

NATION/WORLD DIGEST

Israel, Palestinians Asked To Renew Talks

MOSCOW (AP) — U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton suggested Friday that the United States and Israel have found a way around the worst disagreement the two allies have faced in years while international diplomats set goals for new U.S.-backed peace talks aimed at establishing an independent Palestinian state.

The so-called Quartet group of Mideast negotiators met in the Russian capital to set the stage for peace talks in which the United States would be a go-between. Those indirect talks would be the first under the Democratic Obama administration and the hawkish Israeli government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

At a news conference after the meeting, Clinton spoke approvingly of indications Netanyahu is ready to address U.S. concerns about new Jewish housing that complicates peace efforts.

"What I heard from the prime minister in response to the requests we made was useful and productive," she said, "and we are continuing our discussions with him and his government."

That was a far cry from Clinton's earlier condemnation of the housing plan in east Jerusalem as an insult, delivered for maximum effect during a visit to Jerusalem by Vice President Joe Biden. Clinton had a curt conversation with Netanyahu a week ago in which she laid out U.S. expectations from here, including a roll-back to the housing plan, a gesture of good faith to the Palestinians and an express statement that all issues dividing Israel and the Palestinians, including the fate of divided Jerusalem, remain part of the negotiations.

Iraqis Still Uncertain Seven Years Later

BAGHDAD (AP) — Seven years after the first bombs in the war to oust Saddam Hussein, Iraqis went about their business Friday with little observance of the anniversary, looking to the future with a mixture of trepidation and hope.

Perhaps more important in the minds of many was the ongoing wait for final results from the country's second nationwide parliamentary election. The milestone will determine who will oversee Iraq as U.S. forces go home, but could also point the direction the fragile democracy will take down the road — deeper into the sectarian divide that followed Saddam's fall, or toward a more secular, inclusive rule.

"Now we have democracy and freedom, but the cost was dire and Iraqis have paid that price," said Raid Abdul-Zahra, 38, a technician in Najaf.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's coalition appears to be ahead in the tight race. With almost 90 percent of the vote counted as of Thursday, his coalition was leading in 7 of Iraq's 18 provinces compared to 5 provinces for his closest rival, the Iraqiya coalition led by secular Shiite Ayad Allawi. Al-Maliki's coalition also has about 40,000 votes more in the overall vote count.

Many, especially among the country's Sunni-minority that dominated Iraq during Saddam's rule, blame the U.S. for the sectarian violence that erupted after the invasion.

WASHINGTON — One by one, House Democratic fence-sitters began choosing sides Friday, and the long, turbulent struggle over landmark health care legislation tilted unmistakably in President Barack Obama's direction.

In full campaign mode, his voice rising, the president all but claimed victory, declaring to a cheering audience in Virginia, "We are going to fix health care in America."

With the showdown vote set for Sunday in the House, Obama decided to make one final, personal appeal to rank-and-file Democrats, arranging a Saturday visit to the Capitol. Republicans, unanimous in opposition to the bill, complained anew about its cost and reach.

Under a complex — and controversial — procedure the Democrats have devised, a single vote probably will be held to send one bill to Obama for his signature and to ship a second, fix-it measure to the Senate for final passage in the next several days.

Democratic leaders and Obama focused last-minute lobbying efforts on two groups of Democrats, 37 who voted against an earlier bill in the House and 40 who voted for it only after first making sure it would include strict abortion limits that now have been modified.

Democratic leaders worked late Friday attempting to resolve the dispute over abortion. Rep. Bart Stupak, D-Mich., who suc-

ceeded last November in inserting strict anti-abortion language into the House bill, hopes to do so again. That prospect angered lawmakers who support abortion rights.

"We're not going to vote for a bill that restricts a woman's right to choose beyond current law," said Rep. Diana DeGette, D-Colo., as she left an evening meeting with Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Abortion opponents are divided over whether restrictions on taxpayer funding currently in the bill go far enough.

Reps. John Boccieri of Ohio, Scott Murphy of New York and Allen Boyd and Suzanne Kosmas of Florida became the latest Democrats to announce support for the bill after voting against an earlier version that passed, bringing the number of switches in favor of the bill to seven.

On the other side of the ledger, Rep. Michael Arcuri of New York and Stephen Lynch of Massachusetts became the first Democratic former supporters to announce their intention to oppose the bill. Lynch said he did so despite a telephoned appeal from Vicki Kennedy, whose late husband, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, championed health care for decades.

Rep. Anh Cao of Louisiana, the only Republican to support the earlier measure, has also announced his opposition.

The historic legislation, affecting virtually every American and more than a year in the making, would extend coverage to an estimated 32 million Americans who lack it, forbid

unusually personal criticism in their struggle against the bill, calling Kosmas a "space cadet" after she announced her position and labeling Pennsylvania Rep. Jason Altmire a "drama queen" for waiting to announce his opposition.

They also suggested the administration had adjusted water allotments to an agricultural region of California to secure the support of two lawmakers but offered no evidence of any link between the two events. Democrats disputed the charge.

In addition, they sought to tarnish Democratic claims of deficit savings, circulating a Congressional Budget Office estimate that deficits would rise by \$59 billion once the costs of raising doctor fees under Medicare were added in. The House has already approved the increase in fees, and the bill is awaiting action in the Senate.

The political ramifications remained to be fought out in November.

Arcuri's announcement of opposition reaped a threat from his former allies at the Service Employees International Union, which vowed to try to unseat him in this fall's Democratic primary in favor of "someone who shares our progressive values."

One day after Democrats released 153 pages of revisions to their bill, they were back at it, responding to fresh concerns from some of the rank and file about disparities in payment levels to Medicare providers in different areas of the country.

■ Get Updates At Yankton Online (www.yankton.net)

Report: USDA Lax In Watching Organics Market

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Agriculture Department has failed to enforce penalties against some who falsely marketed foods as organic, according to an internal department investigation.

A report by the agency's inspector general says the agency needs to step up enforcement of those who sell products under the "USDA Organic" label but do not meet government standards to do so. The report says the department has made improvements in maintaining the integrity of the organic program in recent years, but needs to better handle complaints about potential violators.

Oversight of the organic program has become more important and more scrutinized as the industry has exploded in popularity over the last decade, growing 14 to 21 percent annually with sales of \$24.6 billion in 2008. As more companies have vied to be part of the business, critics have charged that the government has not been restrictive enough in what it allows to be labeled as organic.

The internal report says the department has failed to monitor some companies it had already identified as improperly marketing their products as organic. In one case, the department never issued enforcement action against an operation that had marketed non-organic mint under the department's label for two years.

Enforcement action can simply be an agreement to correct the problem or can be more severe, including revocation of an operation's organic certification or cash penalties. In some cases, the report said, it took up to 32 months for the department to issue enforcement action while the companies continued to falsely market their products.

The report also said the department was not processing complaints about the program fast enough and that agents charged with certifying organic operations were not following consistent rules.

USDA official Rayne Pegg, who heads the agency that oversees the program, said the Obama administration has already proposed a budget increase to deal with some of the deficiencies. She said the department is working to improve the program.

The internal report "underscores the necessity for the reforms we have enacted and those currently under way," she said.

LEWIS & CLARK FAMILY MEDICINE, P.C.

Providing Healthcare for Women of All Ages

1101 Broadway, Suite 103A, Morgen Square
Yankton, SD
(605) 260-2100

Brandi Pravecck, CNP
Family Practice
Lewis & Clark Specialty Hospital

Complimentary Interior Design with our Professional Design Staff

with every purchase at Yankton's... **slumberland** furniture that lives the way you do
920 Broadway • 665-3719

Health care bill's next steps

House Democratic leaders are scrambling to get the votes to pass the Senate health care bill. What happens next:

<p>Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Many House Democrats disagree with parts of the Senate bill and don't want to vote for it without fixes Fixes would be in a separate reconciliation bill 	<p>Sunday</p> <p>What the House will vote on</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> "Self-executing rule" Spells out rules governing debate; tucked into the rule is the Senate health care bill Reconciliation bill If rule passes, House debates and votes on the bill that fixes the problems in the Senate bill 	<p>Enough votes to pass?</p> <p>216 votes needed to pass bill in House</p> <p>House: 435 seats by party</p> <p>Democrats 253</p> <p>Republicans 178</p> <p>Uncommitted Dems: Leaders are trying to get 216 to vote yes</p> <p>Unyielding GOP: All have vowed to vote no</p> <p>4 vacant</p> <p>© 2010 MCT Source: McClatchy Washington Bureau; U.S. Congress Graphic: Judy Treible, Lee Hulteng</p>	<p>Next week</p> <p>If both bills pass the House, Senate takes up reconciliation bill with limited debate and just a 51-vote majority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Republicans promise a fight <p>The coming days</p> <p>President will sign Senate bill into law as soon as it passes the House, then sign reconciliation bill after it passes the Senate</p>
--	---	--	--

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Undecided Dems Begin Picking Sides

Obama To Make Final Appeal At Uncertain Members Today, Vote Still Sunday

BY DAVID ESPHO
AP Special Correspondent

WASHINGTON — One by one, House Democratic fence-sitters began choosing sides Friday, and the long, turbulent struggle over landmark health care legislation tilted unmistakably in President Barack Obama's direction.

In full campaign mode, his voice rising, the president all but claimed victory, declaring to a cheering audience in Virginia, "We are going to fix health care in America."

With the showdown vote set for Sunday in the House, Obama decided to make one final, personal appeal to rank-and-file Democrats, arranging a Saturday visit to the Capitol. Republicans, unanimous in opposition to the bill, complained anew about its cost and reach.

Under a complex — and controversial — procedure the Democrats have devised, a single vote probably will be held to send one bill to Obama for his signature and to ship a second, fix-it measure to the Senate for final passage in the next several days.

Democratic leaders and Obama focused last-minute lobbying efforts on two groups of Democrats, 37 who voted against an earlier bill in the House and 40 who voted for it only after first making sure it would include strict abortion limits that now have been modified.

Democratic leaders worked late Friday attempting to resolve the dispute over abortion. Rep. Bart Stupak, D-Mich., who suc-

ceeded last November in inserting strict anti-abortion language into the House bill, hopes to do so again. That prospect angered lawmakers who support abortion rights.

"We're not going to vote for a bill that restricts a woman's right to choose beyond current law," said Rep. Diana DeGette, D-Colo., as she left an evening meeting with Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Abortion opponents are divided over whether restrictions on taxpayer funding currently in the bill go far enough.

Reps. John Boccieri of Ohio, Scott Murphy of New York and Allen Boyd and Suzanne Kosmas of Florida became the latest Democrats to announce support for the bill after voting against an earlier version that passed, bringing the number of switches in favor of the bill to seven.

On the other side of the ledger, Rep. Michael Arcuri of New York and Stephen Lynch of Massachusetts became the first Democratic former supporters to announce their intention to oppose the bill. Lynch said he did so despite a telephoned appeal from Vicki Kennedy, whose late husband, Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, championed health care for decades.

Rep. Anh Cao of Louisiana, the only Republican to support the earlier measure, has also announced his opposition.

The historic legislation, affecting virtually every American and more than a year in the making, would extend coverage to an estimated 32 million Americans who lack it, forbid

unusually personal criticism in their struggle against the bill, calling Kosmas a "space cadet" after she announced her position and labeling Pennsylvania Rep. Jason Altmire a "drama queen" for waiting to announce his opposition.

They also suggested the administration had adjusted water allotments to an agricultural region of California to secure the support of two lawmakers but offered no evidence of any link between the two events. Democrats disputed the charge.

In addition, they sought to tarnish Democratic claims of deficit savings, circulating a Congressional Budget Office estimate that deficits would rise by \$59 billion once the costs of raising doctor fees under Medicare were added in. The House has already approved the increase in fees, and the bill is awaiting action in the Senate.

The political ramifications remained to be fought out in November.

Arcuri's announcement of opposition reaped a threat from his former allies at the Service Employees International Union, which vowed to try to unseat him in this fall's Democratic primary in favor of "someone who shares our progressive values."

One day after Democrats released 153 pages of revisions to their bill, they were back at it, responding to fresh concerns from some of the rank and file about disparities in payment levels to Medicare providers in different areas of the country.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Agriculture Department has failed to enforce penalties against some who falsely marketed foods as organic, according to an internal department investigation.

A report by the agency's inspector general says the agency needs to step up enforcement of those who sell products under the "USDA Organic" label but do not meet government standards to do so. The report says the department has made improvements in maintaining the integrity of the organic program in recent years, but needs to better handle complaints about potential violators.

Oversight of the organic program has become more important and more scrutinized as the industry has exploded in popularity over the last decade, growing 14 to 21 percent annually with sales of \$24.6 billion in 2008. As more companies have vied to be part of the business, critics have charged that the government has not been restrictive enough in what it allows to be labeled as organic.

The internal report says the department has failed to monitor some companies it had already identified as improperly marketing their products as organic. In one case, the department never issued enforcement action against an operation that had marketed non-organic mint under the department's label for two years.

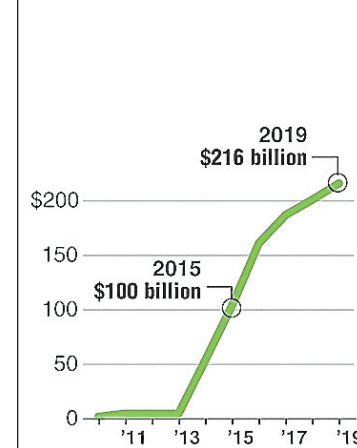
Enforcement action can simply be an agreement to correct the problem or can be more severe, including revocation of an operation's organic certification or cash penalties. In some cases, the report said, it took up to 32 months for the department to issue enforcement action while the companies continued to falsely market their products.

The report also said the department was not processing complaints about the program fast enough and that agents charged with certifying organic operations were not following consistent rules.

USDA official Rayne Pegg, who heads the agency that oversees the program, said the Obama administration has already proposed a budget increase to deal with some of the deficiencies. She said the department is working to improve the program.

The internal report "underscores the necessity for the reforms we have enacted and those currently under way," she said.

Paying later



WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Reserve must reveal documents identifying financial companies that received Fed loans to survive the financial crisis, a federal appeals court ruled Friday.

A panel of the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan said in two separate opinions that such information isn't automatically exempt from requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

News Corp.'s Fox News Network LLC and Bloomberg L.P. sued separately for details about loans that commercial banks and Wall Street firms received and the collateral they put up. Other news agencies including The Associated Press filed briefs with the appellate court in their support.

The Fed argued that if it identified banks that drew emergency loans, it could cause a run on those institutions, undermine the

loan programs and potentially hurt the economy, and lower-court judges were split on the issue.

The Federal Reserve said it's studying Friday's ruling.

"We are reviewing the decision and considering our options for reconsideration or appeal," said Fed spokeswoman Michelle Smith.

Until a final ruling, the Fed is not compelled to turn over any documents.

Sen. Byron Dorgan, who has pressed the Fed to release details about the loan programs, urged Chairman Ben Bernanke on Friday to "immediately" identify the firms that drew emergency loans and the amounts.

Failing to do so after the court rulings "would be a pretty arrogant thing for the Fed to do,"

Dorgan said in an interview with The Associated Press.

In the Fox case, a three-judge panel concluded Friday that the documents should be available for review by news organizations and the public. A lower-court judge had agreed with the Fed that the documents belonged to the Federal Reserve banks and were off limits to the public under the Freedom of Information Act.

Court: Fed Must Reveal Data On Loans To Firms

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Agriculture Department has failed to enforce penalties against some who falsely marketed foods as organic, according to an internal department investigation.

A report by the agency's inspector general says the agency needs to step up enforcement of those who sell products under the "USDA Organic" label but do not meet government standards to do so. The report says the department has made improvements in maintaining the integrity of the organic program in recent years, but needs to better handle complaints about potential violators.

Oversight of the organic program has become more important and more scrutinized as the industry has exploded in popularity over the last decade, growing 14 to 21 percent annually with sales of \$24.6 billion in 2008. As more companies have vied to be part of the business, critics have charged that the government has not been restrictive enough in what it allows to be labeled as organic.

The internal report says the department has failed to monitor some companies it had already identified as improperly marketing their products as organic. In one case, the department never issued enforcement action against an operation that had marketed non-organic mint under the department's label for two years.

Enforcement action can simply be an agreement to correct the problem or can be more severe, including revocation of an operation's organic certification or cash penalties. In some cases, the report said, it took up to 32 months for the department to issue enforcement action while the companies continued to falsely market their products.

The report also said the department was not processing complaints about the program fast enough and that agents charged with certifying organic operations were not following consistent rules.

USDA official Rayne Pegg, who heads the agency that oversees the program, said the Obama administration has already proposed a budget increase to deal with some of the deficiencies. She said the department is working to improve the program.

The internal report "underscores the necessity for the reforms we have enacted and those currently under way," she said.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Agriculture Department has failed to enforce penalties against some who falsely marketed foods as organic, according to an internal department investigation.

A report by the agency's inspector general says the agency needs to step up enforcement of those who sell products under the "USDA Organic" label but do not meet government standards to do so. The report says the department has made improvements in maintaining the integrity of the organic program in recent years, but needs to better handle complaints about potential violators.

Oversight of the organic program has become more important and more scrutinized as the industry has exploded in popularity over the last decade, growing 14 to 21 percent annually with sales of \$24.6 billion in 2008. As more companies have vied to be part of the business, critics have charged that the government has not been restrictive enough in what it allows to be labeled as organic.

The internal report says the department has failed to monitor some companies it had already identified as improperly marketing their products as organic. In one case, the department never issued enforcement action against an operation that had marketed non-organic mint under the department's label for two years.

Enforcement action can simply be an agreement to correct the problem or can be more severe, including revocation of an operation's organic certification or cash penalties. In some cases, the report said, it took up to 32 months for the department to issue enforcement action while the companies continued to falsely market their products.

The report also said the department was not processing complaints about the program fast enough and that agents charged with certifying organic operations were not following consistent rules.

USDA official Rayne Pegg, who heads the agency that oversees the program, said the Obama administration has already proposed a budget increase to deal with some of the deficiencies. She said the department is working to improve the program.

The internal report "underscores the necessity for the reforms we have enacted and those currently under way," she said.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Agriculture Department has failed to enforce penalties against some who falsely marketed foods as organic, according to an internal department investigation.

A report by the agency's inspector general says the agency needs to step up enforcement of those who sell products under the "USDA Organic" label but do not meet government standards to do so. The report says the department has made improvements in maintaining the integrity of the organic program in recent years, but needs to better handle complaints about potential violators.

Oversight of the organic program has become more important and more scrutinized as the industry has exploded in popularity over the last decade, growing 14 to 21 percent annually with sales of \$24.6 billion in 2008. As more companies have vied to be part of the business, critics have charged that the government has not been restrictive enough in what it allows to be labeled as organic.

The internal report says the department has failed to monitor some companies it had already identified as improperly marketing their products as organic. In one case, the department never issued enforcement action against an operation that had marketed non-organic mint under the department's label for two years.

Enforcement action can simply be an agreement to correct the problem or can be more severe, including revocation of an operation's organic certification or cash penalties. In some cases, the report said, it took up to 32 months for the department to issue enforcement action while the companies continued to falsely market their products.

The report also said the department was not processing complaints about the program fast enough and that agents charged with certifying organic operations were not following consistent rules.

USDA official Rayne Pegg, who heads the agency that oversees the program, said the Obama administration has already proposed a budget increase to deal with some of the deficiencies. She said the department is working to improve the program.

The internal report "underscores the necessity for the reforms we have enacted and those currently under way," she said.

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Agriculture Department has failed to enforce penalties against some who falsely marketed foods as organic, according to an internal department investigation.

A report by the agency's inspector general says the agency needs to step up enforcement of those who sell products under the "USDA Organic" label but do not meet government standards to do so. The report says the department has made improvements in maintaining the integrity of the organic program in recent years, but needs to better handle complaints about potential violators.

Oversight of the organic program has become more important and more scrutinized as the industry has exploded in popularity over the last decade, growing 14 to 21 percent annually with sales of \$24.6 billion in 2008. As more companies have vied to be part of the business, critics have charged that the government has not been restrictive enough in what it allows to be labeled as organic.

The internal report says the department has failed to monitor some companies it had already identified as improperly marketing their products as organic. In one case, the department never issued enforcement action against an operation that had marketed non-organic mint under the department's label for two years.

Enforcement action can simply be an agreement to correct the problem or can be more severe, including revocation of an operation's organic certification or cash penalties. In some cases, the report said, it took up to 32 months for the department to issue enforcement action while the companies continued to falsely market their products.

The report also said the department was not processing complaints about the program fast enough and that agents charged with certifying organic operations were not following consistent rules.

USDA official Rayne Pegg, who heads the agency that oversees the program, said the Obama administration has already proposed a budget increase to deal with some of the deficiencies. She said the department is working to improve the program.

The internal report "underscores the necessity for the reforms we have enacted and those currently under way," she said.

Lewis & Clark Home Builders Association

5th Annual 2010 Home Show

Landscaping by **curbAppeal** Sponsored in part by **Housing**

March 27th & 28th, 2010
Saturday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. • Sunday: Noon - 4 p.m.

Kiwanis 4-H Ice Center • 709 Whiting Drive, Yankton, SD
Admission: \$3⁰⁰ per person • Children 12 & Under Free

The Lewis & Clark Home Builders Association Home Show is designed for home owners in all stages of building, remodeling, landscaping and decorating their homes.

FREE PROGRAMS OFFERED:

Saturday 11:00 a.m. Boy Scouts of America	Saturday 1:00 p.m. Yankton County EMS	Saturday 3:00 p.m. Master Gardeners	Sunday 1:00 p.m. Dogs 'R Us 4-H Club
--	--	--	---

COUPON Lewis & Clark HBA
\$1⁰⁰ OFF Good for up to 4 people
Admission to 2010 Home Show

Product Demonstrations and exhibits will include:
Home Builders • Design & Construction • Windows & Doors • Lighting & Electrical Supplies • Millwork
Construction Products • Sunrooms, Fencing & Decks • Closet & Garage Organization • Fireplaces
Plumbing • Gutters & Siding • Water Conditioning • Heating & Cooling • Financial Institutions & much more!