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Clinton will talk to Reno about Wen Ho Lee case

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He made the statement to reporters prior to meeting with Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.

Clinton said his staff has already contacted Reno, and "I'm sure I'll have a chance to talk to the attorney general about it." He said he did not discuss the matter with her before now because "it would have been completely inappropriate for me to intervene."

"There was a serious violation here. He has acknowledged that," Clinton said of Lee. "Whenever we hold anybody in prison ... we need to have a very high threshold. There ought to be an analysis of whether that threshold was crossed."

Earlier Friday, presidential spokesman Joe Lockhart said he did not expect the president to reach out to the attorney general personally. "There is a fine tradition that the Justice Departments

operates independently."

In a rare public disagreement, Clinton said Thursday that Lee's long detention "just can't be justified," but Reno refused to apologize and said the confinement was the nuclear scientist's own fault.

Later in the day, Lockhart said that while Clinton intends to look into how the case was handled, there was no discussion of an apology to Lee from the executive branch.

"Given the limited and the proper role and hands-off role that was played here by the White House, there's no discussion of that [an apology]," Lockhart said. "When people are troubled by things, and he indeed is troubled himself by some of these questions, we should look at it."

The 60-year-old Lee, a former Los

Alamos laboratory scientist, went free Wednesday after pleading guilty to one felony of mishandling weapons secrets.

Reno, at her weekly news conference, said Lee could have avoided nine months of detention by agreeing earlier to plead guilty and tell the government what he did with the secrets.

FBI Director Louis J. Freeh said "the safety of the nation demands that we take this important step" under which Lee was sentenced to the 278 days he had served. The government dropped 58 other counts.

Hours after Reno spoke, Clinton expressed an opinion far closer to that of U.S. District Judge James Parker, who said Lee's detention "embarrassed our entire nation."

Clinton, who met with Justice officials

Lee case - page 20

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Students get advice on key part of job-hunt process

"Interviewing Insights" was the topic when La Grange lawyer G. Grant Dixon III presented tips and techniques to students at The

John Marshall Law School in a seminar conducted recently by the Chicago law school's Career Services Department.