

Both sides of budget crunch likely to blink

By DAVID ESPO
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — With a partial government shutdown looming and the threat of a default, as well, Speaker Newt Gingrich was asked whether he was calculating that President Clinton would blink in a veto confrontation with Republicans.

No, Gingrich replied recently. "I'm making a calculation that we aren't going to blink. The likelihood is that both sides will wind up blinking, either before the threatened partial shutdown of the government Monday at midnight, or, more likely perhaps, some days later, when a compromise is needed to prevent serious disruptions in the lives of millions of Americans.

VICTORY...

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Dozen," said Williams, 62, then a flight crew mechanic. "Winning the WBC was an honor like you couldn't imagine. It represented a lot of hours of hard work and dedication."
He said 30 years ago, pre-flight checks and maintenance were "like being on the pit crew of a race car, only a thousand times more detailed."
Williams hopes The Pride, which was named via a

And Clinton may yet make the major concessions on Medicare, Medicaid and welfare that Republicans expect — and congressional Democrats fear — when the two sides sit down to discuss a possible compromise on the overriding GOP goal of a balanced budget.

But in a string of gestures that contradict their political personalities, Clinton is holding tough thus far in the current budget crunch, while Gingrich, with Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole by his side, keeps edging toward compromise.

On Friday, for example, Gingrich and Dole went before reporters, golf clubs in hand, to exhort Clinton for playing golf while the budget crisis loomed. With Clinton vowing to veto the short-term bills Republicans are

advancing to his desk, the Republican leaders said it was up to the president to initiate compromise efforts.

"It would be rather presumptuous of me or the Speaker to call the president," Dole said. "It's up to him to make that call."

Less than two hours later, the GOP leadership issued an invitation to Clinton to come to the Capitol on Saturday. Clinton offered to send his top aide instead, and Dole and Gingrich countered

RABIN...

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court he received weapons from the soldier, Eric Schwartz, but returned them. Schwartz didn't appear in court, and police wouldn't say whether he would appear on Monday.

His mother, Sarah, was questioned Sunday by police, Israel Radio said.

Hagai Amir, wearing jeans and a black skullcap, said he didn't believe his brother really planned to kill Rabin. He said a cache of weapons found at the Amir house was intended for possible use against Arabs.

Judge Dan Arbel said he believed "there was a conspiracy and an organization" to kill Rabin.

"This was not done by one man," Arbel said. Shin Bet is widely blamed for

with an offer to send stand-ins for themselves. In the political dust that followed, plans for the meeting were scrapped.

Shortly thereafter, Republicans tried again.

Aides arranged an early afternoon telephone call to the president on Saturday, in which Dole suggested a compromise on one key sticking point, a proposed increase in the Medicare Part B premium.

Clinton said no, and, according

to Republican aides, swiftly terminated the call, saying he had to leave for a previous engagement. When GOP aides called the White House to see whether to continue the call later, officials said later, they learned that White House spokesman Mike

McCurry was already offering the White House version of events to reporters.

"He believes that dropping the provision on Medicare would represent movement toward the principles he has outlined," McCurry had said.

WHITE HOUSE...

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he didn't rule out discussing it as part of a long-range budget-balancing deal.

The tough talk left it highly likely that 800,000 federal employees would be sent home Tuesday, when most agencies' authority to spend money expires. Also looming is the expiration Wednesday of the government's ability to borrow money, although Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin has said he would avoid an unprecedented default by using money in some of the government's cash-heavy trust funds.

The latest day of bipartisan intransigence came as GOP House and Senate bargainers tried to hammer out the final pieces of their plan for cutting taxes, trimming spending and overhauling Medicare and other social programs on the way to a balanced budget by 2002. That

measure, which Republicans hope to finish this week, also faces a veto by Clinton, who says its spending and tax reductions are too steep.

House negotiators tentatively agreed to abandon their demand that the \$500 per child income-tax credit apply to families earning up to \$200,000 annually, said one participant in the closed-door talks, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Instead, the source said bargainers "basically want the Senate figures," which would limit the break to couples making up to \$110,000, and single people making as much as \$75,000. That could also help weaken Democrats' argument that the GOP tax cuts would go heavily toward the rich.

Sunday's focus, however, was the veto battle between Clinton and Republicans over short-term borrowing and spending authority.

SERBS...

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ernment's lead negotiator signed for Croatia.

The Croatian government and rebel Serb leaders had agreed Oct. 3 on basic principles for the return of the territory, but remained at odds over how that would be done.

Serbs wanted a three-year transition period and U.N. monitoring. Croatia insisted on no more than one year and wanted a NATO presence, similar to that which would enforce peace in Bosnia.

The agreement calls for a one-year transitional period that can be extended to two if requested by either side. It asks the U.N. Security Council to create an interim administration for the area and deploy troops to maintain peace, but does not specify the composition of those forces.

The 14-point agreement was finalized in Dayton during talks between Croatian President Franjo Tudjman and Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, negotiating on behalf of rebel Serbs in Croatia and Bosnia, sources said.

Hrvoje Sarinic, who signed for the Croats, said the agreement paved the way for "full normalization of relations between Croatia and Serbia." The two have never restored ties broken in the 1991 war.

"Today's agreement was the best we have been offered so far,"

schoolchildren's contest, won't end up in an aviation "boneyard." The aircraft may be moved from New York, possibly to a military museum in Ohio.

"I think it's a historic landmark for Plattsburgh and should stay in Plattsburgh. If they're going to move it or chop it up, give me a call. I'll take it."

"I'll always remember this plane and her crew from the heart."

"Always."

said chief Serb negotiator Milan Milanovic. "Our conditions were to prevent war and to prevent people from fleeing the area. We asked for U.N. administration and we got it."

The accord also promises human rights will be respected and provides for the return of tens of thousands of Croats who fled eastern Slavonia during the 1991 war.

The agreement also gives anyone who moved to the area from other parts of Croatia the right to remain — a reference to ethnic Serbs who fled Croatian army offensives last spring and summer and resettled in eastern Slavonia.

It also guarantees the right of return for property confiscated or abandoned by force and the right of compensation for property which cannot be returned.

The area will be demilitarized and a temporary new police force created to build "professionalism ... and confidence among all ethnic communities," the agreement said.

Local elections will be held 30 days before the transition period ends, and Serbs will be allowed to have their own municipal council.

Oil-rich eastern Slavonia saw some of the fiercest fighting of the 1991 Serb-Croat war, particularly the artillery siege of Vukovar.

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STORM...

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At peak, Niagra Mohawk Power estimated that about 1,700 customers were powerless in the North Country and about 25,000 statewide.

"Some were intermittent — short blinks — but other customers were out for hours," said Jim Cosgrove, a Niagra Mohawk representative.

"We'll continue to work until we have all our customers back in service," he added.

Niagra Mohawk and NYSEG spokespersons agreed North Country service was tougher to repair because the problems were scattered throughout the rural area.

The next few days should bring partly cloudy to cloudy skies with light snow and rain, and temperatures in the 30s and low 40s, according to the National Weather Service.

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