

not on USA's radar
ans haven't paid much at-
tional missile defense sys-
up Poll shows. 6A.

After surgery for stroke

Sudden hospitalization for
vere headaches over the
weekend couldn't stave off
ain swelling for Sen. Paul
overdell. The Republican
m Georgia, respected for
s ability to unify col-
agues, dies Tuesday at 61.
ur hearts are breaking,"
id a choked-up Majority
ader Trent Lott, a close
end of Coverdell, from the
enate floor. "We will miss
m greatly." 6A.

Access for disabled

Reno is expected to an-
with 10 communities in a
disabled citizens. 3A.

In check

sumer prices 0.6% in June,
ber that excludes energy
est gain. "Inflation is dor-
economist. 3B.

Rejecting new bills

and \$10 bills are being spit
ers, and the vending ma-
to update equipment. The
s a pretty penny. 3A.

In southern states

ues to simmer in triple-
rought conditions worsen.
st for the rest of the week,
ays. 10A. Weather, 14A.

Met privacy

"Bankruptcy lawyers view
alable asset." 12A.
clarify the bankruptcy laws
privacy concerns, it should
that carefully balances the
consumers with those of
says. 12A.

Novelty wearing off

as encountered Sacagawea
promotional campaign. 3B.
CEO is sent packing. The
1B.
at earnings forecasts with
1B.
earnings estimate, reports a

Hangs on to Tour lead

is still leader as Tour de
ains. 10C.
chance at the 800 meters;
ualify for the Olympics. 1C.

Whole health experts

ple getting bodies pierced
complications. 9D.
ment to stop sales of food
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int, why don't more people
al Word. 1D.

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Schools high

teachers what grade
ng environment at their



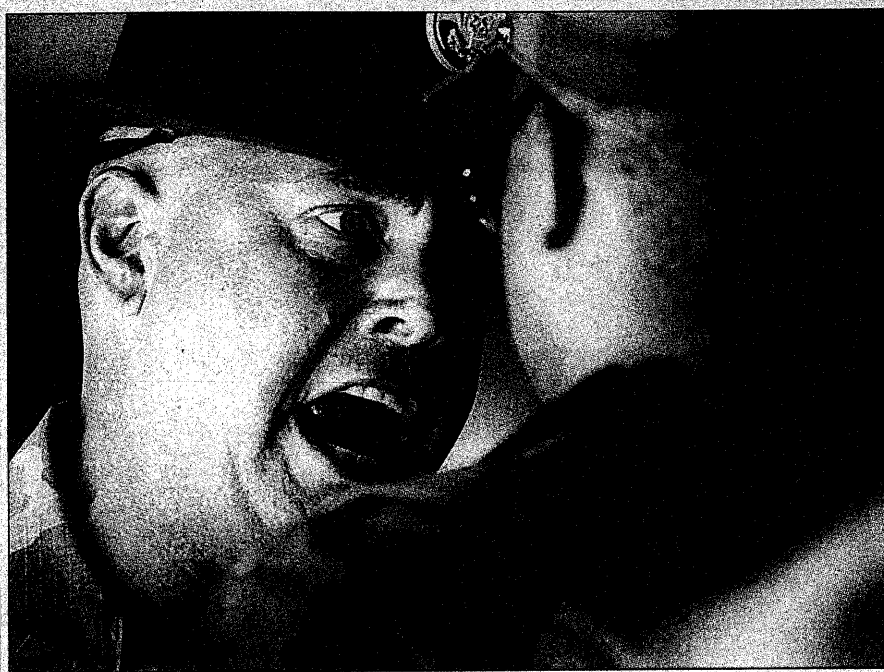
cord. The dramatic move was
announced just after midnight.
White House spokesman Joe
Lockhart said that Clinton
would leave for the G-8 eco-
nomic summit in Japan on

mit with leaders of seven other
nations. He would still be able
to arrive in time for meetings in
Okinawa, skipping preliminary
talks in Tokyo.
At Camp David, talks contin-

ued into the early morning
hours as negotiators tried to re-
solve the key stumbling point—
the question of sovereignty
over Jerusalem, which is

claimed by both Israel and the
Palestinians as their capital.
After staying up much of the
previous night with Israeli
Prime Minister Ehud Barak,

Israelis, Barak has offered to ex-
pand the boundaries of Jerusa-
lem and cede effective control
of Palestinian areas to a Pales-
tinian state.



By Kim Truett, AP, for USA TODAY

"Insist and assist": Glenn Wilson, an Army drill sergeant at Fort Jackson, S.C., gives the lowdown to recruits. Boot camp washout rates have fallen as the armed forces put new emphasis on helping trainees succeed.

This isn't your father's boot camp anymore

Short on recruits, the
armed forces ease their
approach to basic
training — an effort that
some observers fear will
mean softer soldiers

By Dave Moniz
USA TODAY

FORT JACKSON, S.C. — Surrounded by old black-and-white photographs of stern warriors whipping recruits into shape, Col. Mick Bednarek recalls the way boot camp was not so long ago.

"It used to be, the drill sergeant would say, 'If you're good enough to come into my Army, then you have to get past me.'"

Many never got past the Army's fear-some gatekeepers. They washed out and returned to civilian life after a brief and sometimes painful introduction to boot camp. But today, Bednarek says, a training brigade commander and 24-year Army veteran, virtually anyone who makes the effort can get through 8-12 weeks of basic training.

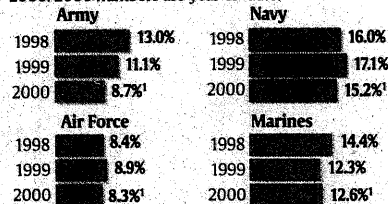
The Army has designed a raft of programs to help woebegone trainees graduate, from remedial military drills to special courses for those with marginal English language skills. There are courses for recruits who arrive too flabby and need a gentler training pace, and courses to calm the fears of trainees who try to quit the Army in the first week.

Because of that newfound ethos, the Army's largest basic training site has experienced an unprecedented drop in recruit failure. As recently as December 1998,

Cover story

Boot camp failure

Basic training failure rates, by service, from 1998 through 2000. 2000 numbers are year-to-date.



¹ — The services say that failure rates historically drop further after the summer, when the bulk of recruits go through basic training.
Source: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines

By Quin Tian, USA TODAY

Please see COVER STORY next page ►

Senate OKs tax cut for couples

By William M. Welch
USA TODAY

WASHINGTON — The Senate approved on Tuesday a Republican plan to cut taxes for married couples by \$248 billion over 10 years, setting up an election-year battle over voters' desire for tax cuts.

The Senate vote was 61-38, short of the two-thirds needed to override a threatened presidential veto. Eight Democrats joined 53 Republicans in favor. One Republican, George Voinovich of Ohio, and 38 Democrats voted no. The GOP victory came as non-partisan congressional analysts adjusted their estimate of federal budget surpluses to nearly \$2.2 trillion in the next decade, or nearly 10 times the size of the tax cut. Republicans said the surplus makes big tax cuts affordable and appropriate. "The American people are being overtaxed," said Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss.

Democrats assailed the GOP bill as favoring the rich at the expense of the middle class. "The full cost of the Republican tax cuts hits at the worst possible time: 10 years from now, just when the baby boomers are starting to retire, just when we're going to need to strengthen Social Security and Medicare," said Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle, D-S.D.

The Senate tax bill must be reconciled with a \$182 billion, 10-year version approved by the House. President Clinton immediately repeated his threat to veto the bill when it reaches the White House, unless Republicans create a prescription-drug benefit through Medicare. GOP leaders have declined to strike a deal.

The GOP-sponsored tax cut is billed as a remedy for a quirk in the tax system that forces many two-income couples to pay more than if they were single. However, analysts say that about as many married taxpayers get a bonus as the number who pay a penalty, and the tax bill does not distinguish between them.

The bill would gradually enlarge the 15% and 28% tax brackets so that they apply to a greater share of a married couple's income.

Under the Senate Republican bill, a couple with \$80,000 in income, two children and itemized deductions would receive a tax cut of about \$1,100, according to the Deloitte & Touche accounting firm.

Bill's effect

Median-income, dual-earner couple with two children and \$10,000 in itemized deductions:

Income	\$72,930
Current tax	\$7,784
Senate GOP bill	\$6,759
Tax cut	\$1,025

Source: Senate Finance Committee

USA TODAY

White House opposes removal of dams in Northwest

Blow to environmentalists might be blow to Gore; effort targeted endangered salmon

By Tom Kenworthy
USA TODAY

Treading cautiously on a divisive political issue in the Pacific Northwest, the Clinton administration has decided it will not support removal of four dams on the Snake River to aid recovery

to be conveyed to Congress today, could affect the presidential race in states key to Democrat Al Gore, who hasn't taken a stance on the issue.

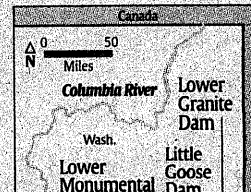
In May, Gore was chastised for "his continued silence" by his Oregon campaign chairman Gov. John Kitzhaber, who

currently protected under the Endangered Species Act. However, they are deeply divided over whether tearing out the earthen portions of the dams is worth the cost.

Breaching the dams would raise electric rates, hurt farmers who irrigate and deprive grain

George Frampton, administration officials will tell Congress today that they will retain dam removal as a future option if they find over the next decade that other measures to save salmon have not succeeded.

"Dam removal may in the end prove to be necessary, but



Recruits receive second chances as basic training stresses success

Continued from 1A

23% of Fort Jackson recruits flunked out of basic training. By the end of this year, the recruit failure rate here is expected to be 10% or lower.

The sudden drop is part of a military-wide trend playing out at rifle ranges and recruit barracks across the country. Commanders at Marine, Navy and Air Force basic training sites say they, too, are graduating recruits who in years past would have been discharged without a second thought.

Some critics, however, question whether the four services, which put about 200,000 recruits through boot camp each year, are sacrificing quality as they struggle to attract and keep young men and women in a wickedly competitive job market.

Tom Wall, who commanded an Army basic training battalion in the mid-1990s, is convinced that the services must be lowering standards. "The kids didn't suddenly get physically fit. The only way you do this is with a floating standard," Wall says.

Boot camp commanders don't necessarily agree. They say they're using proven scientific methods to salvage struggling but worthwhile recruits. Some argue that the drop in attrition reflects the changing nature of the people they recruit and an enlightened philosophy that brings the military out of the dark ages of social Darwinism.

'Insist and assist'

But it is also true that the Pentagon is short of recruits and seasoned troops who want to stay in uniform. With field commanders screaming for bodies to fill undermanned units, marginal recruits are much less likely to be sent packing.

"It's a great paradigm shift. Now, it's gonna be tough, but we'll assist you in meeting the standards as long as you don't give up on yourself," Bednarek explains.

The new philosophy has become an official part of Army training doctrine. Known as "insist and assist," the idea is to demand that all recruits meet graduation standards while assisting stragglers in ways never before imagined.

And it's not just the Army. The other military branches have also taken a new approach within the past two years.

"A drill instructor should not give up on a recruit — we don't leave our dead on the battlefield," says Brig. Gen. Stephen Cheney, commander of the Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island, S.C. "I would phrase it this way: Drill instructors are there for inspiration. The proclivity to drop a recruit is not there anymore."

One of two Marine boot camps (the other is in San Diego), the notoriously tough Parris Island has cut its failure rate for male recruits in half, from 20% to about 10% in the past two years.

Female attrition there has also plunged, from 29% in 1993 to 18.8% last year.

The Army's failure rate for all basic combat training fell to 8.7% as of May, down from 13% in 1998.

The same trend holds for the Navy and Air Force, although the decline in recruit failures isn't as sharp. While the Navy dismissed 17.1% of all recruits last year, this year it is falling 15.2%.

The Air Force's overall failure rate of 8.3% this year is down slightly from 8.9% in 1999.

Maj. Gen. Ray Barrett, Fort Jackson's commander, acknowledges that in an ideal world, fewer soldiers would successfully complete basic training than are doing so now. "There's a law of nature that says we're going to have some attrition. Is it 1% or 15%? You've got pre-existing physical conditions, physical and mental problems — people get hurt. I'm beginning to believe 12-15% is a good number."

Historically, Barrett says, the services had a large enough supply of recruits so that ones who were unfit or discipline problems could simply be sent home. He calls the old methods "an industrial production philosophy."

Some argue that military recruits are as dedicated, as those who joined 10 years ago. The main difference, commanders say, is that the services have to find new ways to motivate young people who grew up in the Information Age and constantly question authority figures.

But there are concerns that the armed forces are flirting with danger. Charles Moskos, a military sociologist at Northwestern University in Evanston, Ill., says the military "may be increasing problems down the road." One potential outcome of a gentler boot camp, Moskos theorizes, is an increase in future disciplinary problems.

"If you're going to have attrition, it's better to have it early. Every attrition case in a standing unit is a pain in the neck," Moskos says.

Second and third chances

A transforming event that changes civilians into soldiers and sailors, basic training has for generations been a harrowing rite of passage. It is where green recruits get their hair cut short, learn to march in cadence and to one day survive combat.

The services defend their new methods and deny they are lowering the bar for marginal troops. In fact, all four branches say they have recently made basic training more rigorous, adding exercises such as the Marine Corps "Crucible," a 54-hour endurance test that involves sleep deprivation and long marches.

The difference in making such a philosophical change, commanders say, is developing patience that heretofore was not part of basic training.

"We realize we are in the development business. People develop at different rates," says Lt. Col. Bill Gallagher, a basic training battalion commander at Fort Jackson.

In decades past, poorly performing recruits were almost always gone after the first several weeks of the two to three month basic training process. Today, the Army will rehabilitate injured soldiers — sometimes for months at a time — and focus intensely on giving poor performers a second, and even a third chance to shoot, rifle or do pushups.

The new philosophy can mean a longer boot camp stay for trainees, especially those who are injured. In some cases, trainees can spend several additional weeks, even several months, completing basic training.

Sgt. 1st Class Robert Wright, who trains Army recruits at Fort Jackson, says recruits who screw up deserve a second chance. "My problem is giving soldiers third and fourth chances. What kind of soldiers do they make?" Wright asks.

Andrew Bacevich, a former Army officer and national security specialist at Boston University, says that it's logical to see a drop in soldier quality during robust economic times when interest in joining the military traditionally declines. In the past two years, every service but the Marines has failed to meet its recruiting goals at least once.

"If recruits are a dime a dozen, then you have the possibility of ratcheting up standards — the training

base becomes a true sorting-out process." Bacevich says. "When recruiting problems become great, you can't afford to have sorting-out happen in the training base."

There are other reasons the services say they need to rethink the old survival-of-the-fittest model. Drill sergeants say that the decline of mandatory physical education classes in many high schools has contributed to a generation of couch-potato teens.

"We're doing an outstanding job with what society is sending us," says Army Sgt. Maj. Willie Hill.

The Navy argues that it is graduating more recruits because commanders have a better understanding of why they fail.

"What we're doing is bringing young people in the front door of boot camp who make perfectly good sailors, except they lack some fundamental tool," says Rear Adm. Ed Hunter, who commands Navy basic training at Great Lakes Naval Training Center near Chicago.

It could be that a smart but out-of-shape enlistee can't run 1½ miles in 14 minutes, as the Navy requires. So instead of cutting him loose, Hunter says, the Navy will immediately put him in remedial training and take the time to ensure that he passes his fitness test.

"That's not changing our standards," Hunter says.

'Break them in easy'

Like the Army, the Navy has other programs to nurture struggling trainees, including one to teach stress and anger management to recruits who respond poorly to authority figures.

Military commanders have also focused on lowering the washout rate by limiting injuries that halt or end training altogether.

All four branches say that in the past five years they've learned a great deal about leg problems, such as shin splints and stress fractures. By custom-fitting recruits with running shoes — instead of that old standby, the combat boot — they have been able to reduce injury losses early in training.

"If you want to know why young people get shin splints and blisters in training, all you have to do is go to church on Sunday," Hunter says. "Everyone is wearing a pair of Nikes."

He adds that few recruits who arrive at Navy basic training have ever worn boots or even hard-soled shoes. "You can't bring them in here and march them 25 miles a week. You have to break them in easy."



By Bruce L. Flansburg, AP for USA TODAY

The skills of a soldier: Drill sergeant Maynard Richardson helps a recruit down a rope at Fort Jackson, near Columbia, S.C. Fort Jackson, the Army's largest basic training site, has seen an unprecedented drop in its recruit failure rate over the past two years as the armed forces have taken a new approach to boot camp.

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JUL 19 2000