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NEWS

White House suggests Clinton plans to answer all questions
 Judy Keen; Gary Fields

WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON -- The White House moved Wednesday to quell speculation that President Clinton might refuse to answer some questions when he testifies about Monica Lewinsky next week.

White House spokesman Joe Lockhart reiterated at the daily news briefing that Clinton intends to testify "completely and truthfully." Asked whether that means Clinton will not decline to answer certain questions, Lockhart said, "That's what it suggests to yes."

Clinton is scheduled to testify Monday under oath via closed-circuit TV from the White House. There has been speculation that he might assert his Fifth Amendment right not to incriminate himself or his Fourth Amendment right to privacy to avoid answering some questions about his relationship with the former White House intern.

Independent counsel Ken Starr is investigating whether Clinton had a sexual relationship with Lewinsky, lied about it under oath and asked others to conceal it. Clinton has denied the allegations.

Lewinsky testified last week to the grand jury that she did have an affair with Clinton and that they discussed ways to keep it secret, but that he did not directly ask her to lie, according to people with knowledge of her testimony.

Speculation is also mounting about a potentially critical piece of evidence: the dress being tested for DNA evidence. Lewinsky gave prosecutors the dark blue dress after she was given immunity from prosecution July 28.

Lockhart said Wednesday that he's not aware of any request from Starr for DNA samples from the president. Asked whether Clinton would like to know the results of the FBI tests, Lockhart said, "I

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"I don't know." Other developments:

Justice Department lawyers are working with Starr's office to clear up an apparent discrepancy in the testimony of two Secret Service uniformed officers.

At issue are the recollections of officers John Muskett and Gary Byrne, people with knowledge of the matter said.

Those people say Muskett has told Justice Department lawyers that he and Harold Ickes, then deputy chief of staff, opened the door of the president's private study in early 1996 and saw Lewinsky leave the room. They also say Byrne has told the government lawyers that Muskett told him that he and Ickes saw Clinton and Lewinsky in an intimate situation.

Byrne and Muskett were unavailable for comment Wednesday. Ickes has said he never saw any sexual encounters between Clinton and Lewinsky.

Byrne and Muskett were among the first Secret Service personnel to appear before the grand jury after Supreme Court Justice William Rehnquist cleared the way last month for Secret Service officers and agents to be called.

Starr's office is preparing a report for Congress that may focus on evidence developed in the Lewinsky investigation.

Under the independent counsel act, Starr must report to Congress if he finds evidence of impeachable offenses by the president.

Other matters Starr has been reviewing, including the firing of travel office employees and the White House's acquisition of secret FBI background files, are not likely to produce evidence of impeachable offenses, people with knowledge of Starr's inquiry said.

Starr's report could be sent as early as next month, those people said, but no final decisions on its scope or findings have been made.

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