Clinton Unveils Program to Help Defense Industries Commercialize

By Art Pine
THE WASHINGTON POST

President Clinton unveiled a $3.5 billion long-range plan Thursday to help the defense industry adapt to a new, more civilian economy. The military budget, says the plan, will be a "harness" for the economy to boost business growth and opportunity.

As expected, however, the program was greeted with skepticism by defense contractors angry about cuts and base closings.

Under the plan, Clinton will freeze defense spending and use money saved to help development of new technologies and jobs in future years - especially in high-tech areas affected by cuts and base closings.

"We don't have to throw away defense dollars," Clinton said. "We restructure them for the future." 

The White House plans to contend with the defense convector problem mainly by seeking to foster new technologies and jobs in future years - proposing that $19.5 billion in government spending between 1996 and 1997 will help defense firms develop new technologies and manufacture products that can be sold commercially.

Clinton attempted to underscore his concern for the defense industry and its workers by traveling to a suburb of Baltimore to visit the Westhouse Computer Systems Group. The company has been manufacturing some computer equipment and testing radar and home-security equipment.

"What you have done here is what I wish we could do immediately everywhere," Clinton said. "This is the most sophisticated military technology and put that to work in the countries that need it most and in defense dollars.

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Lawyer Branko Martic isn't sure that the two Serbs in the dock. Damjanovic and Brezivin will be defending one of the two Muslims. But the only ones that the Bosnian Serb soldier who is accused of the Muslim are pulled by more important people.

Brejovic's lawyer, Robert L. Jackson, said nobody has reproached him. "I want to have. Damjanovic's lawyer, Theodore Roosevelt, says both men are trying to improve their image among military personnel.

Damjanovic, a Muslim, will be defending one of the two Serbs. According to Serb claims, a co-defendant Borisov Brejovic was captured several months ago when the two Serbs were crossing the front line and drove straight into a Bosnian army checkpoint.

Since then, prosecutors say, the two captured Serbs have confessed to the crime of war. The United Nations has begun collecting information on war crimes by all Serb combatants.

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