

LIVING ROOM TIMES

BINDER UPDATE

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 1998

Scandal rocks White House

Charges of perjury, obstruction of justice could lead to impeachment if proven true

WASHINGTON (AP) -- In dozens of taped conversations now in the hands of Whitewater prosecutors, a former White House intern says she had an affair with President Clinton and that he tried to get her to lie about it, lawyers said Wednesday. An outraged president denied the allegations.

“Underscoring for emphasis: The accusations leveled at the president are unproven allegations. If proved, they would involve serious federal crimes.”

—Dan Rather, referring to perjury and obstruction of justice charges

“There is not a sexual relationship,” Clinton said firmly in a White House interview. “I did not ask anyone to tell anything other than the truth.”

Prosecutors immediately subpoenaed the White House for documents about the young woman while new evidence surfaced that Clinton's United Nations ambassador, Bill Richardson, and another longtime confidant, Vernon Jordan, arranged jobs for 24-year-old intern Monica S. Lewinsky.

The offers came around the time Ms. (Continued on page 2)



A file photo of President Bill Clinton in the Oval Office.

“Even the Democrats we talked to today said that if these charges are true, it could actually bring down the Clinton White House.”

—Bob Schieffer, CBS News

Another icy Friday?

Another Friday winter storm is on its way, and if the timing is right, the snow and ice it is expected to produce could mean a “good chance for school cancellations and delays” in Connecticut, said WTNH Channel 8 meteorologist Geoff Fox last night.

A cancellation in Newington would, of course, mean a postponement of the midterm exam schedule by one day.

WTNH's FutureCast showed that snow would begin at approximately 4:00 AM tomorrow morning. “Friday morning rush hour, I expect snow in just about all of Connecticut. But quickly, that will change to sleet and freezing rain.” Fox stated. “A lot of the day is going to

Sex scandal rocks Clinton White House; impeachment possible if charges of perjury prove true

(Continued from page 1)

Lewinsky prepared an affidavit in the Paula Jones sexual harassment case denying an affair with Clinton -- a denial now called into question by tape recordings secretly made by one of her friends, officials confirmed.

In addition, individuals familiar with the investigation said there is evidence at the White House that Ms. Lewinsky checked into the Oval Office several times after leaving her White House internship.

The individuals, who spoke only on condition of anonymity, said the visits were likely in late afternoon and early evening and the listed purpose was to visit Betty Currie, the president's personal secretary. Currie was a friend of the young woman, the individuals said.

Whitewater prosecutors were already investigating job-for-silence allegations that Jordan and other Clinton friends arranged work for Whitewater figure Webster Hubbell, a former associate attorney general. When questioned by Whitewater investigators, Hubbell has told them he can not recall key events.

Attorney General Janet Reno and a federal appeals court panel approved Whitewater Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr's request to expand his inquiry into the events surrounding Ms. Lewinsky.

The young intern's attorney, William Ginsburg, said Wednesday that "at this time, she stands by her" affidavit denying the affair. Later, however, Ginsburg suggested in a television interview that her account could change, noting that Starr has the authority to grant immunity to Lewinsky in exchange for her cooperation in the investigation.

"Mr. Starr's office could give her protection," Ginsburg said on ABC.

Ms. Lewinsky is scheduled to give a deposition Friday in the Jones lawsuit. CBS reported she planned to invoke her Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination.

The developments capped a day of turmoil for Clinton and Ms. Lewinsky, who was at the center of a legal and media storm. Word of the new investigation gripped the White House and had political figures talking of possible impeachment if the allegations were borne out.

The investigation was prompted when one of Ms. Lewinsky's friends, former White House staffer Linda Tripp, provided Starr with tapes in which Ms. Lewinsky alleged an affair with Clinton and recounted conversations she allegedly had in which Clinton and Jordan asked her to deny the relationship, lawyers said.

Newsweek magazine reported in a special release Wednesday that Starr's office arranged a sting operation with Tripp and tried unsuccessfully to get Ms. Lewinsky to participate. Newsweek and NBC reported Tripp was wired by prosecutors for the secret taping of a meeting with Ms. Lewinsky.

The magazine also reported it listened to some excerpts from the Tripp tapes in which Ms. Lewinsky purportedly says she planned to lie about her relationship with Clinton if deposed in the Jones' case. "I will deny it so he will not get screwed in the case, but I'm going to get screwed personally," the magazine quoted the young woman as saying on the tape.

The magazine said that the portion of the tapes it listened to "do not confirm or disprove that either Clinton or Jordan ever coached her to lie."

Two lawyers familiar with the tapes, who demanded anonymity, said Ms. Lewinsky described an affair in no uncertain terms in conversations tape-recorded secretly by Tripp. The lawyers said that in these conversations Ms. Lewinsky said Jordan assisted her in getting a new job in New York in recent months, around the time she was subpoenaed the Jones case.

Cosmetic company Revlon disclosed Wednesday that Jordan, who is a member of the company's board, referred Ms. Lewinsky for a public affairs job at a Revlon affiliate. She was interviewed over the last two months and offered a job.

"In light of today's events, the company is informing Ms. Lewinsky that it will take no further action at this time on her employment application," the company said.

Jordan wasn't the only one to help with a job offer. Officials confirmed that Ambassador Richardson interviewed Lewinsky at his office in the Watergate, where she also has an apartment, and offered her a junior job in public

(Continued on page 3)

President Clinton accused of lying under oath, encouraging others to lie about his alleged love affair

(Continued from page 2)

affairs at the U.S. mission at the United Nations in New York.

"The decision to hire Ms. Lewinsky was based on her qualifications, initiative and reputation as a hard worker," Richardson spokesman Calvin Mitchell said. "There was no pressure by any individual to hire her."

Officials told The Associated Press that White House deputy chief of staff John Podesta, acting on a request from Currie, asked Richardson to consider hiring Ms. Lewinsky. The officials said that Podesta forgot the intern's name during the conversation, but Currie then forwarded resume information about Ms. Lewinsky to the ambassador.

Lawyers familiar with the matter said Tripp began the tapings after she was attacked last August by Robert Bennett, Clinton's private attorney, as making false accusations in the Jones case.

Tripp had said another former White House employee, Kathleen E. Willey, had confided to her that she had stepped from the Oval Office into a private office with Clinton and that the president kissed and fondled her. Bennett said at the time that "I really smell a rat," calling the accusation an effort by Mrs. Jones and her lawyers to humiliate the president.

Sources said Tripp made both telephone tapes and face-to-face recordings of her conversations with Ms. Lewinsky from last summer through early this year. Lawyers said Tripp has told prosecutors that Ms. Lewinsky confided that Clinton even left three telephone answering machine messages for her at her home and played them for Tripp.

Lawyers gave these descriptions of the tape-recorded conversations between Tripp and Ms. Lewinsky:

--In a conversation with Tripp late last year, Ms. Lewinsky says that Clinton is going to deny the affair, that she is going to deny the affair and that Tripp should do the same.

--Ms. Lewinsky related to Tripp one alleged conversation with Jordan in which it was suggested that perjury cannot be brought in a civil case like Mrs. Jones' lawsuit. In fact, perjury can be prosecuted in a civil case.

--Because of Ms. Lewinsky's relationship with Clinton, advisers wanted to get her out of the White House before the presidential election in 1996, when she took a new position at the Pentagon. When a promised return to the White House never occurred after the election, Jordan late last year arranged for Ms. Lewinsky to go to New York.

Tripp's attorney, Jim Moody, declined comment. Jordan and his attorney did not return calls to their offices seeking comment.

Deputy Whitewater prosecutor Hickman Ewing said in Little Rock, Ark., "I won't deny that we have an expansion" of the investigation. "We are completely within our jurisdiction," Starr said.

Clinton and the White House aggressively denied the allegations.

"The charges are not true, and I haven't asked anyone to lie," the president said. Asked about the allegations during the day, Hillary Rodham Clinton told reporters, "Certainly I believe they're false. Absolutely."

The White House brought in three high-powered private attorneys -- Bennett, David Kendall and Bob Barnett -- to work with presidential counsel Charles Ruff on reaction. The three private attorneys are all involved in representing or advising Clinton in the Whitewater case or Paula Jones' sexual harassment suit.

The unexpected intersection of the Jones and Whitewater cases left the White House grappling with fresh controversy with the stakes to Clinton higher than any of the previous controversies surrounding him.

"These are probably the most serious allegations yet leveled against the president," said former Clinton counselor George Stephanopoulos. "There's no question that ... if they're true, they're not only politically damaging but it could lead to impeachment proceedings."

Republican seized on the development.

House Judiciary Chairman Henry Hyde, R-Ill., whose committee is charged with initiating impeachment proceedings, said he wanted to wait and see what Starr's investigation found but that seeking impeachment was an option.

"Telling people to lie and obstructing justice are serious charges," Hyde said. "I would not say he (Clinton) is immune from consideration of impeachment should these allegations prove to be correct."

Ms. Lewinsky started working at the White House in December 1995. After working as an intern at the White House, Ms. Lewinsky moved to the Pentagon last April to work along with Tripp in its public affairs office. She left the Pentagon job last month, but her departure had nothing to do with the sexual harassment case, Ginsburg said.