

## NATION/WORLD DIGEST

## Republicans Circulate 'Pledge To America'

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Republican leaders are vowing to cut taxes and federal spending, repeal President Barack Obama's health care law and ban federal funding of abortion as part of a campaign manifesto designed to propel them to victory in midterm elections Nov. 2.

The "Pledge to America," circulated to GOP lawmakers Wednesday, emphasizes job creation and spending control, as well as changing the way Congress does business, according to Republicans who have been briefed.

It pairs some familiar Republican ideas — such as deep spending cuts, medical liability reform and stricter border enforcement — with an anti-government call to action that draws on tea party themes and echoes voters' disgruntlement with the economy and Obama's leadership.

The plan is emerging less than six weeks before elections in which Republicans are favored to add substantially to their ranks, perhaps enough to seize control of the House.

"Regarding the policies of the current government, the governed do not consent," reads a preamble to the agenda. "An arrogant and out-of-touch government of self-appointed elites makes decisions, issues mandates, and enacts laws without accepting or requesting the input of the many."

## LA Suburb Mismanaged \$50 Million In Bonds

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The scandal-plagued city of Bell mismanaged more than \$50 million in bond money, levied illegal taxes and paid exorbitant salaries to its leaders, according to a state audit released Wednesday.

The audit was made public a day after eight current and former officials of the blue-collar Los Angeles suburb were arrested for misappropriation of public funds and other charges.

The officials, wearing handcuffs and jail clothing, appeared before a judge on Wednesday but did not enter pleas. Their arraignments were postponed until Oct. 21.

Three were given permission to post bail immediately, but five others, including Mayor Oscar Hernandez and former city manager Robert Rizzo, were ordered to appear before another judge later in the day to prove they would not use looted city funds to get out of jail.

Rizzo was singled out for criticism in the state controller's audit, which said he had total control of city funds and used some of the money to inflate his salary and pay off personal loans.

## Jerusalem Violence Clouding Peace Efforts

JERUSALEM (AP) — Crowds of Palestinian youths violently rampaged in east Jerusalem Wednesday following the shooting death of a local man, clouding fragile peace efforts even as the Palestinian president signaled he may back away from threats to quit negotiations if Israel resumes West Bank settlement construction.

At one point, Israeli riot police stormed the hilltop compound known to Jews as the Temple Mount and to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary — the most explosive site in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the place where the last Palestinian uprising began almost exactly 10 years ago.

That uprising — which killed thousands of people over some five years of violence — erupted after a failed U.S.-led peace effort at Camp David. Wednesday's outburst comes less than a month after the sides resumed peace negotiations, at a tense moment when those talks are already facing possible collapse over Israel's plans to end its 10-month slowdown of construction in the Jewish settlements of the West Bank.

The "moratorium" on construction was declared last November under intense U.S. pressure to help coax the Palestinians into talks with the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who — despite having accepted the principle of a Palestinian state — inspires very little faith in the Palestinians. Netanyahu said all along that the measure would end on Sunday — and the Palestinians have threatened to walk away from the talks if this occurs.

The impasse and looming deadline have created a palpable tension that has built throughout the week.

## Fox Crowns New 'American Idol' Judges

INGLEWOOD, Calif. (AP) — Jennifer Lopez and Steven Tyler will join Randy Jackson as "American Idol" judges next season, after months of turnover and speculation about the future of TV's top-rated show.

With pomp rivaling that of a U.S. Supreme Court appointment, Fox finally assembled the new pieces of the "Idol" panel that will be returned to its original three-member format for season 10.

Actress-singer-dancer Lopez and Aerosmith frontman Tyler will have the job of trying to match the offbeat chemistry of former judges Simon Cowell and Paula Abdul.

"This is 'American Idol!'" host Ryan Seacrest said after the new judges joined him on stage at the Forum arena, where the final national audition for next season's singing contest was held Wednesday.

The announcement was made before a crowd of several thousand who had gathered to try out, some cheering loudly for the cameras and all hoping to make it to the next round, when they'll be judged by the revamped panel. The mini-show was streamed live online by Fox.

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## Friend: Bomb Suspect Wanted Quick Fame

CHICAGO (AP) — A 22-year-old Lebanese immigrant accused of placing a backpack he thought contained a bomb near Chicago's Wrigley Field was no terrorist, just someone seeking quick fortune and fame in America, his attorney and a friend said Wednesday.

But a federal judge denied bail for Sami Samir Hassoun, determining he is dangerous and a flight risk.

"It's hard to imagine a more serious crime ... Although it was thwarted, it had the potential to kill many people," U.S. District Judge Susan Cox said Wednesday afternoon at Hassoun's detention hearing.

Earlier Wednesday, restaurant owner Joseph Abraham told The Associated Press that Hassoun is well educated but also prone to big boasts, lies and bluffs. Those may have led his friend of more than a year to plant the bogus bomb provided by FBI undercover agents, Abraham said.

"Half of the stuff he told you you couldn't believe — lies to show people he was a big shot," said Abraham, 49. Outside the courtroom, attorney Myron Auerbach also described his client as prone to embellish. He said Hassoun had difficulty backing away from dangerous situations. But, he insisted, "My client is not a terrorist."

## Obama Defends U.S. Approach To World Aid

BY BEN FELLER

AP White House Correspondent

UNITED NATIONS — President Barack Obama on Wednesday defended U.S. aid to impoverished people even during sour economic times at home yet promised a sterner approach, favoring nations that commit to democracy and economic revival.

Addressing world leaders, Obama offered no new commitments of U.S. dollars, but rather a blueprint of the development policy that will drive his government's efforts and determine where the money flows. His message was that the United States wants to help countries help themselves, not offer aid that provides short-term relief without reforming societies.

"That's not development, that's dependence," Obama said. "And it's a cycle we need to break. Instead of just managing poverty, we have to offer nations and people a path out of poverty."

Obama spoke at a major anti-poverty summit convened by the United Nations, one day ahead of his main speech to the U.N. General Assembly. The president is in the midst of a three-day trip to the U.N. for its annual meeting.

World leaders on Wednesday were wrapping up an intensive review of the poverty reduction goals adopted 10 years ago, a

highly ambitious effort that has yielded mixed results. The mission is to cut extreme poverty, reduce child and maternal mortality and expand primary education, among other objectives, by 2015.

The president, met by applause as he took the grand U.N. stage, sought to elevate the mission of U.S. development.

Noting the Americans hurting at home, where a recession has eroded millions of jobs, Obama defended the spending of U.S. tax dollars to help others build up their agriculture, transportation and health systems. He called it not just a moral imperative but an investment that can help the global economy and reduce the threats of instability and extremism.

"Let's put to rest the old myth that development is mere charity that does not serve our interests," Obama said.

The White House framed the president's blueprint as a fresh, far-reaching approach to helping other countries, although it builds on programs of other presidents. Obama sought to offer a sense of clarity of why the United States aids other nations, saying it is "rooted in America's enduring commitment to the dignity and potential of every human being."

Obama said development should no longer be measured by how much money or medicine is

delivered, but by the extent to which the U.S. helps countries build up themselves. He aimed to show toughness in setting demands of recipient nations.

"The purpose of development — and what's needed most right now — is creating the conditions where assistance is no longer needed," he said. "So we will seek partners who want to build their own capacity to provide for their people."

He said the U.S. will not abandon countries that need lifesaving help. But he made a plea to developing countries to show responsibility: "We want to help you realize your aspirations. But there is no substitute for your leadership."

International aid organizations praised Obama's commitment to the cause but offered sober words about the challenge ahead, pressing the U.S. president and other leaders of rich nations to follow up on their promises.

Obama then shifted quickly from the plight of the developing world to domestic politics. He was raising money in New York City on Wednesday night for Democratic congressional candidates ahead of the midterm elections in six weeks.

The centerpiece of Obama's trip comes Thursday when he addresses the General Assembly in a speech expected to defend his efforts to advance Mideast peace and combat nuclear threats in Iran and North Korea.

## Political issues

Americans are split on a Republican Congress but can agree on not being happy with President Barack Obama.

Has President Barack Obama met your expectations?

7%

Exceeded your expectations

7%

Fallen below your expectations

54%

Do you want the Republicans to win control of Congress in Nov.?

Registered voters

Yes 48%

No 46%

Among those very enthusiastic about voting in November

Yes 62%

No 35%

Leading potential Republican candidates for president in 2012

Former Mass. Gov. Mitt Romney

25%

Former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin

18%

Unsure

13%

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Source: McClatchy-Marist poll of 815 registered voters, Sept. 14-15; margin of error: +/- 3.5 percentage points

## J&amp;J Lawyers: FDA Knew Of Secret Motrin Recall

BY LINDA A. JOHNSON

AP Business Writer

TRENTON, N.J. — Lawyers for Johnson & Johnson insist government regulators knew the company was secretly pulling packets of ineffective Motrin from store shelves last year, rather than announcing a public recall.

But the lawyers, responding Wednesday to demands from a congressional panel probing the case, wrote they have no documents from the Food and Drug Administration approving what's been dubbed the "phantom recall" of Motrin in the first half of 2009.

Documents the J&J attorneys turned over Wednesday to the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee seem to show the FDA received two brief company reports about the effort to remove small containers of faulty Motrin caplets from convenience store shelves. The committee has scheduled a hearing on the matter Sept. 30.

The reports were obtained by The Associated Press. Neither mentions that employees of the company J&J hired for the project were instructed to act like regular shoppers, buy up all containers of the two Motrin lots in question, and not tell store personnel what they were doing. Those instructions had been included in previously released e-mails circulated internally at J&J's McNeil Consumer Healthcare unit.

What role, if any, the FDA played in the



secret recall has become a central part of the committee's probe.

That investigation is an offshoot of the panel's probe of numerous recalls since last September involving tens of millions of bottles of Tylenol and other J&J nonprescription medicines. The reasons include potentially wrong doses of active ingredient and contamination with bacteria or tiny metal shards.

"FDA was unaware of McNeil's 'phantom recall' when it was initiated. Any effort to suggest to the contrary is based on quoting documents selectively and out of context and ignores other evidence as to what occurred," FDA spokeswoman Elaine Ganz Bobo said in an e-mail.

The J&J attorneys, Ethan M. Posner and Robert K. Kelner, wrote Wednesday that, "It would be highly unusual for the FDA to negotiate an 'agreement' regarding the conduct of a recall in a formal manner, let alone a 'written agreement.'"

The documents they submitted "make clear that McNeil kept the FDA apprised of its

actions," the attorneys added.

One of the documents, a "Field Alert Report" that McNeil apparently submitted to the FDA on March 23, 2009, states that J&J hired a third party to assess how many containers of the faulty Motrin were still available by visiting about 10 percent of convenience stores.

A final "Field Alert Report" dated April 21, 2009, states that about 1 percent of two Motrin lots that didn't dissolve properly had been found during that assessment. The report adds that those containers had been bought up and the company would finish buying all other Motrin from the two lots at convenience stores across the country.

Three months later, an FDA investigator in Puerto Rico, Neisa M. Alonso, wrote to McNeil's head of quality assurance, Carolyn Parziale, stating that "your company should do a voluntary recall of the product," according to another document obtained by the AP.

Bobo said the FDA "then voiced its objections about McNeil's 'phantom recall' activities to the senior leadership of Johnson & Johnson in a February 2010 meeting."

The ranking Republican on the oversight committee, Rep. Darrell Issa, R-CA, wrote in an e-mail to The Associated Press, "We need to uncover the true extent of what the FDA knew and when they knew it and determine whether or not they acted appropriately and timely."

## SC Principal: 2nd Student Questioned In Shooting

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — The principal of a South Carolina high school where pipe bombs were discovered and disarmed after a shooting confirmed Wednesday that a second student was being questioned in the incident.

Socastee High School principal Paul Browning said police asked the second student about the Tuesday afternoon event at the school in the northeast part of the state, and the student was released to his parents.

The incident began when a

freshman confronted an on-campus officer and fired a gun before being taken into custody, police said. Students were evacuated to a football field and bomb squads removed and disarmed the explosive devices.

The students returned to school Wednesday after walking through metal detectors, which will be used for the rest of the week.

Detectives also interviewed other students Wednesday about the incident and reports that

comments had been posted on a social networking site before the shooting, Browning said. He could not confirm that any of the comments came from the freshman.

School resource officer Erik Karney encountered the freshman Tuesday afternoon and the two got into a struggle. Horry County Police spokesman Sgt. Robert Kegler said. During the fight, the student shot at Karney, and while the bullet missed him, the officer was injured after it struck a wall,

Kegler said.

The student has not been identified because of his age. He is expected to appear in Family Court in Conway on Friday, prosecutor Greg Hembree said.

Officer Karney was scheduled to return to the school Monday. Horry County School spokeswoman Teal Britton said she was not aware of any discipline issues involving the freshman, and urged anyone with information about the incident to come forward.



## Some Risks Are Worth Taking. Your Health Isn't One Of Them.

Skin cancer is the most common of all cancers, accounting for 40 to 50 percent of all cancer cases diagnosed each year. While some forms of skin cancer are more dangerous than others, early detection and prompt treatment of any malignant area is of the utmost importance.

Causes and risk factors for skin cancer include fair skin tone, frequent exposure to ultraviolet rays, family history and age. Symptoms may appear as spots; irregular moles; bumps; discoloration; sores; or scaly, reddish, bleeding or oozing skin.

The American Cancer Society recommends a skin examination every three years between the ages of 20 and 40, with annual exams after age 40. They also suggest performing a monthly self-examination in front of a full-length mirror, checking all areas of the body including palms, soles, back of the torso and back of the legs.

## Concerned about skin cancer?

Dr. Lisa Miller will present a free seminar on preventative measures and the detection and treatment of skin cancer on Monday, September 27th, 7:00pm at Lewis & Clark Specialty Hospital



Dr. Lisa Miller  
Yankton Surgical Associates



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