

NATION/WORLD DIGEST

U.S. Walks Out On Ahmadinejad U.N. Speech

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The U.S. delegation walked out of the U.N. speech of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad on Thursday after he said some in the world have speculated that Americans were behind the Sept. 11 terror attacks, staged in an attempt to assure Israel's survival.

He did not explain the logic of that statement that was made as he attacked the U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Ahmadinejad has called for the destruction of Israel and is deeply at odds with the United States and European allies over its nuclear program and suspicions that it is designed to produce an atomic bomb. Iran says it is only working on technology for electricity generation.

The U.S. delegation left the hall after Ahmadinejad said there were three theories about the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks:

— That a "powerful and complex terrorist group" penetrated U.S. intelligence and defenses.

— "That some segments within the U.S. government orchestrated the attack to reverse the declining American economy and its grips on the Middle East in order also to save the Zionist regime. The majority of the American people as well as other nations and politicians agree with this view."

The Americans stood and walked out without listening to the third theory, that the attack was the work of "a terrorist group but the American government supported and took advantage of the situation."

Monthly Premiums Rise In Medicare Plans

WASHINGTON (AP) — Millions of seniors face double-digit hikes in their Medicare prescription premiums next year unless they shop for cheaper coverage, a new analysis of government data finds.

Premiums will go up an average of 10 percent among the top 10 drug plans that have signed up about 70 percent of seniors, according to an analysis of Medicare data by Avalere Health, a private research firm.

Marketing for next year's drug plans gets under way Oct. 1, and seniors will see some of the biggest changes since the Medicare prescription benefit became available in 2006. More than 17 million are enrolled in private drug plans offered through Medicare.

"People are just going to have to get on top of this and shop around," said Dan Mendelsohn, president of Avalere, which does research for industry and government. "Beneficiaries are really going to have to reassess their plans for next year."

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Dems Delay Vote On Bush Tax Cuts

BY STEPHEN OHLEMACHER
Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Senate Democratic leaders decided Thursday to delay a vote on preserving soon-to-expire middle class tax cuts until after congressional elections in November.

President Barack Obama has made extending the cuts a priority, and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid tried to forge a consensus among fellow Democrats to pass a bill before voters choose their congressmen and senators on Nov. 2.

But Reid, a Democrat from Nevada, decided to delay any vote after a meeting with other Senate Democrats failed to produce an agreement on how to proceed.

"Democrats believe we must permanently extend tax cuts for the middle-class before they expire at the end of the year, and we will," Reid spokesman Jim Manley said. "Unfortunately, to this point we have received no cooperation from Republicans to do so."

Enacted in 2001 and 2003 under President George W. Bush, they were the most sweeping tax cuts in a generation. If Congress takes no action, taxpayers at every income level face significant tax increases next year.

Republicans want to extend all the tax cuts. Obama and Democratic leaders in Congress

want to extend them for individuals making less than \$200,000 and married couples making less than \$250,000.

"We will come back in November and stay in session as long as it takes to get this done," Manley said.

House Democrats have said they would wait for the Senate to act, but House Speaker Nancy Pelosi had not yet decided Thursday whether to stage a symbolic vote on tax cuts before the election. Either way, no tax bill will reach the president's desk before voters go to the polls.

A last-minute, or lame duck, session of the House and Senate is set to begin Nov. 15 with a few new faces and perhaps a far different political outlook after an election in which Republicans are expected to make significant gains, even possibly enough to gain control of the House or Senate, or both. Democrats still will hold the majority through the end of the year, however. Some House and Senate Democratic officials believe the timing would make it easier to extend the Bush-era tax cuts set to expire in January.

But who gets a break on their tax bill — everyone, or just what Obama calls the middle class — still would likely be the subject of heated debate.

The Senate's No. 2 Democrat, Dick Durbin of Illinois, described an election-driven stalemate

unlikely to lift in the next five weeks, when many lawmakers up for re-election would prefer to be home campaigning. All 435 seats in the House and 37 in the Senate are on the line.

"We are so tightly wound up in this campaign that it's impossible to see a bipartisan answer to the challenge we face," Durbin, the Democrats' vote-counting whip, said. "That's the reality before the election."

Pre-election, some Democrats are wary of supporting Obama's plan to let taxes rise for the wealthiest Americans, fearing they would be accused of supporting a tax hike. Other Democrats believe they have a winning message of fiscal responsibility while making the rich pay more after years of relative prosperity.

"I'm doing all I can to get the middle income tax cut passed as quickly as possible," said Sen. Max Baucus, D-Mont., chairman of the Senate Finance Committee.

GOP lawmakers say it's a familiar debate: Democrats favor tax increases while Republicans oppose them.

Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, said Democrats are putting nearly every working American at risk for a significant tax increase next year.

"They are in charge and they haven't done anything about it,"

said Cornyn, who is chairman of the committee in charge of electing Senate Republicans. "That would not be a position I would want to be in."

Delaying action on the tax cuts could cause problems for the Internal Revenue Service and employers trying to withhold the correct amount of taxes from workers' paychecks, starting in January. The Treasury Department, which oversees the IRS, usually makes withholding tables available in mid-November for the following year, so employers and payroll firms have time to prepare.

"If Congress has not acted to extend the middle class tax cuts by that time, Treasury will then make an appropriate determination about how to proceed," Treasury spokeswoman Sandra Salstrom said.

Democrats say Republicans are holding middle class tax cuts hostage while they fight to extend tax cuts for the wealthy, an argument that would be stronger if Democrats actually scheduled a vote on the proposals. Senate GOP leaders have vowed to oppose legislation that would extend only middle-class tax relief. Democrats would need at least one Republican vote to overcome a filibuster.

MENNO

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machinery looked like. It was something brand new," he said. "It wasn't that many years ago (they used the samples). There were a lot of changes in machinery at the time, and people didn't even know what a lot of the new machinery looked like."

Saturday's schedule at the Power Show features the antique tractor pull and the money pile for children.

Sunday's schedule includes the pancake breakfast and lunch, the exhibitors' and workers' church service, the Worthington steam engine start-up, the children's pedal tractor pull, the ladies' nail-driving contest, the bale throwing contest and the mini-rod pull.

Both days feature the flea market, toy show, antique car and tractor parade, and children's games. They also feature sessions — two on Saturday and one on Sunday — of steam engine plowing, sawmill start-up; corn cutting, binding and chopping; and corn shelling and shredding.

While the Worthington start-up is listed only on Sunday, Nusz said an effort will be made to get the model down from Artesian and started both days of the power show, if possible.

The antique car and tractor parade has also become popular over the years, as people like to show off their entries, Nusz said. The parade will be held at noon Saturday and 2:30 p.m. Sunday.

"We circle around the grounds, and the announcers give any information (about the entries)," he said. "They can bring their cars and tractors any time, even if they can only stay for one day."

The annual Power and Toy Show is held every September on the third weekend after Labor Day. This event usually draws about 3,000 paid visitors, 200 exhibitors, 60 vendors and more than 300 volunteer workers.

In addition, the show has been featured in the Farm Collector and Toy Farmer magazines.

The first Power Show was held July 4, 1987, in the Menno City Park. The show remained in that location until 1995. A year later, the Power Show moved to Pioneer Acres just north of Menno.

"When we moved from downtown Menno to north of town, it gave us more area," Nusz said. "We moved some buildings in, and now we have little houses, a church and a women's building. We are featuring displays in the ladies' building both days."

The Power Show has grown greatly during its history, Nusz said. The show received a major boost with the formation of the Menno Pioneer Heritage Association (MPHA) in April 1995, which now boasts more than 325 members.

The MPHA seeks to create a living museum dedicated to preserving the cultural and ethnic heritage found in southeastern South Dakota. The move to Pioneer Acres has opened up space for permanent buildings and exhibits, as well as events throughout the year.

"This (Power Show) has gained a new life on its own," Nusz said. "We have both competitors and spectators who come from many states. We anticipate another good crowd this year, with the good weather forecast."

The Power Show has drawn together the generations, Nusz said.

"The older people have the chance to talk about things and tell them to the young people," he said. "Some of the same people show up every year, but we also get new ones."

The change in machinery in a relatively short amount of time staggers the mind, Nusz said.

You have to think back ... to what machinery has evolved into today. And the change is coming faster all the time," he said.

For more information, visit online at www.pioneeracres.com.

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