

Bid to delay recall fails; Republicans lay out budget plans

BY ERICA WERNER
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — Republican recall candidates Arnold Schwarzenegger and Peter Ueberroth laid out economic recovery outlines for California on Wednesday as a federal judge rejected an effort to delay the Oct. 7 vote because of potential problems with punch-card voting machines.

After days of circus atmosphere around the recall, the campaigns began to take a traditional tone with major candidates holding carefully staged events to position themselves before voters.

Schwarzenegger, the action star, surrounded himself executive-style with big-name advisers to outline his economic plans. Ueberroth, the former baseball commissioner and key organizer of the successful 1984 Olympics, held a lean, straightforward news conference to offer his proposal.

Democratic Gov. Gray Davis, who went on the offensive Tuesday with a speech blasting the recall as a Republican power grab, was to hold a "town-hall" meeting in a Hollywood studio Wednesday night.

California's senior U.S. senator, Democrat Dianne Feinstein, campaigned against the recall in a West Los Angeles speech, saying recalls were designed for cases of misconduct and public corruption.

"It was not meant to recall someone you just elected because you don't like a policy or something they've said and done," said Feinstein, who refused to run as a Democratic replacement candidate.

A federal judge in Los Angeles kept the recall on schedule by turning down arguments by American Civil Liberties Union lawyers that it should be delayed until March so that six counties can complete the replacement of

old punch-card machines with more reliable modern systems.

"Because an election reflects a unique moment in time, the court is skeptical that an election held months after its scheduled date can in any sense be said to be the same election," said U.S. District Court Judge Stephen V. Wilson.

The Schwarzenegger and Ueberroth plans were the latest put forth after general criticism of a lack of specifics from candidates. Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante, the only major Democrat among the 135 candidates, announced his plan Tuesday.

Schwarzenegger met with advisers including former U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and billionaire investor Warren Buffett before announcing his ideas during a televised news conference.

Californians are experiencing "the American dream slipping away" because of lost jobs that won't return unless the state creates "a positive business environment," the actor said.

Schwarzenegger said he did not want to raise taxes and would identify areas to cut after a special audit of the state's books "to find out how bad the situation really is."

Education would not be on the table, he said, but he did not identify specific areas he would cut. He contended in response to questions that he did not have to be specific before the election.

"The public doesn't care about figures," he said. "They've heard figures for the last five years, figures and graphs and percentages and all those kinds of things. What the people want to hear is is are you going to make the changes? Are you tough enough to go in there and provide leadership? That's what this is about, and I will be tough enough."

The star of the "Terminator" robot movies said that as the election approached he might identify specific cuts.

Administration demands Abbas clamp down on terrorist groups

BY BARRY SCHWEID
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration demanded Wednesday that Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas clamp down on terror groups and backed Israel in postponing pull-backs on the West Bank.

"The message that we are conveying directly to the Palestinian side is that they need to move now on security," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said.

President Bush telephoned Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon from his Texas vacation retreat and Condoleezza Rice, Bush's national security assistant, telephoned Israeli and Palestinian officials.

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said Bush expressed his condolences for the Tuesday bomb attack on a packed bus in Jerusalem. He said Bush remains

committed to achieving peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

At least five of the victims in the suicide bombing were U.S. citizens.

"The two leaders said this latest attack on Jerusalem only reinforced the need to crack down on terrorists and terrorist infrastructure," McClellan said. They agreed that the way forward to peace is through the dismantlement of terrorist organizations.

"We continue to call on the Palestinian Authority to dismantle terrorist organizations," McClellan said.

Secretary of State Colin Powell underscored that message in a telephone call to Abbas.

The Palestinian leader has shied away from confronting Hamas and Islamic Jihad, extremist groups that claimed responsibility for bombing a bus Tuesday in Jerusalem.

"There is more that they can do," Boucher said of Abbas and his security chief, Mohammed Dahleh, "and that's why we're calling on them to move now on security, especially to dismantle the capabilities of these organizations that carry out terrorist attacks."

Before the terrorist attack, Sharon was prepared to take several conciliatory steps. Among them was turning over security in four West Bank towns to the Palestinians.

He called the move off after the bombing, and the State Department appeared understanding.

President Bush's policy, based on a peacemaking roadmap, is not in crisis, but fresh emphasis is being placed on uprooting the terror infrastructure, a senior U.S. official said Tuesday.

Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair in a tele-

phone conversation Tuesday night agreed that stepped-up efforts are needed to combat terrorist groups in the region, McClellan said.

A few hours before the Jerusalem bombing, Bush said a permanent peace between Israel and the Palestinians could only be achieved by dismantling terror organizations.

"Here's my view on cease-fires," Bush said, standing outside a gas station in Crawford, Texas, en route to play a round of golf. "I'm happy there's calm. I think that's important. But the most important thing is for the parties that care for peace to dismantle terrorist organizations that want to kill."

Within hours, a suicide bomber blew himself up on a bus crammed with Orthodox Jews on their way home from prayer at the Temple Wall, the holiest site in Judaism.

Rumsfeld says U.S. commanders see no need to increase troops to improve security

BY ROBERT BURNS
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS — U.S. military commanders in Iraq see no need to add more troops for security despite the bombing of the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said Wednesday.

He also said the issue of U.S. troop strength in Iraq is "continuously under review." Members of Congress, including some Republicans, want the U.S. military force bolstered.

Rumsfeld said his deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, told him Wednesday that he had spoken with the senior U.S. military commanders to check their views about the need for troops beyond the approximately

145,000 Americans now in Iraq.

"At the moment, the conclusion of the responsible military officials is that the force levels are where they should be," Rumsfeld said at a news conference after meeting with Honduran President Ricardo Maduro.

"The effort should be on developing additional Iraqi capability rather than additional coalition capability," Rumsfeld said.

Pressed for his view about the fallout from Tuesday's bombing, which killed at least 20 people, Rumsfeld said he was confident that other countries would continue assisting reconstruction efforts.

"The solution will be as we dramatically increase the number of Iraqis providing security," he said. As for the current effort of U.S. troops there, "We need to provide security where it's possible, but it's not possible to provide it

on every street corner and every portion of a country the size of California."

Earlier, at Honduras' Soto Cano Air Base, Rumsfeld said Central and South America — in addition to Iraq and Afghanistan — deserve attention in the fight against terrorism.

"It's a truly global struggle," Rumsfeld told about 100 U.S. troops inside a cinder block aircraft hanger at the remote air base in a lush valley ringed by thickly forested mountain peaks.

Terrorists in this region are mixed with drug traffickers and other criminals, he said.

"In this region we know there are terrorists, there are hostage-takers, there are drug traffickers," he said. "Sometimes it's the same people doing all three things. And it poses a very serious threat."

Central and South America


share some of the troublesome characteristics of areas in the Persian Gulf and Central Asia that have enabled terrorist groups to thrive in recent years, Rumsfeld said. He cited the problem of un-governed areas in Central America and unprotected borders.

"Terrorists use those seams to their advantage," he said.

Rumsfeld said the Bush administration appreciates the Honduran government's partnership in combating terrorism. As evidence of that cooperation, he noted that Honduras is sending troops to Iraq.

About 370 soldiers are in a Latin American security contingent that will operate in south-central Iraq as part of a Polish-led division. The Hondurans are to replace the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force in September after training with a Spanish brigade in Spain and in Kuwait.

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