

# American

## NEWS & VIEWS

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## Midterms Show Voters Still Worried About Economy, President Obama Says

By Stephen Kaufman  
Staff Writer

Washington — Reacting to the 2010 midterm elections November 2 that resulted in the Democratic Party losing control of the House of Representatives, slimming its majority in the Senate and losing some gubernatorial contests, President Obama said American voters had sent a message that they are frustrated with the state of the U.S. economy and acknowledged he had not made as much progress as he had hoped on several domestic concerns.

“Over the last two years, we’ve made progress. But clearly, too many Americans haven’t felt that progress yet, and they told us that yesterday. And as president, I take responsibility for that,” Obama said at a November 3 White House press conference.

He said voters had used their votes to voice frustration with the pace of U.S. economic recovery, job growth and improvements in their standard of living, and that he had not made the progress he had hoped on issues such as reforming earmarks that determine where government spending is directed, moving the United States toward energy independence, and cooperation with congressional Republicans.

“As I reflect on the results of the election, it underscores for me that I’ve got to do a better job, just like everybody else in Washington does,” the president said.

Expressing willingness to compromise with the new Republican majority in the House, Obama said he hopes that a shared interest in improving the U.S. economy and encouraging job growth will cause both parties to “act responsibly.”

Experts have argued the U.S. government can still produce results when different parties control the White House and Congress, even if there are still intense conflicts between them. According to data compiled by a website specializing in these elections (see U.S. Midterm Elections), Obama is confronting midterm election losses that have been faced by most of his predecessors. Since 1862, when President Abraham Lincoln’s Republican Party lost three House of Representatives seats, every president has lost seats in the House with only four exceptions: Theodore Roosevelt in 1902, Franklin Roosevelt in 1934, Bill Clinton in 1998, and George W. Bush in 2002.

But both Clinton and Bush had to come to terms with

midterm election losses in 1994 and 2006, respectively. President Clinton’s initial reaction to Democratic defeats in 1994 was to voice acceptance, but also to stand by accomplishments his administration had made.

“With the Democrats in control of both the White House and the Congress, we were held accountable,” Clinton said the day after the November 8, 1994, vote. “I don’t believe the American people were saying, ‘We’re sorry the deficit has been reduced; we’re sorry the size of government has been reduced; and we’re sorry you’ve taken a tough stand on crime; we’re sorry you’re expanding trade.’”

Policy differences between Clinton and the new Republican congressional leadership led to a failure to agree on legislation to fund the operations of the U.S. federal government. This caused the government to shut down for about three weeks between November 1995 and January 1996.

But Clinton also reached across the aisle to work with Republicans, resulting most significantly in the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 that reformed the U.S. welfare system.

When President Bush saw his party lose control of Congress in 2006, he abandoned controversial plans to overhaul the U.S. Social Security system.

“Race by race, it was close,” Bush said in his initial reaction to the November 7, 2006, midterm losses. “The cumulative effect, however, was not too close. It was a thumping. But nevertheless, the people expect us to work together. That’s what they expect. And ... there comes responsibility with victory.”

Obama acknowledged electoral setbacks that were faced by his predecessors and said, “This is something that I think every president needs to go through” to reconnect better with American voters.

“I’m not recommending for every future president that they take a shellacking like ... I did last night,” he said. “But I do think that ... this is a growth process and an evolution.” He said he anticipates he will have “more ups and downs” with the American people during the course of his presidency.

## Republicans Win Majority in U.S. House of Representatives

By Ralph Dannheisser  
Special Correspondent

Washington — Republicans gained at least 60 seats in the House of Representatives in elections held November 2, more than enough to wrest control of the chamber from

the Democrats when the 112th Congress convenes in January 2011.

With about a dozen results still outstanding at midday November 3, Republicans had secured 239 seats in the new Congress, compared with 185 for the Democrats.

The result means divided government for at least the next two years, as Democrat President Obama will have to share power with Republicans in the House of Representatives. Democrats retained control of the Senate, but with a reduced majority.

The Republican victory gives its House members the power to elect the chamber's leader, the speaker, who will set the agenda for what measures are considered on the floor and has a major say in selecting the chairmen of House committees.

President Obama stressed the need for compromise in a November 3 news conference, saying the results showed "no one party will be able to dictate where we go from here, that we must find common ground in order to ... make progress on some uncommonly difficult challenges."

Obama said he had telephoned Representative John Boehner of Ohio and Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the Republican leaders of the two chambers, and told them he is "very eager to sit down with members of both parties and figure out how we can move forward together."

In 2010, Republicans generally campaigned on the issues of cutting government spending, reducing taxes, and curbing what they portrayed as misguided Obama administration efforts such as the landmark health care reform law, economic stimulus programs, a law tightening regulation of financial markets, and climate and energy legislation.

Many political observers attribute the Republicans' electoral success to public discontent with incumbents, fueled by a high unemployment rate and the fragile economy.

Among the newly elected Republican members are many of the more than 70 who ran with the support of elements of the tea party, a loosely organized movement of activists determined to reverse what they see as a dangerous growth in government.

They can be expected to pursue that goal in the new Congress.

An early objective of these activists likely will be extension of tax cuts initially passed a decade ago in the

George W. Bush administration that are scheduled to expire at the end of 2010. President Obama and many Democrats favor extending the cuts for most taxpayers, while permitting the rates for the wealthiest 2 percent to return to higher levels.

Representative Michele Bachmann, a mainstay of the tea party movement who was re-elected to a third term in her Minnesota district, has called the repeal of the health care law another top priority. Such an effort would almost surely be futile: Even if both the House and the still-Democratic Senate went along, Obama would be virtually certain to exercise a veto that requires two-thirds votes in both chambers to overcome.

Complicating the legislative picture in the short term is the fact that, although the Republicans will assume power in January 2011, the Democrats will retain control during a so-called lame duck session of Congress scheduled to begin November 15. Such post-election sessions gain their name from the fact that members who did not run for re-election or were defeated — the "lame ducks" — retain their seats and voting rights during that time.

#### ELECTIONS BRING LEADERSHIP CHANGES

Boehner, the Republican minority leader for the past four years, is a likely choice for the speakership. A House member since 1991, he played a major role in the most recent Republican takeover of the chamber in 1994, when he joined then-Representative Newt Gingrich and others in devising the "Contract with America" that helped the party gain the congressional majority for the first time in 40 years. Eric Cantor of Virginia, second-ranking Republican leader in the 111th Congress, is likely in line to succeed Democrat Steny Hoyer of Maryland as House majority leader.

As for the committee chairmanships, the likelihood is that many will be filled in the new Congress by those Republicans who have been serving as ranking minority members of the respective committees.

Democrat Nancy Pelosi, the speaker of the House for the past four years, easily won re-election in her California district and will retain her own congressional seat, though not the speakership. It is unclear whether she will wish to be elected minority leader by her House Democratic colleagues — or whether she would be chosen even if she seeks the post.

Several senior Democrats were swept out of office in the Republican tide, including three committee chairmen:

- James Oberstar of Minnesota, a 36-year House veteran who serves as chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and prides himself on being the

institutional memory of the body, lost his bid for a 19th two-year term.

- Armed Services Committee Chairman Ike Skelton was defeated for the Missouri seat he has held for 34 years. John Spratt Jr., who helped push through the Obama budgets and the stimulus plan as chairman of the Budget Committee and serves as second-ranking Democrat on Armed Services, lost his South Carolina race after 28 years in office.

- Rick Boucher, another 28-year veteran, lost his re-election bid in Virginia and still another, Solomon Ortiz of Texas, appeared to have lost to a tea party newcomer by less than 800 votes, though he had not yet conceded defeat at midday November 3.

### Secretary of State's Terrorist Designation of Jundallah

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Office of the Spokesman  
November 3, 2010

#### MEDIA NOTE

#### Secretary of State's Terrorist Designation of Jundallah

On November 3, 2010 the Secretary of State announced the designation of Jundallah, a violent extremist organization that operates primarily in the province of Sistan va Balochistan of Iran, as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended (INA). The Secretary also announced Jundallah's designation under section 1(b) of Executive Order 13224. The Department of State took these actions in consultation with the Departments of Justice and Treasury.

Since its inception in 2003, Jundallah has engaged in numerous attacks resulting in the death and maiming of scores of Iranian civilians and government officials, primarily in Iran's Sistan va Balochistan province. Jundallah uses a variety of terrorist tactics, including suicide bombings, ambushes, kidnappings and targeted assassinations. In May 2009, Jundallah attacked the crowded Shiite Amir al-Mo'menin mosque in Zahedan, destroying the mosque and killing and wounding numerous worshipers. An October 2009 bomb attack which killed more than 40 people was reportedly the deadliest terrorist attack in Iran since the 1980s. Following the February 2010 capture by Iranian authorities of Jundallah's ex-leader, Abdul Malik Rigi, the group selected a new leader, al-Hajj Mohammed Dhahir Baluch, and confirmed its commitment to continue its terrorist activities. In July 2010, Jundallah attacked the Grand Mosque in Zahedan, killing approximately 30 and injuring hundreds.

The Administration condemned the Grand Mosque attack

in the strongest possible terms and stated that the United States extends its sympathy to the families and loved ones of those injured and killed. The President and the Secretary called for the perpetrators of this horrific attack to be held accountable for their actions.

Designations of terrorist organizations play a critical role in our fight against terrorism and are an effective means of curtailing support for terrorist activities and pressuring groups to abandon terrorism. The consequences of these designations include a prohibition against persons knowingly providing material support or resources to Jundallah, and the blocking of all property and interests in property of the organization that are in the United States, or come within the United States, or the control of U.S. persons.

### Secretary Clinton Praises Religious Tolerance in Malaysia

By MacKenzie C. Babb  
Staff Writer

Washington — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton is praising Malaysia's commitment to religious tolerance as she visits the Muslim-majority country.

"Extremism is not a path to building sustainable prosperity, peace, stability or democracy — it only promotes conflicts and hardens hearts," she told reporters at a joint news conference November 2 with Malaysian Foreign Minister Anifah Aman.

Clinton said the United States fully supports Malaysian efforts to create a global interfaith dialogue, which Anifah said began with a proposal that Prime Minister Najib Razak made to the U.N. General Assembly in September.

Anifah said the proposed initiative "promotes mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and rejects extremists who undermine the universal values of religion." The initiative's goal is to create a global movement of moderates, he said.

Clinton did not meet with the prime minister, who was sick during her visit, but did speak to him by telephone. Clinton said she had raised the trial of former Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim with Anifah.

"The United States believes it is important for all aspects of the case to be conducted fairly and transparently in a way that increases confidence in the rule of law in Malaysia," Clinton said, adding that the United States would continue to follow the matter. The government has denied there is any conspiracy against Anwar, and Anifah said Anwar will receive a "fair and open trial."

"It is in my interest and in our interest to make sure that

Anwar gets a fair trial because if there is such a thing as a political prosecution, if it can happen to Anwar, it can happen to the rest of us," Anifah said.

He and Clinton said they discussed cooperation on issues including trade, science, education, Afghanistan and nuclear nonproliferation. Clinton added she also planned to sign a series of agreements with Malaysia during her trip.

"First, a memorandum of understanding between our two governments designed to expand our collaboration on research and development of new technologies; second, a partnership between the government of Malaysia and Johns Hopkins University to build a new medical school and teaching hospital here in Malaysia; and finally, the sale of 50 Pratt & Whitney airplane engines to Malaysia Airlines, which will create new jobs in both countries," Clinton told reporters.

Clinton's visit to Malaysia is part of her 13-day trip to meet with leaders of at least eight East Asian and Pacific nations.

The secretary began traveling October 27 and is set to visit Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, Australia and American Samoa before returning to Washington November 8. The secretary's trip overlaps with President Obama's travel to India, Indonesia, South Korea and Japan November 6-14.

### **Secretary Clinton Promotes Rights, Openness in Papua New Guinea**

By Merle David Kellerhals Jr.  
Staff Writer

Washington — Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton encouraged Papua New Guinea to address its human rights conditions and to strengthen anti-corruption efforts.

The secretary also offered to help the government set up a sovereign wealth fund to manage revenue from massive oil and natural gas fields. In addition, Clinton said the United States is committed to empowering women in Papua New Guinea and across the Asia-Pacific region.

"The planning for a sovereign wealth fund is a very important commitment. And the United States stands ready to help translate your country's natural resources into widespread prosperity," Clinton said at a press conference in Port Moresby with Prime Minister Michael Somare.

Clinton's trip to Papua New Guinea was also intended to signal a continued U.S. commitment to the Pacific island nations in a broader engagement with the Asia-Pacific

region. The secretary's 13-day visit to the region includes meetings with leaders and senior officials from eight nations. The United States shares interests in freedom of navigation, cooperation on climate change, food security and biodiversity protection.

Papua New Guinea has abundant deposits of gold, copper and other minerals, as well as oil and natural gas fields, whose development would be a boon to the national economy while helping to meet global and regional energy demands. The U.S. energy giant Exxon Mobil is a majority stakeholder in a new \$15 billion liquefied natural gas project that is expected to come on line in 2014.

Clinton, the first U.S. secretary of state to visit the South Pacific nation in 12 years, said November 3 during meetings in Port Moresby that for Papua New Guinea to achieve an effective and responsive democracy with economic development and growing prosperity, there will have to be a strong commitment to good government, with openness and accountability.

She met with Somare and encouraged his coalition government to strengthen protection and services for its people. She said the United States would partner with the World Bank Group and the Papua New Guinea government to host a regional meeting in 2011 to discuss how best to empower women, including maternal health and economic empowerment.

Clinton visited the Tubuserea Lavadai Mangrove Reforestation project, funded in part by a U.S. grant for efforts to manage biodiversity, natural resources and climate change. In addition, the United States provides support for the Coral Triangle Initiative, which protects marine biodiversity, improves capacity for coastal and fishery management, and supports climate change measures in the Pacific.

The Obama administration has pledged more than \$21.5 million over the next two years, pending congressional approval, in climate change assistance for Pacific island countries.

### **U.S., Tajikistan Pioneer Alternative Energy Use Projects**

By Howard Cincotta  
Special Correspondent

Washington — The U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe, in cooperation with Tajik government agencies and international partners, is undertaking a series of projects — from border-outpost renovations to solar-powered medical clinics — that demonstrate the widespread potential of alternative energy and other green technologies in Tajikistan and throughout Central Asia

and Afghanistan.

Within the U.S. Embassy itself, officials are actively recycling materials, sponsoring clean-up campaigns and installing new lighting to reduce the embassy's environmental footprint and show how conservation and energy efficiency can be both practical and cost-effective.

"Tajikistan and other Central Asian countries are endowed with great potential in areas that include solar, wind power, biogas and wider use of small hydropower stations," said U.S. Ambassador to Tajikistan Ken Gross at the 2009 Renewable Energy Conference in Dushanbe.

#### BORDER GUARDS

The job of the Tajikistan Border Guard Service – combating drug trafficking, crime and potential terrorism – isn't an easy one in the best of times. In past years, however, it has been made more difficult by downright miserable living and working conditions – in a country noted for harsh winters of bitter winds and temperatures that can often drop to -30 degrees Celsius.

Most of their outposts, which date from the Soviet era, were built of unfired mud bricks covered with a quicklime mortar. As a result, they had fallen into a state of advanced decay, according to John McCann, an engineer with the U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe. "The walls were cracked, and their general condition atrocious," he said, adding that the buildings were also difficult and expensive to heat and maintain.

Several years ago, the U.S. Embassy's Office of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) cooperated with the Tajik government to refurbish a number of these border outposts, each of which houses approximately 50 personnel. It swiftly became clear, however, that with the severe climate and little money for fuel, conventional construction techniques wouldn't work.

This is how alternative energy came into the mix: McCann and others convinced State Department colleagues, the Tajik authorities and the Asian Development Bank that green technologies offered the clear advantages of practicality, low cost and sustainability.

The project has brought an added benefit: an increased public awareness of how renewable energy sources can aid Tajikistan's economic development.

#### SOLAR POWER AND HOT WATER

The first outpost to be rehabilitated, located at Shogun on the border with Afghanistan, features prefabricated construction, which has begun paying immediate,

practical dividends. Chief among them: much lower maintenance and winter heating costs.

The walls and ceilings at Shogun are constructed of plastic foam sheets sandwiched between inner and outer steel panels that offer excellent energy efficiency. Emergency lighting from light-emitting diodes (LEDs) is more efficient as well.

In July, Tajikistan Major General Sherali Mirzo, chief of the Border Guard forces, joined Gross in dedicating a newly reconstructed facility at Khirmanjo in southern Tajikistan. Khirmanjo uses solar power for hot water and backup LED lighting. It also has new furniture and equipment provided by INL.

Commander Colonel Rahmatov Alamkhon, head of the regional Shurabad detachment, commented that he had trouble believing that his personnel could have so much hot water without paying any electricity bills.

"The guards are really pleased with having hot water for showers and cleaning," said McCann, who has led the engineering effort for INL. "It's also caused excitement about other green projects." Among the local organizations that have shown interest in alternative energy options: the Tajik Drug Control Agency and the Dushanbe Technical Institute.

The Khirmanjo project, carried out by Tajikistan's BSK-Asia Construction Company, is also bringing clean drinking water to a local school, a hospital and a village from a well that pumps water to an elevated storage tank. Additional solar panels heat water for the school as well.

Previously, McCann observed, as many as 90 percent of the children suffered from waterborne diseases, and the village recently experienced a rare outbreak of polio.

Mirzo and Gross, along with Tajik Major General Abdusattor Rajabov, participated in another ribbon-cutting ceremony in September, at the completion of major renovations of the Border Guard Academy facility in Dushanbe.

The two-story academy building will house as many as 200 people. Along with rebuilt dormitories, the renovation included a new dining hall, a gym, garages, kitchen equipment and a heating system.

Another initiative uses solar panels to charge batteries for new radio equipment provided to the border guards by the Central Command's counternarcotics program. The new radio equipment allows patrols along the border to contact their local headquarters and allows the headquarters to communicate directly with Dushanbe, while the solar charging allows the system to operate

when electricity is either lost or unavailable.

#### WATER AND WIND

The people of Tajikistan have long known about one renewable energy source that they possess in abundance – water – and the country operates some of the largest hydroelectric facilities in the world.

But smaller can sometimes be better. The border outpost on the Afghan border at Yatchi-Pun is situated in a narrow valley beneath towering mountains, which will limit the usefulness of its solar panels.

Since the Pyani River is nearby, however, INL, with its Tajik and international partners, is planning to construct a microhydroelectric plant at Yatchi-Pun that will produce an estimated 50 kilowatts of power for heating, supplemented by a coal-burning furnace. (Over the course of a year, a 50-kilowatt facility can typically supply the electricity needs of 30 U.S. households, according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration.)

INL and the Asian Development Bank also hope to add another of Tajikistan's plentiful energy resources – wind – to future outpost projects. For facilities at remote and mountainous locations such as Kizil-Art, at the border with Kyrgyzstan, and Kulma, on the Chinese border, they plan to install wind turbines along with solar panels.

Each project has its own unique circumstances, McCann points out, which require that the mix of energy sources be adapted to the location, climate and power requirements of the individual facility.

#### GREEN INITIATIVES

The rehabilitation of border-guard outposts is by no means the only U.S. alternative-energy undertaking in Tajikistan.

Beginning in August, a U.S. Army Civil Affairs Team installed solar electricity systems in a number of remote villages in the Shurabad and Khamadoni districts that provide sustainable, year-round energy for medical facilities in rural Tajikistan. These health clinics previously had no electric power during the winter months.

U.S. Embassy Dushanbe itself will install solar panels and LED lighting to reduce energy consumption in its facilities, according to Nicholas Barnett, the U.S. official in charge of the embassy's Green Initiatives program.

Barnett has also teamed up with a Tajik company to recycle paper from the embassy into egg cartons for use in Tajik markets and is planning for the installation of five

waterless urinals in the embassy that could save as much as 40,000 gallons of water a year.

To reach the entire embassy community, Barnett created a "Green Team" to compile and circulate tips and suggestions for being green at work and at home, from double-sided printing to sponsoring local trash pick-ups. The embassy has also used events such as Earth Day, in April, to take their green message to universities and other organizations around the country.

"I'm often baffled when I see arguments focused on whether or not going green is worth it," Barnett said. "If I can reduce consumption of resources at the embassy, I can improve efficiency, save money and improve our environmental record."

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