Clinton, Gore Use Earth Day Speeches To Defend Record

By Gary Lee

WASHINGTON

Amid criticism that he is not fulfilling his pledge to create the greenest government in history, President Clinton Thursday defended his environmental record in a speech on the eve of Earth Day.

Before a crowd in a Washington park, Clinton received a number of environmental actions the administration has taken, from executive orders to encourage recycling and reduce federal energy consumption to legislative proposals to clean toxic waste dumps across the country.

In addition, "This year, we're asking Congress to pass new and stronger laws to protect our lakes, rivers, and the water we drink," Clinton said. "And we're offering new approaches to get the job done."

In a separate speech, Vice President Gore echoed the defense. The White House's plan to combat global warming is "one of the primary concerns," he said.

House Approves $28B Crime Bill

By Kenneth J. Cooper

WASHINGTON

The House Thursday rejected the Senate's $22 billion legislation and approved nearly $26 billion to build more prisons, hire more police and take on criminals longer in an effort, according to lawmakers, to ease crime politically appealing balance between tougher punishment and effective prevention, but Republican critics dismissed it as not tough enough, particularly on the death penalty. Opposition from a majority of House Republicans made the vote too close to pass, but some Democrats voted against the Senate bill last November.

Because more than 90 percent of violent crime is handled at the state and local levels, the $28 billion legislation would try to meet its goals "to control and prevent crime" primarily through reductions in the death penalty, the Justice Department said. The bill would require states to hire 50,000 new local police officers. The White House has supported the legislation and approved $28 billion over five years, amendments later prepared a paragraph-by-paragraph rebuttal of the grand jury's report.

The Justice Department Thursday issued a rebuttal of its criticism of its administration's handling of the 1989 investigation of environmental and safety problems at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons complex. The report is a response to criticism of the case by Colorado, Rockwell International Corp., and the House Judiciary Committee.

The report was as a response to criticism of the case by the Department of the Interior, the Department of Justice, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Justice Rebuts Criticism of Rocky Flats Handling

The Justice Department Thursday issued a rebuttal to congressional criticism of its handling of the 1989 investigation of environmental and safety problems at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons complex. The Justice Department, according to its 88-page report issued by the House Judiciary Committee, said it received a letter from the Department of Justice in 1992 after pleading guilty to 10 hazardous waste and clean water violations as part of a plea agreement.

"This case was handled perfectly in the sense that any case of this nature with complex investigatory and institutional issues is likely to have difficulties," said an 88-page report issued by the House Judiciary Committee.

The report serves as a response to criticism of the case by the Department of the Interior, the Department of Justice, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

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