

International

WILL OBAMA PUT AMERICANS' JOBS AHEAD OF HIS OWN?

(UPI) -- As U.S. President Barack Obama campaigns for more government spending -- aka his jobs plan -- new unemployment claims provide fresh evidence the U.S. economy is stalling and in danger of slipping into a second recession.

Big government could easily take unemployment to more than 15 percent and create a hole too big to ascend.

New jobless claims for the week of Sept. 10 rose to 428,000, up from 412,000 the previous week. Having slipped to less than 400,000 a week last spring, these are trending upward. Generally, weekly jobless claims of less than 350,000 are associated with a healthy economy and more than 450,000 with recession.

Recent data indicate the economy is at the precipice of a second Great Recession -- perhaps worse. Data on car sales and broader retail sales, personal consumption and consumer at-



titudes indicate Americans are scared. Other than high-income folks in the luxury category, a general lack of confidence in the president to adequately get the U.S. economy going is becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy of economic decline.

Household incomes have sunk to their lowest levels since 2007 and the number of Americans living in pov-

erty is rising.

Unemployment is up, even as the economy has managed a modest recovery since Obama became president. The Labor Department reported no jobs were added in August. Mass layoffs have been announced at major financial houses and banks, pharmaceutical manufacturers and telecommunications companies.

We will have yet to see the impact of those in jobless claims and monthly unemployment reports.

Finance, drugs and telecom are at the core of U.S. competitiveness and recent growth and with those announcing layoffs a recession can't be far away.

Obama wants an additional \$447 billion in new stimulus spending but skeptical voters should ask: How can more \$447 billion solve a problem stimulus twice that size failed to fix? How does more spending fit into long-term goals to cut the deficit?

The president responds with tax increases and asks Congress to cut spending in other areas -- he is disinclined to do any cutting himself. How can extending the payroll tax holiday for the middle class have much impact if paid for with new taxes on wealthy? Both spend money and taking from Reginald to pay Rachel is more designed to buy votes than create jobs.

Health

\$1.20 A PERSON COULD CURB CHRONIC DISEASES

(Reuters) - Poorer countries could introduce measures to prevent and treat millions of cases of cancer, heart disease, diabetes and lung disease for a little as \$1.20 per person per year. The World Health Organization (WHO) said there are many cheap steps governments could take to stem a tide of expensive-to-treat, life-threatening diseases which could bankrupt health systems.

Non-communicable diseases -- such as heart attacks and strokes, cancers, diabetes and chronic respiratory disease -- account for more than 63 percent of all deaths worldwide, killing 36 million people a year.



The WHO predicts that the global NCD epidemic will accelerate in the next two decades so that by 2030 the number of deaths from these diseases could reach 52 million a year.

NCDs are often thought of as diseases of the wealthy

world, where fatty foods, sedentary lifestyles and high consumption of tobacco and alcohol have become part of normal life for many.

But in recent decades such risk factors and illnesses have become far more prevalent in poorer nations, where access to doctors and medicines is limited, and knowledge on and commitment to prevention is patchy.

"Nearly 80 percent of these deaths (from NCDs) occur in low and middle income countries," said Ala Alwan, the WHO's director for NCDs and mental health. "The challenge to these countries is tremendous, but this study proves that there are affordable

steps all governments can take to address non-communicable diseases."

The WHO's list of recommendations includes measures that target whole populations, such as excise taxes on tobacco and alcohol, legislating for smoke-free indoor workplaces and public places, as well as campaigns to reduce levels of salt and trans fats in foods, and public awareness programs about improving diets and increasing physical activity.

Other steps include screening, counseling and drugs for people at risk of heart disease, cervical cancer screening and hepatitis B immunization to prevent liver cancer.

Occasional Column

KUWAIT THEN AND NOW (I)

"Faheihil; 50 houses; 20 wells of good water at 8 ft.; 150 date palms; sheep and goats".

"Fintas; village; 100 houses; 30 wells; 300 date palms".

Above are some of the references to the pre-oil Kuwait contained in what was once a "confidential" document prepared by the British military intelligence about 95 years ago. (A Handbook of Arabia... prepared by the British Admiralty War Staff Intelligence Division in 1916).

On the site of the above description now stand posh buildings with modern amenities whose residents can hardly conjure up the not-very-distant past look of these areas.

Of the origin of Kuwait, how many people know that the first reference to Kuwait under the name of "Kuwait" is made by Syrian traveller and pilgrim Murtada Al Alwan who visited the place in 1709 while on his way to Mecca and



Medina? Murtada found Kuwait to be a flourishing town which indicates that Kuwait existed as a human habitat of some importance at least fifty or maybe a hundred years earlier, say in about 1600 A.D., as towns do not grow overnight.

Regarding the population of old Kuwait, there are several contemporary references. Danish explorer and scientist Carsten Niebuhr (1733-1815) who passed by the vicinity of the Kuwait territory in early 1760's estimated the population of the town to be 10,000. However, Niebuhr did not actually land in the town of Kuwait.

About 135 years later, British official Stavrides, in his memorandum dated 30 June 1896 wrote that the population of the "town" of Kuwait amounted to 50,000 souls, mostly fisherman who netted both fish and pearls.

Not many visitors to the Zoo at Omariya know that Kuwait was the first country in the Gulf where

a zoo was established in 1955. And even less people will remember that it was Shaikh Jabir Al Abdullah Al Jabir Al Sabah who set up the region's first zoo known as Salwa garden after which the place Salwa was so named subsequently. He purchased animals with his own money and eventually transferred his collection in 1965 to form the nucleus of Umariya Zoo.

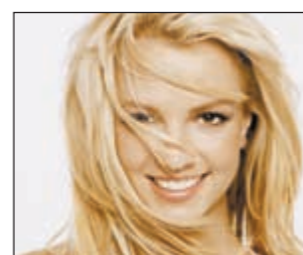
The long and moving story has been told in the book titled "Salwa Garden: the first zoo in Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf" written and published by his daughter Shaikha Mona Jabir Al Abdullah Al Jabir Al Sabah, Assistant Undersecretary of Al Diwan Al Amiri and author of several research-oriented books on Kuwait and the Gulf.

There are many obvious sectors depicting the expansion of Kuwait, such as the growth of cooperative societies popularly known as "Jamaiyya".

It will be news to many that there are now as many as 55 Jamaiyyas in Kuwait, each representing a Mintaqa and that the first Jamaiyya in Kuwait was established at Kaifan in 1961? With the expansion Kuwait, Jamaiyyas also increased. They have a Union of Consumer Co-operative Societies. Dr. Hussain Ali Aldwihes, Chairman of the Union, explained to this writer the problems of Jamaiyyas and the way to sort them out, often in coordination with the concerned Ministry. The Union also brings out a magazine in Arabic named "Al Ta'awun". I humbly suggest that as a large number of Jamaiyya users do not know written Arabic, the magazine may contain some pages of English also.

Kuwait then and now is also expressed through a proverb "From Jamal to Opel"; but I leave this to be elaborated in the second part of my column.

twitter



Britney Spears

@celebrainwreck: Britney Spears Abu Dhabi | Formula 1 Grand Prix Musical Acts ... bit.ly/qlLYos



Beyonce

@usweekly: Pregnant Beyonce hits Fashion Week again -- this time to show her House of Dereon line in London! bit.ly/ohn7CK



Wayne Rooney

@goal_intl: Sir Alex Ferguson believes Wayne Rooney can now become a leader at Manchester United: After hi... bit.ly/nOw6HV #soccer #football



Tareq Salahi

@usweekly: Saying he's suffered "both emotional and physical harm," Tareq Salahi has filed for divorce from wife Michaele. bit.ly/pzDcHc



Sally Pressman

@peoplemag: Congrats! Army Wives actress Sally Pressman is married: http://ow.ly/6xn4W



Emmanuel Adebayor

@goal_intl: Emmanuel Adebayor reveals that Real Madrid boss Jose Mourinho encouraged his move to Tottenham... bit.ly/q9yqss #soccer #football



Marc Anthony

@areyouentwise: Marc Anthony Cries At Birthday Concert entertainmentwise.com/news/63117/Mar...

Environment

"Missing" global heat may hide in deep oceans

(Reuters) - The mystery of Earth's missing heat may have been solved: it could lurk deep in oceans, temporarily masking the climate-warming effects of greenhouse gas emissions, researchers reported on Sunday.

Climate scientists have long wondered where this so-called missing heat was going, especially over the last decade, when greenhouse emissions kept increasing but world air temperatures did not rise correspondingly.

The build-up of energy and heat in Earth's system is important to track because of its bearing on current weather and future climate.

The temperatures were still high -- the decade between 2000 and 2010 was Earth's warmest in more than a century -- but the single-year mark for warmest global temperature was stuck at 1998, until 2010 matched it.

The world temperature should have risen more than it did, scientists at the National Center for Atmospheric Research reckoned.

They knew greenhouse gas emissions were rising during the decade and satellites showed there was a growing gap between how much sunlight was coming in and how much radiation was going out. Some heat was coming to Earth but not leaving, and yet temperatures were not going up as much as projected.

So where did the missing heat go?

Computer simulations suggest most of it was trapped in layers of oceans deeper than 1,000 feet during periods like the last decade when air temperatures failed to warm as much as they might have.

This could happen for years at a time, and it could happen periodically this century, even as the overall warming trend continues, the researchers reported in the journal Nature Climate Change.

"This study suggests the missing energy has indeed been buried in the ocean," NCAR's Kevin Trenberth, a co-author of the study, said in a statement. "The heat has not disappeared and so it cannot be ignored. It must have consequences."

Showbiz

"Boardwalk Empire" brings Scorsese an Emmy



(Reuters) - He is one of the greatest American film directors working, but on Sunday night it was the world of U.S. television that Martin Scorsese ruled over, winning an Emmy for directing drama "Boardwalk Empire."

The pilot episode of the series, which is set in 1930s Prohibition-era Atlantic City at a time when mob bosses ruled that seaside town, was directed by Scorsese, and if he had his way, the maker of "GoodFellas" and "Raging Bull" said he'd like to direct more.

"I've always dreamed of working on a project where the characters can develop over a period of time," Scorsese told reporters backstage at the Emmys. "You can develop plot, characters ... and get more done over a longer period of time. It gives you more license and much more freedom."

Scorsese, 68, had been nominated for Oscars, the film industry's top honors, seven times before finally winning for directing his 2006 hit "The Departed."

Yet even though he plays at the top of his game in film, he said it was nerve-racking sitting in the Emmy audience and waiting to see if his name would be called.

"I was extremely nervous," he said. "I must say it is something I never dreamed of. It's a different medium, although we approach 'Boardwalk Empire' as a film, a very long film. It's just as exciting."

He told reporters that the type of television dramas being made now on cable TV networks such as HBO, where "Boardwalk Empire" airs, were of a quality that directors like Scorsese had longed for back in the 1960s but failed to materialize on broadcast networks looking for the widest possible audiences.

"You have the opportunity here now. You can do something really extraordinary now. This is the time," he said.