

Palestinians To Submit Membership Request

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The Palestinians brushed aside heated Israeli objections and a promised U.S. veto Monday, vowing to submit a letter formally requesting full U.N. membership when Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas addresses the General Assembly.

As the Palestinians edged closer to seeking statehood recognition from the United Nations, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called for Abbas to meet with him in New York. The Israel leader said he wanted to resume peace talks, upping the pressure on Abbas and building on the frenzied diplomacy swirling around the Palestinians bid.

Regardless, Abbas said he had not been swayed by what he called "tremendous pressure" to drop the bid for United Nations recognition and instead to resume peace talks with Israel. Senior aides to the Palestinian leader said Abbas was undaunted by threats of punitive measures.

Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said, however, there was still time to find a solution to the diplomatic crisis.

Obama Backs Ending One Day Of Mail Service

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama said Monday the U.S. Postal Service should be allowed to reduce mail delivery to five-days-a-week to help cut its massive losses.

The Postal Service lost \$8.5 billion last year and is facing even more red ink this year as the Internet siphons off large amounts of first-class mail and the weak economy reduces advertising mail.

While the post office has cut more than 100,000 workers in the last few years it needs to cut more, close offices and find other ways to reduce costs to keep operating.

In his economic growth and debt reduction plan unveiled Monday, Obama endorsed the idea of dropping one day of mail delivery — it is expected to be Saturday — and urged other changes in postal operations.

He agreed that nearly \$7 billion the post office has overpaid into the federal retirement system should be refunded to the agency, urged that its payments for advance funding of retiree medical benefits be restructured, and said the post office should be allowed to sell non-postal products and raise postage rates.

Appeals Court: Padilla Sentence Too Lenient

MIAMI (AP) — The 17-year prison sentence imposed on convicted terrorism plotter Jose Padilla is far too lenient for someone who trained to kill at an al-Qaida camp and also has a long, violent criminal history, a federal appeals court ruled Monday as it threw out the sentence.

A divided three-judge panel of the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ordered a new sentencing hearing for Padilla, a U.S. citizen and Muslim convert convicted in 2007 along with two co-conspirators of several terrorism-related charges. Padilla, 40, was held for more than three years without charge as an enemy combatant before he was added to the Miami terror support case.

The ruling affirmed the convictions of Padilla, Adham Hassoun and Kifah Jayyousi on terrorism support and conspiracy charges. The sentences of Hassoun and Jayyousi — more than 15 years and more than 12 years, respectively — were also upheld.

Federal prosecutors objected in 2008 to Padilla's sentence and the appeals panel's majority agreed that U.S. District Judge Marcia Cooke, who presided over the four-month trial, made several errors in essentially discounting his sentence by 12 years. Among the mistakes, the appeals court found, was not taking into account Padilla's training at the al-Qaida camp in Afghanistan.

GOP Rep: Appoint Counsel In Solyndra Loan

WASHINGTON (AP) — The chairman of the House Judiciary Committee is calling for an independent investigator to look into a \$528 million loan approved by the Energy Department for a now-bankrupt solar energy company.

Republican Rep. Lamar Smith of Texas wrote to Attorney General Eric Holder on Monday that an outside lawyer is needed to probe the loan approved for California-based Solyndra Inc., which declared bankruptcy this month and laid off its 1,100 workers.

The FBI and the Energy Department's inspector general are already investigating the Solyndra loan, which has become a flashpoint in a partisan debate over subsidies for so-called green jobs.

Smith said an outsider is needed to determine "whether politics played a role" in the loan.

Protesters In Yemen Storm Military Base

SANAA, Yemen (AP) — Thousands of protesters backed by military defectors seized a base of the elite Republican Guards on Monday, weakening the control of Yemen's embattled president over his poor, fractured Arab nation. His forces fired on unarmed demonstrators elsewhere in the capital, killing scores, wounding hundreds and sparking international condemnation.

The protesters, joined by soldiers from the renegade 1st Armored Division, stormed the base without firing a single shot, according to witnesses and security officials. Some carried sticks and rocks. They used sandbags to erect barricades to protect their comrades from the possibility of weapons fire from inside the base, but none came and the Republican Guards eventually fled, leaving their weapons behind.

Although the base was not particularly large — the Republican Guards have bigger ones in the capital and elsewhere in Yemen — its capture buoyed the protesters' spirits and signaled what could be the start of the collapse of President Ali Abdullah Saleh's 33-year-old regime.

"It was unbelievable," said protester Ameen Ali Saleh of storming the base on the west side of the major al-Zubair road, which runs through the heart of Sanaa. "We acted like it was us who had the weapons, not the soldiers."

Obama Plan Targets Wealthy

BY JIM KUHNHENN
 Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In a blunt rejoinder to congressional Republicans, President Barack Obama called for \$1.5 trillion in new taxes Monday, part of a total 10-year deficit reduction package totaling more than \$3 trillion. He vowed to veto any deficit reduction package that cuts benefits to Medicare recipients but does not raise taxes on the wealthy and big corporations.

"We can't just cut our way out of this hole," the president said.

The president's proposal would predominantly hit upper income taxpayers but would also reduce spending in mandatory benefit programs, including Medicare and Medicaid, by \$580 billion. It also counts savings of \$1 trillion over 10 years from the withdrawal of troops from Iraq and Afghanistan.

The deficit reduction plan represents an economic bookend to the \$447 billion in tax cuts and new public works spending that Obama has proposed as a short-term measure to stimulate the economy and create jobs. And it gives the president a voice in a process that will be dominated by a joint congressional committee charged with recommending deficit reductions of up to \$1.5 trillion.

His plan served as a sharp counterpoint to Republican lawmakers, who have insisted that tax increases should play no part in taming the nation's escalating national debt. Obama's plan would end Bush-era tax cuts for top earners and would limit their deductions.

"It's only right we ask everyone to pay their fair share," Obama said from the Rose Garden at the White House.

In issuing his threat to veto any Medicare benefits that aren't paired with tax increases on upper-income people, Obama said: "I will not support any plan that puts all the burden for closing our deficit on ordinary Americans."

Responding to a complaint from Republicans about his proposed tax on the wealthy, Obama added: "This is not class warfare. It's math."

The Republican reaction was swift and derisive.

"Veto threats, a massive tax hike, phantom savings, and punting on entitlement reform is not a recipe for economic or job

Dolores Hope, Wife Of Bob Hope, Dies At 102

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Dolores Hope, the sultry-voiced songstress who was married to Bob Hope for 69 years and sometimes sang on his shows for U.S. troops and on his television specials, has died at age 102.

Hope family spokesman Harlan Boll said Hope died Monday of natural causes at home in Los Angeles. He did not elaborate.

Bob Hope died at age 100 on July 27, 2003.

At her 100th birthday party, Hope appeared little changed: Her white hair was richly coiffed, her skin smooth and her voice deep and warm. She was brought to the party in a wheelchair but was alert and happy as she greeted old friends and posed for photographs.

Hope mused, "I thought it was going to be just another birthday."

Obama's debt plan

President Barack Obama's new 10-year deficit reduction package totals more than \$3 trillion, half from budget cuts, the rest from tax increases.

Budget cuts

Trim mandatory programs \$580 billion
 Includes \$248 billion cuts in Medicare and \$72 billion in Medicaid; cuts to farm subsidies, benefits programs for federal employees

Cut war spending

Draw down U.S. troops in Afghanistan; transition from a military to a civilian-led mission in Iraq \$1 trillion

Revenue hikes

End tax cuts for the rich \$800 billion
 End Bush-era tax cuts for high-income households

Eliminate tax breaks

Close loopholes, limit deductions for those earning more than \$250,000 a year, end tax breaks for oil and gas companies \$700 billion

Source: White House, AP, Chicago Tribune
 Graphic: Judy Treible

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growth—or even meaningful deficit reduction," Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell said in a statement issued minutes after the president's announcement. "The good news is that the Joint Committee is taking this issue far more seriously than the White House."

Obama's proposal comes amid Democratic demands that Obama take a tougher stance against Republicans. And while the plan stands little chance of passing Congress, its populist pitch is one that the White House believes the public can support.

The core of the president's plan totals just over \$2 trillion in deficit reduction over 10 years. It would let Bush-era tax cuts for upper income earners expire, limit deductions for wealthier filers and close loopholes and end some corporate tax breaks. It also would cut \$580 billion from mandatory programs,

including \$248 billion from Medicare. It also targets subsidies to farmers and benefits programs for federal employees.

Key features of Obama's plan: —\$1.5 trillion in new revenue, which would include about \$800 billion realized over 10 years from repealing the Bush-era tax rates for

couples making more than \$250,000. It also would place limits on deductions for wealthy filers and end certain corporate loopholes and subsidies for oil and gas companies.

—\$580 billion in cuts in mandatory benefit programs, including \$248 billion in Medicare and \$72 billion in Medicaid and other health programs. Other mandatory benefit programs include farm subsidies and federal employee benefits. Administration officials said 90 percent of the \$248 billion in 10-year Medicare cuts would be squeezed from service providers. The plan does shift some additional costs to beneficiaries, but those changes would not start until 2017.

—\$430 billion in savings from lower interest payment on the national debt.

—\$1 trillion in savings from drawing down military forces from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Republicans have ridiculed the war savings as gimmicky, but House Republicans included them in their budget proposal this year and Boehner had agreed to count them as savings during debt ceiling negotiations with the president this summer.

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