 years, the rowdy and raucous Texas Tech University Saddle Tramps have been known across West Texas as a famed and exclusive spirit club.

And as far back as anyone can remember, the group has included only men.

Then came Jennifer Slattery, the first woman ever to apply for membership.

The Saddle Tramps say she was not denied admission this spring because she is a woman, but the 50-member group has applied for male-only legal designation that would exempt it from an anti-discrimination law.

The controversy has evolved into a case of tradition versus tolerance.

"I don't know why they can't just go on like they've been going on," Rick Murray, a member of the organization in 1957, said.

"I'm not sure why this issue always has to come up. It even comes up with the Boy Scouts."

Tramps executive board member Matthew Hines would not comment on why Slattery was kept from joining but said the group does not keep women out.

He said the group's meeting are private and that he is "not allowed to discuss what goes on."

"We have never discouraged females from coming to rushes,"

Hines said, "I have not noticed a lot of females ever being interested in joining. We're a spirit organization here and we support male athletes."

"We have our own section in Jones Stadium provided by the athletic department. We ring bells, do chants and get everyone spirited."

None of which cannot be done by a woman, Slattery said.

"[Saddle Tramps] have never discouraged females from coming to rushes."

Matthew Hines
Tramps executive board member

"There really is no reason why a woman shouldn't be able to join," the Tech junior said. "If they get single-sex status, I don't think it's fair they get my money or other females' money."

Tech officials said the Saddle Tramps receive about \$2,000 a year in student fees.

School officials say the group may not discriminate against women — or anyone else — but added there is no evidence Slattery was excluded because of her sex.

"Apparently there had been some incidents that occurred in which the female student made comments

about the organization that made them feel she wasn't interested or didn't think much of the group," Mike Shonrock, Tech's dean of students, said.

"If we had found they had discriminated they would no longer be considered an official organization at Texas Tech. We take this very seriously."

Hines said the group has asked the Internal Revenue Service to officially recognize it as an all-male organization, exempting it from the Title IX anti-discrimination law.

The designation would allow the group to continue receiving public money.

Jay Jacobsen, president of the American Civil Liberties Union, said the group being historically male is no basis for an exemption.

"There has always been slavery; there has always been segregation," Jacobsen said. "Those same arguments have always been made."

The idea that a public group's history will allow them to be exempt from discrimination laws is ridiculous.

"If they receive public money and make use of public resources then they will have to let women join. Title IX specifically says you cannot exclude a student from a student activity on the basis of gender."

Hines said the only requirements for joining are school spirit, leadership skills and a 2.0 grade-point average.

Houston rail link approved

HOUSTON (AP) — A light rail project for downtown Houston was approved by the city's mass transit board.

The nine-member Metropolitan Transit Authority unanimously endorsed the \$280 million project, which would run south from downtown through Rice University, through Texas Medical Center and the Astrodome complex.

"I think it's truly the link to connect downtown Houston city councilperson Fraga said during the meeting.

Several opponents against the line and demand referendum.

However, such an effort was ruled illegal under state law because no new debt or increases would be used to fund the project.

Instead, Metro intends to use funds previously marked for a west-side high-occupancy transit lane and a raft of other projects including new buses and and-ride lots, that now are postponed or killed.

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