

SUNNY High near 85 PAGE B6

SPORTS FINAL

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Setting off on a journey through the seasons



diary

A year in the forest

JUNE FIRST in a series

River, walked the New England shoreline, retraced the steps of the legendary Old Leatherman and hiked along the Appalachian Trail in his past adventures. This time his journey is not one of miles, but through the seasons. For a few days each month, Steve will camp in the Yale Myers Forest in eastern Connecticut and bring home the drama of the forest as it transforms itself through the year. This is his first

Editor's note: Steve Grant, The Courant's nature

writer, has canoed the length of the Connecticut

By STEVE GRANT Courant Staff Writer

UNION - I first heard this bit of folklore more than 20 years ago.

Supposedly, airline pilots flying at night see nothing but a large, dark expanse as they pass over northeastern Connecticut, the only black hole in the brightly lit Boston-to-Washington megalopolis.

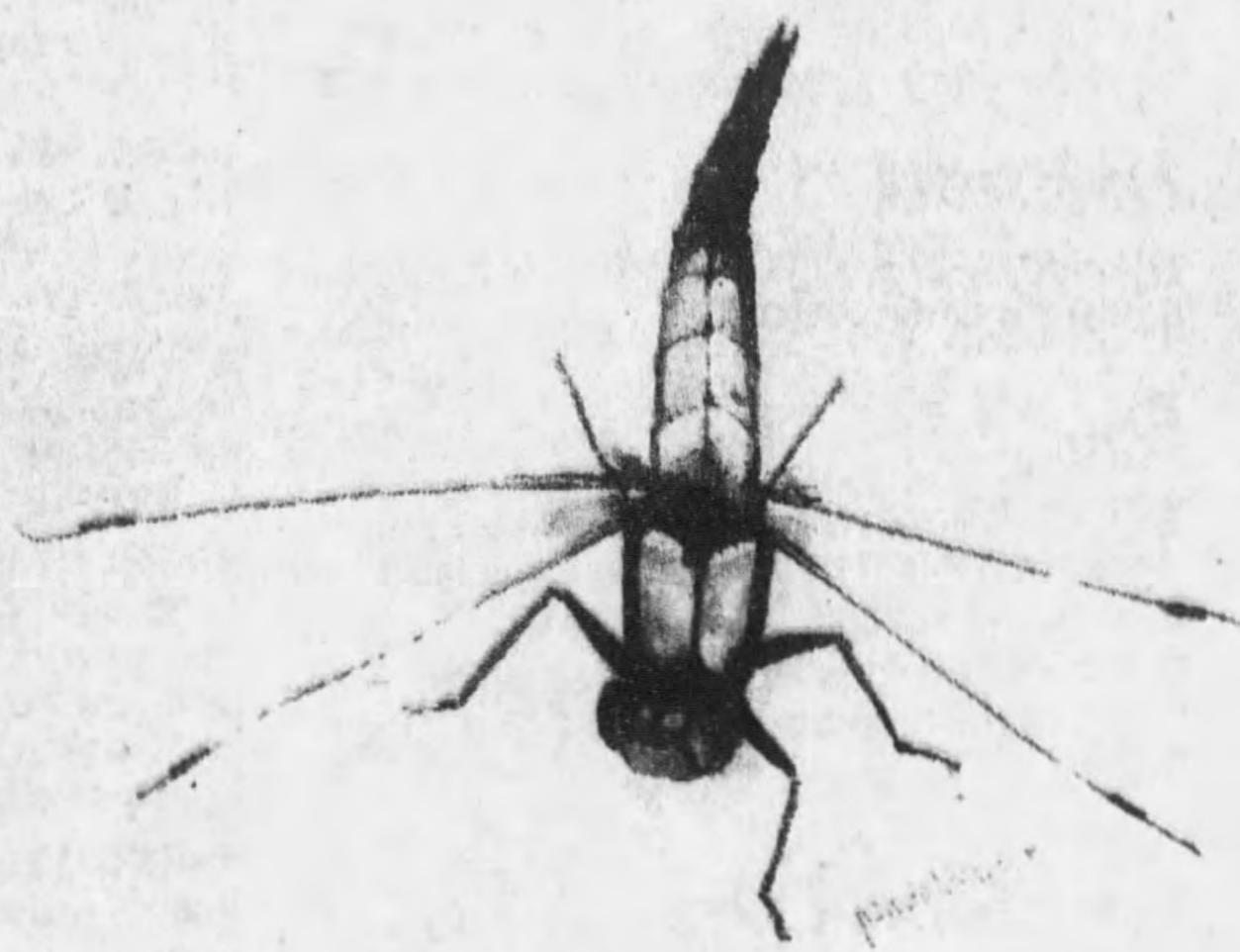
At a dinner last month I heard the same story, and decided to check it out this time.

"It's true," said William F. Palmer, assistant airport administrator at Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks. "That area is sparsely populated. There are not a lot of lights and town centers and other creations of manmade light."

Within this void in the urbanized East Coast, I am camped in a 7,840-acre forest where deer, beaver and birds are abundant, but streetlights are not. There are occasional reports here of a moose, even a bear, but no shopping center for miles.

This is as wild as Connecticut gets. My vantage point is Yale University's Yale Myers Forest in Union, Ashford, Eastford and

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POND SKIMMER Illustrations by BRIAN SHELLITO/ The Hartford Courant

calls for registry

Plan would track all sex offenders

By STEVEN THOMMA Knight-Ridder Newspapers

CLEVELAND - President Clinton proposed a new plan Saturday to make America's homes safer from criminal sexual predators, but found himself dogged yet again by questions about the ethics in his own White House.

Clinton, on a two-day campaign swing after a week's worth of bad news at home in Washington, tried to keep the subject off the Whitewater controversy and the investigation into his administration's unauthorized use of FBI files on Republi-

In his weekly radio address, Clinton said he wants a national system to track sexual offenders when they move from state to state.

Meanwhile his rival, Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole, kept up the pressure with a hard-hitting radio speech that accused the Clinton administration of unethical conduct.

Dole said the White House use of the FBI files hit at a core American tradition,

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Committee narrowslist for top job at UConn

By JON LENDER and FRANCES GRANDY TAYLOR Courant Staff Writers

Operating in secret at a crucial moment for the University of Connecticut, the committee searching for a UConn president has decided to interview about 10 candidates beginning late next week - among them presidents of other large universities.

After months of soliciting applications -a period that included an unsuccessful approach to retired Gen. Colin L. Powell -an 11-member steering committee will conduct its first interviews over a period of days, officials close to the selection process said during the past week.

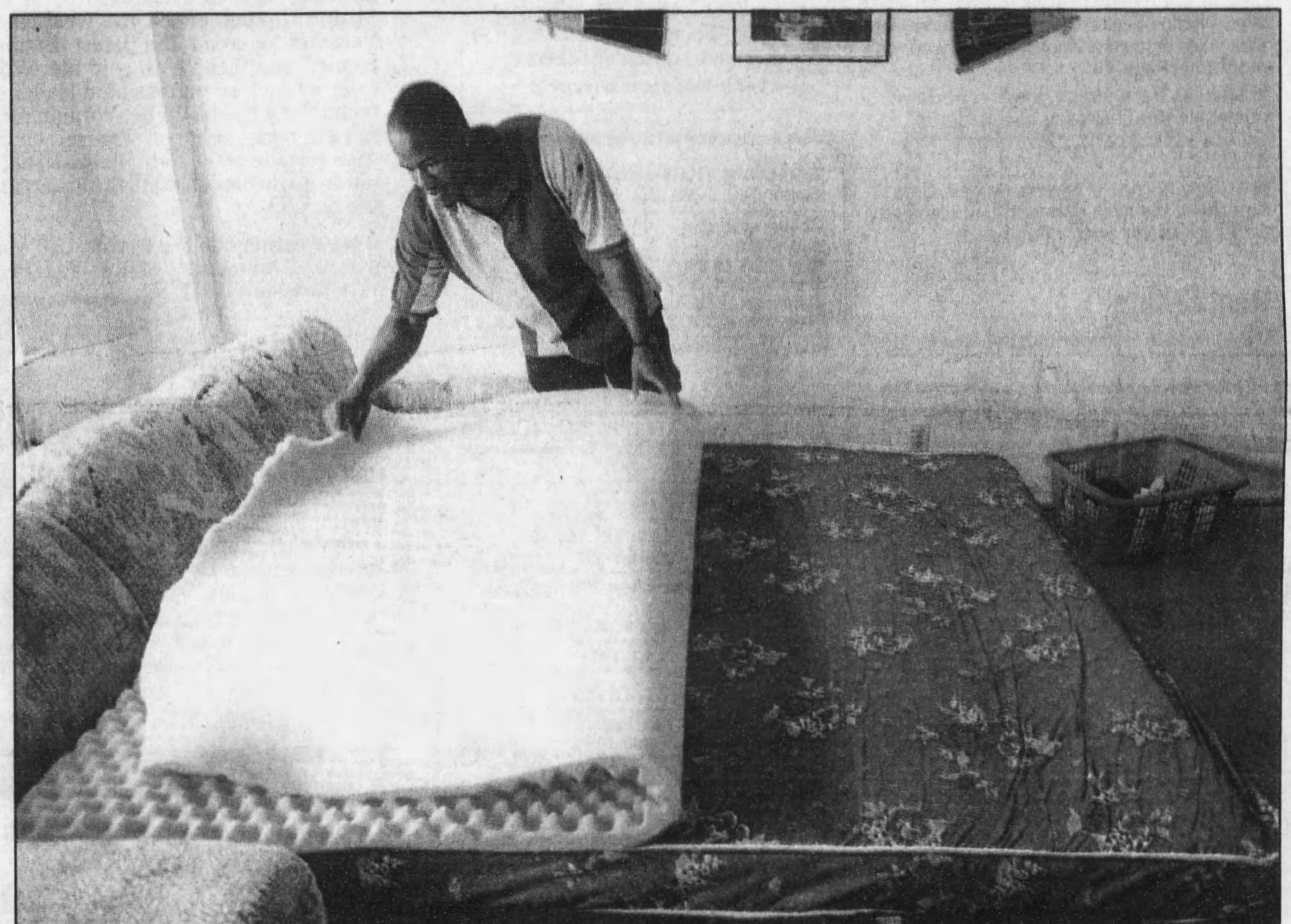
The interview schedule extends beyond the original July 1 selection date, which means it will take at least several more weeks to pick a new president.

Meanwhile, tension and speculation are building - both on and off the main campus in Storrs — regarding questions closely related to the choice:

• Will the new president come from the academic world, as a prominent fac-

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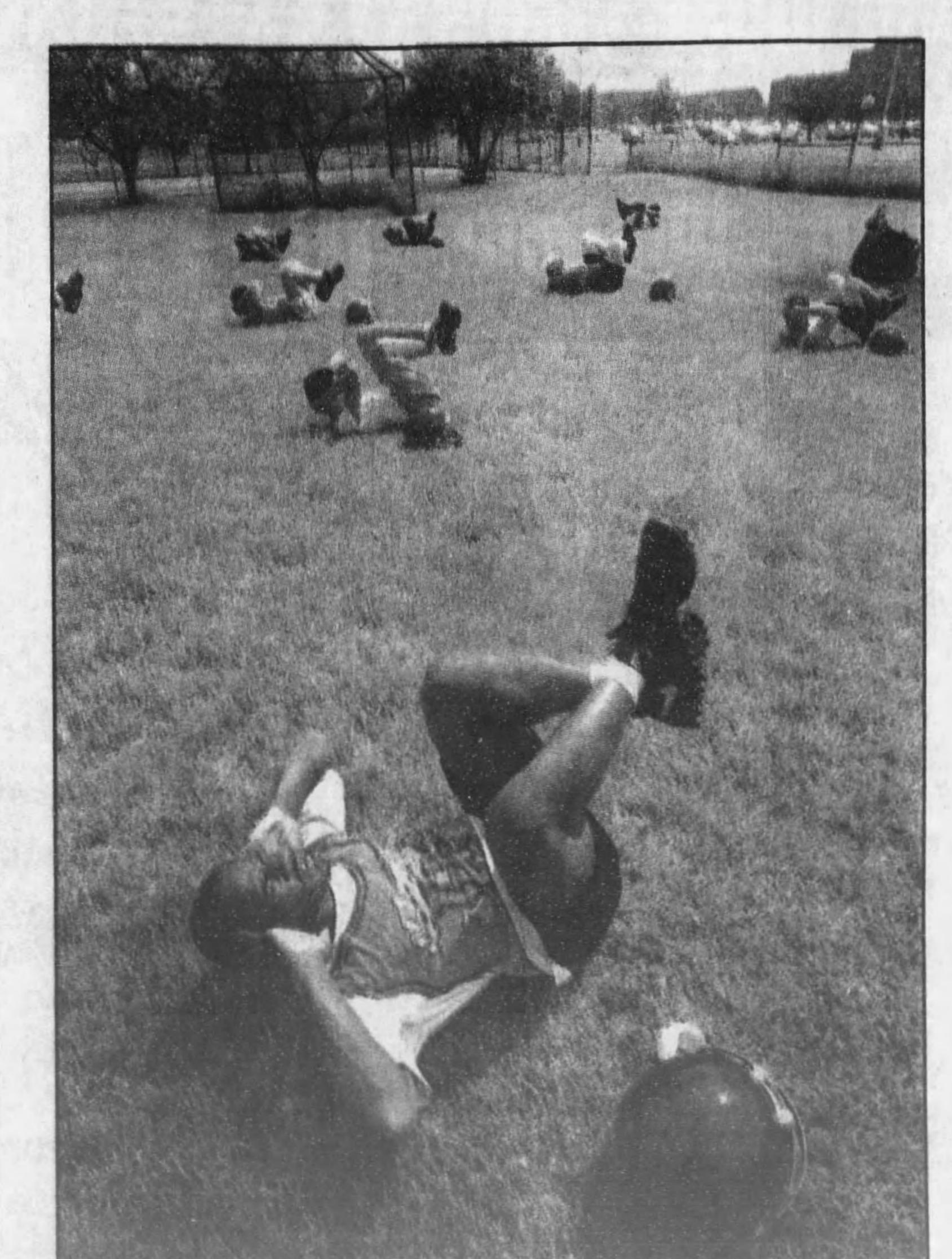
Making his own way



Michael McAndrews / The Hartford Courant

M Household chores give Eddie Lawrence, 17, an opportunity to keep things neat. Eddie, a student at Bulkeley High School,

prepares to fold up his sofa bed in his studio apartment in downtown Hartford.



■ Eddie, who keeps a busy schedule of academics and after-school activities, works out with his football teammates behind Bulkeley High School.

Living by himself, a city teenager overcomes odds

By ROBERT A. FRAHM Courant Staff Writer

The first thing you notice about the place is how neat it looks.

Eddie Lawrence, just home from high school, takes a measure of pride as he gives a quick tour of the tiny, eighth-floor apartment near downtown Hartford where he lives by himself.

"It's really a decent view," the 17-year-old says,

staring out at the city's skyline. He takes a photo album from a closet where he keeps shoes, letters and photos in rows of shoeboxes. In a plastic file box, he saves essays and poems he has written, along with a stack of old letters from a brother he lost in a car accident. A pair of basketball sneakers stands neatly in a corner.

In a city where nearly two of every three children come from single-parent homes, a small number live without either parent — in foster homes, emergency shelters or even by themselves. Some overcome the odds. Eddie, who will be a senior at Bulkeley High School in the fall, is one of them. He keeps his apartment, just as he does his life, in careful order.

It is a long way from the chaos of his childhood. He grew up amid the drugs and crime of the Bellevue Square housing project. He was arrested at age 11 for trying to break into cars, lived in juvenile institutions for two years, and returned to Hartford as an eighth-grader at a last-resort school for troubled

Today he is an honor student with a fistful of

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Should we pay college players?

Camby case puts focus on agents' giving of gifts

By GREG GARBER and LYN BIXBY Courant Staff Writers

Wednesday the National Basketball Association will hold its annual draft, where young men get rich

The professional teams will select 58 players, and this year a recordsetting 40 underclassmen have made themselves available. One of them is Marcus Camby. He has acknowledged accepting cash from one agent between his sophomore and junior years. He said he learned after last season that gifts his friends had given him had come from a second agent.

How many of the 58 players who will be picked have been offered improper inducements by agents?

University of Connecticut coach Jim Calhoun paused for a millisecond and answered with authority, "Fifty-eight."

How many might have taken something? "More than half," he said. "Obvi-

ously, it's a huge problem." Two dozen agents, lawyers and coaches were asked the same question by The Courant, and Calhoun's estimate was on the low side. Several say 90 percent of the college players who move on to the NBA have compromised their eligibility by accepting gifts while in school.

"I used to play down those estimates," said Mark Rodgers, a Little Rock, Ark., agent and a prominent member of the Sports Attorneys Association. "But when you hear, read and see all of the things you do in this business, you begin to feel more and more that those estimates are not inaccurate." Amid escalating reports of taint-

ed college programs and crooked agents, NCAA and college officials are searching for ways to curb the abuses. Many are suggesting college athletes should receive some form of compensation. The problem has reached such

proportions - particularly in basketball and football — that the NCAA has created a special committee that may recommend fundamental changes in the organization's definition of amateurism.

The committee is led by University of Maryland President William E. Kirwan, whose only prediction is that the committee will come up with creative, innovative proposals.

From what the committee has been told, he said, 70 percent to 80 percent of the first-round picks in

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the NBA have probably had contact with an agent that would violate NCAA rules. What is most troubling, Kirwan said, is that the corruption could spread.

"We've got rules and regulations, that, if not being flouted, are certainly being widely violated, and that is not a healthy thing," he said. "If people are going to violate the rules in one area, how far do you go before there's a breakdown of the whole system?"

Who will police agents?

Established agents blame escalating salaries during the past decade for the proliferation of unscrupulous agents.

"It used to be the Federal Express envelope with \$100 bills," said Marc Fleisher, a New Canaan-based agent who represents the Boston Celtics' Dino Radja and the Los Angeles Lakers' Vlade Divac. "Now you're talking about numbers that are mind-boggling. I'm hearing about cars and \$200,000 houses for the handful of top picks."

Sports representation is a competitive field. None of the agents interviewed said they had ever given athletes improper gifts. But many were not reluctant to point fingers at their rivals, even to the point of naming them, though not on the record.

"I guess that's like saying everyone else cheats; isn't it?" said David Dunn, a California agent. "There probably aren't a lot of guys stepping up, saying they pay kids,

The exception is Hartford lawyer Wesley S. Spears, who told an acquaintance he spent more than \$75,000 on Camby and his friends.

Very few agents have been punished for making payments to college athletes. In most cases it was the athletes and their schools that were penalized. According to the National Basketball Players Association, only two agents have been decertified since regulations were strengthened in 1986. Neither the NBPA nor the NCAA have subpoena power in their investigations.

"Getting the information, the evidence is very, very hard," said George Cohen, counsel to the NBPA committee on agent regulation. "You're talking to someone who faces that frustration all the time."

More than two dozen states, including Connecticut, have widely varying laws regulating sports agents. Mike Tranghese, the Big East commissioner, opposes federal

intervention. But he supports the idea of uniform state laws and penalties for offending agents.

"Once we do that," he said, "I think we can get both the NBA and the NFL players associations, along with the NBA and the NFL, to begin to take some significant action against agents when they do something that is deemed illegal."

Tranghese was appointed to the NCAA's special committee on agents before Camby's admissions earlier this month. The 22-member committee includes college presidents, athletic directors, coaches, professors, lawyers and students. One of the charter members was UMass coach John Calipari, who last month signed a \$15.5 million, five-year contract to coach the New Jersey Nets.

Tranghese traces his sense of urgency on the sports agent issue to the record number of underclassmen, including three high school students, who petitioned to enter the NBA draft.

He is not alone in his view that the NCAA should undertake some reforms. Cedric Dempsey, the NCAA's executive director, said the organization might consider changing its position on amateurism and liberalizing its rules, just as the U.S. Olympic Committee did in the

"The athletic grant-in-aid today is not as good as it used to be," Dempsey said. "It's a changing world, and we've got to change our thinking.'

A sound investment?

Guy Zucker, a Boston-based sports agent, said he can't compete for marquee players because the price is too steep. He represents Donald Royal of the Orlando Magic and Troy Brown, a former Providence College player who is in the Continental Basketball Association.

"Not paying kids puts me at a huge business disadvantage,' Zucker said. "I have been asked, point-blank, by players not close to Marcus Camby's ability for money and cars. They say, 'This is what it will take.'

"Coaches get paid off, assistant coaches get paid off. A mother this year asked me if buying the new car was an agent's responsibility. And if you don't deal with them, they stop returning your calls."

Quite simply, improper inducements can pay off — literally — for both the would-be agent and the would-be professional athlete.

Historically, agents have received 4 percent of the value of an athlete's contract. In the draft this year, for instance, the NBA's rookie salary

structure dictates that the first player taken will receive a three-year contract worth \$9.1 million. Four percent of that deal would translate to an agent's share of \$364,000, a tidy return on the investment of several months of concentrated re-

But with the rigid salary structure, some agents are offering to negotiate rookie contracts for nothing in exchange for a percentage of endorsement contracts (sometimes as high as 25 percent) and the hope of negotiating a lucrative second contract.

Advantage International agent Peter Roisman, formerly of Hartford, said the new salary structure focuses enormous attention on the top five or six draft picks.

'The way things are now, the 20th player drafted is worth zero in endorsements, and he's not going to get much of a contract," Roisman said. "Everybody is after the top

Cohen of the basketball players association said agents are prepared to spend money to make money: "If I'm an agent and I'm trying to get Marcus Camby, I know he's going to sign a \$9 million contract — and that doesn't include endorsements. I spend, what — \$75,000? In some ways that's just an intelligent business decision, wouldn't you say?"

According to the NBPA, there are 260 agents certified by the union, but only about 100 actually represent players. David Falk, one of the top agents, represents about 20 players, including the Chicago Bulls' Michael Jordan. In fact, the 10 agents with the most clients represent about one-third of the NBA's 350 to 400 players.

Everyone associated with college athletics — from the coaches to the schools to the television networks -seems to get rich from basketball. Everyone except the college players. Today's athletes feel they are entitled to a cut of the \$5 million profit a school such as UConn or the University of Kansas can make in a single season.

"We take kids who are basically professional athletes, stick them in universities and ask them to perform without giving them a piece of the pie," said Gary Roberts, a Tulane University law professor who is president of the Sports Attorneys Association. "They are often poor minority kids who feel they are being exploited, and they are just ripe for these agents to come along and take advantage of those underlying feelings."

Officials, he said, need to recognize that some players go to college

specifically to prepare themselves for professional basketball.

"The problem is, we have pretended far too long that Marcus Camby is a college student primarily, when he is not," Roberts said. "Whenever you create something that's not real, there are always problems."

Rodgers, the Little Rock attorney and sports agent, said college players are not necessarily being exploited. Some, he said, take advantage of the system.

"These kids know what's going on," he said. "They know that if there's people out there that if they put that hand out or they show a need, that somebody is going to fill that hand, somebody's going to fill that need."

However, he said, the agent who pays is not necessarily going to get the contract.

"If I'm willing to give a player money, that player knows I'm willing to cheat," he said. "If I'm a cheat, then I'm a dishonest person. If I'm a dishonest person, why in the world would you want to hire me to negotiate your contract and maybe handle your money for you?"

Camby ended up signing with Proserv Inc., one of the top companies representing professional ath-

An effort toward reform

William Strickland of International Management Group, another top company, has a roster of 14 players. He learned his craft at Pro-Serv, where Falk and Michael Jordan made endorsement history in the 1980s.

Strickland remembers attending a seminar given by legendary agent Ed Garvey:

"It was an audience of what I'd mostly call wannabes. Garvey told us, 'Most of you people can't afford to represent a top NFL pick.' He said afford because he knew we didn't have enough money to land those guys. And this was back in 1980, '81.

"I grew up in LA, and it was known all over the city that [businessman] Sam Gilbert would take care of all the UCLA basketball players. That was the '60s and '70s. My point is, this has been going on

for a long time."

Gilbert was a multimillionaire contractor who operated out of the San Fernando Valley. He was asked to disassociate himself from UCLA when Larry Farmer was coach. Gilbert helped players get clothing and other items and subsidized apartments in buildings he owned in the San Fernando Valley.

In the 1920s, University of Illinois football star Red Grange hired agent C.C. "Cash and Carry" Pyle to arrange barnstorming tours that netted them hundreds of thousands of dollars.

As salaries soared in the 1980s, so did the number of agents. From 1985-87 two agents, Norby Walter and Lloyd Bloom, embarked on an elaborate scheme, paying off some 40 college football players.

They had a silent partner, Michael Franzese, a captain in the Colombo crime family, who testified for the government when the agents were charged with mail fraud and tried in Chicago in 1989. Franzese who was serving a 10-year federa sentence for racketeering, said his hope was to gain influence over players and, ultimately, to fix

The pressure to curb unscrupulous agents has built to the point where it has spurred several initia-

• The Sports Attorneys Association created a committee to draft a model law for individual states to enact with the aim of establishing uniform regulations and penalties for agents across the country.

 Early this month, U.S. Rep. Bart Gordon, D-Tenn., proposed a federal law that would make it a crime for an agent to induce an athlete to do anything that would terminate the athlete's eligibility to play college

 The NCAA's special committee on agents and amateurism is working on recommendations to present to the organization's annual convention in January.

Several members of the NCAA committee said top college athletes should be allowed to receive some form of compensation, possibly loans against their future earning potential as professionals. At the

same time, penalties should be increased for violating NCAA rules.

"What we are talking about is the idea of the premier athlete, such as a Marcus Camby," Tranghese, the Big East commissioner, said. "So if someone comes along offering him \$200 or \$300 or \$1,000, it isn't going to make any difference because he would have some money in his pocket."

Robert Ruxin, author of "An Athlete's Guide to Agents," began researching the landscape as a student at Harvard Law School in the

late 1970s.

"I've been saying for 15 years that the NCAA should legalize agents for undergraduates," he said. "They should allow a student to retain an agent, someone who can advise him while he's in school. That way the more reputable agents will be able to work within the system, and it will make it tougher for the underground agents."

Since he wrote his book, Ruxin said, the money has increased dramatically, but the issues have remained the same: "Just as there's a fresh crop of athletes every year, there's a fresh crop of would-be agents, some of whom think the way to get into the business is to buy their way in. In the past that's been cash, airline tickets, jewelry, women, drugs, whatever it takes."

Jim Calhoun has sent Reggie Lewis, Cliff Robinson, Tate George, Chris Smith, Scott Burrell, Donyell Marshall and now Ray Allen to the

A few years ago at Georgetown University, he tossed the reputable Falk out of the UConn locker room: "I said, 'What are you doing

"He said, 'Looking for you.' "I said, 'Here I am. Bye.' "

Calhoun talks to his players regularly about agents. This season he brought in former NBA star Bobby Dandridge to discuss the subject.

"My line has been a hard line," Calhoun said. "You try to be vigilant. You talk to the kids.... There's no way possible you can absolutely know what your players are doing 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. I'd ask parents the same question about their kids. You just can't

President plans effort to track sex offenders

Continued from Page 1

the privacy of its citizens.

"Since our nation was founded over 200 years ago, the American people have held the expectation that their privacy was sacred, and that government could not, without serious cause, pry into the lives of our citizens," Dole said.

He also said the Clinton administration misused the FBI by urging the agency to investigate former White House travel office employees fired to make way for Clinton allies.

"In doing so, they misused the

FBI and revealed a pattern of ethical arrogance, the full extent of which, even today, we are just beginning to discover," Dole said. "We have learned the privacy of literally hundreds of Americans was trampled on. . . . The Clinton

administration came into office vowing to set a new ethical standard. Unfortunately, the standard they have set cannot be defended," Dole said. "America deserves bet-Clinton did not respond directly

to Dole, or refer to the FBI files.

But his deputy campaign manager, Ann Lewis, said Dole "offered only negative, partisan attacks on the president" because he had "no new or positive ideas about the future of this country."

Clinton preferred to talk about crime, using his radio address to boast of an overall reduction in crime nationwide and to announce that he had ordered Attorney General Janet Reno to prepare a national system to track sexual offenders. The move echoes legislation proposed in Congress.

"Nothing is more important than keeping our children safe," Clinton said, "especially from sexual preda-



■ President Clinton arrives at the White House Saturday after delivering a speech at the U.S. Conference of Mayors in Cleveland. Carrying his luggage is Bruce Lindsey, who has become a prosecution target in the second Whitewater trial under way in Little Rock, Ark.

tors, people who . . . are likely to U.S. Conference of Mayors, after a commit their crimes again and again."

He noted that the 1994 crime bill required states to compile lists of sexual offenders and gave them the power to notify local communities when sexual offenders move in.

"Now we must take the next step," he said, namely letting one state know when a sexual offender moves there from another state. Sens. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, and Joseph Biden, D-Del., recently proposed legislation to create a national registry.

The proposal highlighted the twoday trip that came after a week of bad news at home for Clinton and his wife. He spoke Saturday to the

fund-raising trip to Houston and a speech on job gains to the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees in Chicago

Last week, Republicans on the Senate Whitewater committee all but accused Hillary Rodham Clinton of obstructing justice in their investigation of the Whitewater land deal in Arkansas. Also, Senate and House committees started investigating the White House use of private FBI files on 407 members of the Reagan and Bush administrations, and independent counsel Kenneth Starr added the handling of the FBI files to his Whitewater

Gingrich threatens contempt charges

Associated Press

MARIETTA, Ga. — The White House must turn over 2,000 pages of travel office files or the House will declare it in contempt of Congress next week, Speaker Newt Gingrich, R-Ga., said Saturday.

"The biggest issue we have next week with them is simple," Gingrich told a press conference.

"These people cannot continue to stonewall, obstruct, delay and lie and they need to turn over those

2,000 pages by next Wednesday,"

The White House has claimed executive privilege over the papers, which have been subpoenaed by a House committee.

The committee is investigating the firing of seven travel office employees early in the Clinton administration and how the administration reacted to earlier inquiries into those dismissals.

The packet resulted in the disclosure that the White House had improperly requested and obtained FBI files on more than 400 members of former Republican administra-

"I think the average American is getting pretty fed up with a White House that totally, inappropriately and, I think, illegally got FBI files on behalf of paid political operatives of the Democratic Party so that they could go through to see if they could find any dirt," Gingrich said.

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