

## NATION/WORLD DIGEST

## Debt Limit Could Throw World Into Recession

CHICAGO (AP) — President Barack Obama confidently predicted Friday that a divided Congress would raise the nation's borrowing limit to cover the staggering federal debt rather than risk triggering a worldwide recession, but he conceded for the first time he would have to offer more spending cuts to Republicans to get a deal.

Pushed to the brink, Obama said, the two parties would find "a smart compromise."

In an interview with The Associated Press, Obama also took pains to promote his long-term plan to cut trillions of dollars from federal deficits as a fairer, more compassionate alternative to a Republican plan that surged to party-line passage Friday afternoon in the House.

And Obama said in his most forceful terms yet that he had the economic record to win re-election after he had "been able to yank this economy" out of recession.

One week after the near government shutdown — Obama signed the bill finalizing that legislation after returning to the White House — the rejuvenated president answered questions in his hometown following an evening of fundraising for his re-election bid and a rare night in his own bed.

## Gadhafi Troops Shell Misrata In Libya

TRIPOLI, Libya (AP) — Moammar Gadhafi's troops launched a powerful assault with tanks and rockets Friday on Misrata, the last major rebel city in western Libya, sending residents fleeing to increasingly crowded safe areas of the city that are still out of the Libyan leader's reach, witnesses said.

Misrata has become emblematic of the limits of NATO's air campaign, with the alliance's top military commander saying he needs more precision attack aircraft to avoid civilian casualties in urban combat. President Barack Obama acknowledged in an interview that the two-month-old civil war has reached a stalemate.

After a weeklong flurry of high-level diplomatic meetings in Europe and the Middle East, rebel leaders complained that the international community is not doing enough to keep Gadhafi's troops at bay. In the capital of Tripoli, a government official denied Libyan troops are shelling Misrata and said they are only taking defensive actions.

Friday's fighting in Misrata — even as a NATO foreign ministers meeting in Berlin debated handling of the Libya air campaign — high-light rebel worries that international intervention won't come fast enough or will be ineffective.

## Rising Cost Of Food, Gas Threaten Recovery

WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans are paying more for food and gas, a trend that threatens to slow the economy at a crucial time.

So far, the spike in such necessities hasn't stopped businesses from stepping up hiring or slowed factory production, which rose in March for the ninth straight month. Still, higher gas prices have led some economists to lower their forecasts for growth for the January-March quarter.

Consumer prices rose 0.5 percent last month, the Labor Department said Friday. Nearly all of the gains came from pricier gas and food.

When taking out those two volatile categories, core inflation was relatively flat. But at the same time, employees are only seeing small, if any, pay increases.

"People have less money to spend on goods other than food and energy and that is going to cause the expansion to slow," said economist Joel Naroff of Naroff Economic Advisors.

## Scientists Pore Through NASA Mapping Data

LOS ANGELES (AP) — NASA has released a trove of data from its sky-mapping mission, allowing scientists and anyone with access to the Internet to peruse millions of galaxies, stars, asteroids and other hard-to-see objects.

Many of the targets in the celestial catalog released online this week have been previously observed, but there are significant new discoveries. The mission's finds include more than 33,000 new asteroids floating between Mars and Jupiter and 20 comets.

NASA launched the Wide-field Infrared Survey Explorer, which carried an infrared telescope, in December 2009 to scan the cosmos in finer detail than previous missions. The spacecraft, known as WISE, mapped the sky 1 1/2 times during its 14-month mission, snapping more than 2 1/2 million images from its polar orbit.

The spacecraft's ability to detect heat glow helps it find dusty, cold and distant objects that are often invisible to regular telescopes.

The batch of images made available represents a little over half of what's been observed in the all-sky survey. The full cosmic census is scheduled for release next spring.

## Judge Approved Test Cases Suing Hackers

LONDON (AP) — Actress Sienna Miller and three other alleged victims of a British tabloid phone-hacking scandal could push ahead with suing the News of the World newspaper, a judge said Friday.

High Court judge Geoffrey Vos said the four cases should not be delayed by an ongoing criminal investigation into the tabloid's conduct.

Police were investigating the paper to establish its role in a series of illegal interceptions into celebrities' mobile phone voicemails, and three of the paper's journalists have been detained for questioning.

Vos said the four "test cases" — the most well-advanced out of more than 20 similar lawsuits — should be heard first.

The cases would focus on whether there was interception, how much was carried out, what was done with the information and what damage was suffered, Vos said. They could provide guidance for potential damages the other alleged victims can claim, he added.

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## Powerful Storms Kill 9 In Ark., Okla.

BY SARAH EDDINGTON

Associated Press

CRYSTAL SPRINGS, Ark. — Powerful spring storms roared through parts of the South on Friday, toppling trees, smashing buildings and killing at least nine people, including two sets of parents and children who were huddled together as the winds raged outside their homes.

It was the deadliest storm of the season so far. Several tornados accompanied the onslaught, but much of the damage was attributed to straight-line winds — sudden, violent downbursts that struck with hurricane force in the middle of the night.

Forecasters warned of approaching danger as much as three days earlier, but the winds up to 80 mph and repeated lightning strikes cut a path of destruction across a region so accustomed to violent weather that many people ignored the risk — or slept through it.

The storms began late Thursday in Oklahoma, where at least five tornadoes touched down and two people were killed. The system then pushed into Arkansas, killing

seven more. Dozens of others were hurt.

By midday Friday, the storms marched into Tennessee, Louisiana and Mississippi. At least three twisters touched down in Mississippi, causing widespread damage but only one serious injury.

Arkansas Gov. Mike Beebe said he had never seen the state suffer so many deaths from straight-line winds. Tornadoes and floods cause most of Arkansas storm-related fatalities.

Unlike tornadoes, which develop from columns of rotating air, straight-line winds erupt from a thunderstorm in unpredictable downdrafts, then spread across the landscape in all directions.

Teams from the National Weather Service worked Friday to learn more about what caused the damage.

At Crystal Springs, lightning split a tree that fell into a home, killing an 18-month-old girl and her father as they slept. In Little Rock, winds knocked a tree into a home, killing a woman and her 8-year-old son in his bed.

In the Arkansas town of Bald Knob, a 6-year-old boy died when the top of a tree more than in diameter crashed through his home while he

was sleeping.

The worst damage in Oklahoma was in the small town of Tushka, where residents wondered what would become of their community after a twister damaged or destroyed nearly every home along the two main streets. The only school — a collection of buildings housing grades K-12 — was all but gone.

Two people were killed and at least 25 hurt as the tornado plowed through the town of 350 before dawn. At least a dozen homes and businesses were destroyed.

Gilbert Wilson, Atoka County's emergency management director, said witnesses reported seeing two tornadoes that merged into a single twister. The weather service confirmed a tornado hit the area.

Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin declared a state of emergency for 26 counties affected by the storm.

Authorities said a strong downburst of wind apparently overturned a mobile home, killing a 64-year-old woman in St. Francis County, in eastern Arkansas.

In Little Rock, the storms intensified shortly before 2 a.m., catching many people asleep.

## No New Issues With TransCanada Pipeline Found

BY MATTHEW DALY

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The State Department said Friday that a new environmental study of an oil pipeline from Canada to Texas shows no new issues since a similar report was issued last year.

The report on the proposed \$7 billion, 1,900-mile pipeline, comes as President Barack Obama offered his first public comments on the project, which would carry crude oil extracted from tar sands in western Canada, and refineries in Texas. At a town hall meeting on energy last week, Obama said concerns about the potentially "destructive" nature of the Canadian oil sands need to be answered before his administration decides whether to approve a permit for the Keystone XL pipeline.

The pipeline planned by Calgary-based TransCanada would travel through six U.S. states carrying what environmental groups call "dirty oil," because of the intensive energy needed to extract crude from formations of sand, clay and water.

The project would double the capacity of an existing pipeline from Canada, and supporters say it could significantly reduce U.S. dependence on Middle Eastern oil. The pipeline would travel through Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas and Oklahoma before reaching refineries in Houston and Port Arthur, Texas.

Obama used the phrase "tar sands" — the term favored by environmentalists — to describe the bitumen deposits embedded in Alberta, Canada sands, but refused to offer an opinion about whether the pipeline should be approved.

Obama said he could not comment on the specifics of the Keystone XL pipeline, because the State Department is going through a complicated review process, "and if it looks like I'm putting my fingers on the scale before the science is done, then people may question the merits of the decision later on."

Still, Obama noted that Canada is one of the largest oil exporters to the United States. "I will make this general point, which is that, first of all, importing oil from countries that are stable and friendly is a good thing," he said.

Environmental groups were heartened by Obama's comments, but disappointed by the State Department review.

Susan Casey-Lefkowitz, international program director for Natural Resources Defense Council, said the 320-page report glossed over crucial issues such as pipeline safety and the risks posed by the proposed route over the massive Ogallala Aquifer, which supplies drinking water to people in eight states.

A spokesman for TransCanada said the company was pleased that the report was issued, noting that U.S. officials have pledged to decide on the project by the end of the year. Spokesman Shawn Howard declined to comment on the report's substance.

The pipeline project has been delayed since last summer, when the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency asked the State

Department to conduct a supplemental environmental impact study to address concerns about pipeline safety and the impact on climate change of oil sands production. The State Department has authority over the pipeline because it crosses an international boundary.

In its new report, the State Department appeared to argue against a route change for the 36-inch pipeline.

Experience "from previous oil line releases in shallow groundwater areas ... indicates that the impacts from even large spills would likely be limited to localized groundwater contamination that would not threaten the regional viability of the aquifer system," the report says.

## Attention 63-3 Taxpayers &amp; School Board

Our Superintendent stated that "We have a very good story to tell" about his desire for \$41 Million in **NEW TAXES** to be paid by District 63-3 Ag, Home & Business property owners.

**NEWS ALERT: Raising taxes by \$41 Million is never a "very good story." Save your stories, here are the facts.**

- State aid for education for 2011-2012 is **higher than 2006-2007** per student.
- 63-3 enrollment is **down 16%** in the last 10 years. **We lost 550 students.**
- **Tax revenue for the district is up 11%** in the last nine years.
- 63-3 **General Fund expenditures are up 29%** in the last nine years.
- Since January 2009 we have **spent \$7.1 million on capital projects** during a declining enrollment environment? We could be using those \$\$ now in the general fund. New gyms, heated bus barns, administration building, destroying two houses, exactly how did this spending help our students education?

• **WE DON'T HAVE A REVENUE PROBLEM, WE HAVE A SPENDING PROBLEM.**

- 63-3 has continued to outspend our increasing tax revenue for the past decade in the face of declining enrollment. They have dug this hole with their inaction and fiscally irresponsible decisions. Now they want to do it again.

• **GET THE SPENDING IN LINE WITH THE REVENUE.**

1. Roll back spending to 2006-2007 levels.
  2. Personnel cuts for some with 10% wage reductions and 2 year wage freezes for **ALL**.
  3. Employees should contribute to their pension and health care plan.
- 63-3 is asking for the **LARGEST OPT-OUT IN SOUTH DAKOTA HISTORY**, exceeding even Sioux Falls with their much larger enrollment.
  - Stop using our kids as "human shields." Leave that to the Mideast despots and dictators.

**Vote NO on the May 24th Opt-Out. Tax and spend is never a "very good story."**

Paid for by Wayne Wurth, Disabled Vietnam Veteran

**Concerned Taxpayers of 63-3**

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