Balanced Budget Amendment Appears Headed for Defeat

By Karen Haker

WASHINGTON

This year's version of a balanced budget amendment appears headed for defeat in the Senate Tuesday night, with many senators likely to back a less-stringent alternative that gives the White House a chance of winning the necessary two-thirds majority.

Concluding a week of debate on the topic, the Senate's rejection of a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced federal budget would doom action on the issue for the rest of the year. Although the House may vote later this month to endorse the amendment, Senate Majority Leader George J. Mitchell, a Maine Democrat, said Monday that there would not be a second vote in the Senate.

Supporters of the amendment, led by Sen. Paul Simon, D-Ill., were not ready to concede defeat. But they acknowledged they were at least four votes short of the 67 required, without much hope of picking up all four of the senators still undecided.

Sen. Robert C. Byrd, the West Virginia Democrat who has been passionately leading a crusade against the Simon amendment, said the vote would be "very close," but that the momentum is going his way. "The initial argument is very popular because a lot of people don't understand it, but it is very dangerous to the fabric of our country," Byrd said in an interview.

The budget amendment failed by one vote in the Senate in 1986, the last time it was voted on. When the Senate debated open last week, Simon had more than 50 co-sponsors and an additional dozen or so private commitments.

The amendment, if passed, might not have a direct effect until three-fifths of the state legislatures voted to ratify it. The chief distinction between the two approaches is with the number of exceptions that would be allowed.

Under the Simon amendment, a three-fifth majority of Congress would have to approve spending in a national emergency. The Reid amendment would bar the diverting of funds in excess of income, except in a national emergency, and would allow Congress to borrow money for highways and other "capital" investments.

In Tit-for-Tat Move, Russia Expels Senior U.S. Diplomat

By Sonni Efron

WASHINGTON

In Russia's first diplomatic tiff with Washington since the cold War's end, Moscow expelled a senior American diplomat Monday in retaliation for last week's ouster of a Russian envoy to the United States.

The Russian Foreign Ministry identified diplomat James L. Morris, listed as a counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow, as the CIA station chief.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Grigory Karasin expressed regret Friday for Moscow's decision to expel James A. Malinin, a Soviet trade representative, "because "he was in a position to be a source of Russian imperial ambitions would leave it virtually defenseless.

commissars for centuries before the collapse of the U.S.S.R. in 1991, shares an 800-mile border with Russia and is fearful that a resurgence of Russian imperial aspirations would leave it virtually defenseless.

Judges Order Lorens Bobbitt Released from Mental Hospital

By Karen Hosler

WASHINGTON

Saying Lorens Bobbitt does not pose a threat to herself or the community, a Prince William County, Va. judge Monday ordered the 24-year-old case, also known as "the Manassas massacre," a lO-minute news conference in English and Spanish, in which she thanked supporters and said she was eager to get on with her life out of the harsh public spotlight.

"I still have my American dream," said the buoyed, seemingly self-possessed Venezuelan immigrant, who smiled at reporters and gave no sign that the government's efforts to make her a "cultural" American were a success.

Later, at her employer's home in Fairfax County, where her release was celebrated with a white chocolate cheesecake, Bobbitt expanded on her dream, adding that she still hopes to find "a family, children, a husband - a nice husband this time."

Ever since the morning of June 23, 1993 - when, Bobbitt said, she never her husband's plans with a kitchen knife because he had raped her - the case has been front-page news around the world. Columnists and armchair sociologists in the United States and abroad.

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