

NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL

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PRESIDENT OBAMA DROPS IN GALLUP POLL

Aubrey Jones
Staff Writer

President Barack Obama's popularity has dropped 19 points. According to the Gallup Poll, Obama is now at a 51 percent approval rating compared to the 69 that was seen in January.

Although dropping below 50 percent at some point during the presidency is almost expected, there have only been two other presidents since World War II who have fallen below 50 before November of their first year in office, Gerald Ford and Bill Clinton.

While some studies and articles have different theories about the fall in approval, the one that stands out the most is the healthcare reform. Obama wants to have more federal involvement in our healthcare system and to some, this screams socialism.

Cameron Lee, a recent history and political science graduate from North Carolina State University agrees that healthcare is among the causes for the low approval ratings: "He [Obama] is taking a huge hit because he has created a rift between the people in the United States. It's because he is pursuing very strongly a policy in a way that alienates a substantial part of the American people."

In other words, there are only two sides to healthcare reform and Obama is choosing to support only one side, even if he is going to lose half the support of the American people.

"I think it's great. It's a sign of action. He isn't going to sit and talk about something, he is going to actually do it," said Lee.

Besides healthcare reform, the state of the national economy is also something that has put Obama at such a low rating. According to Voice of America News, the White House and the Congressional Budget Office project a federal deficit of about \$1.6 trillion for the current fiscal year, which is a new record, and also report that in the next decade the federal deficit will reach \$9 trillion. This leaves a large debt with the next generation, which also happens to be the generation to

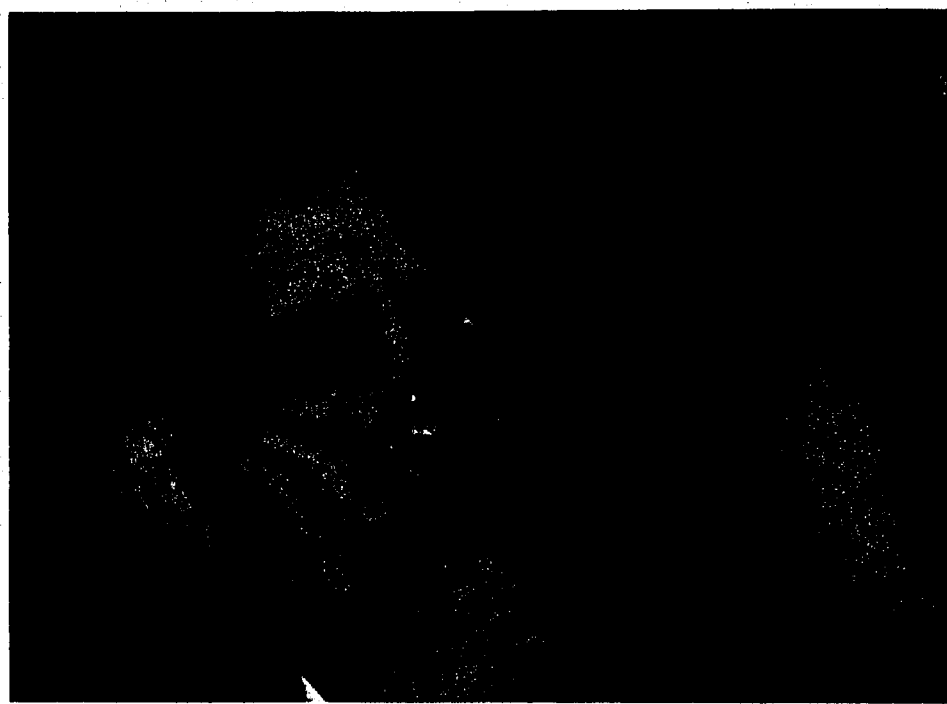


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which most Meredith College students belong.

While questions of how America is going to pay for such a high deficit float around, if the stock market is rising and fewer home foreclosures are happening, many believe that the present economic fix is all that is needed.

According to The Washington Post, "What really matters is not the size of the deficit but how we're spending our money." If the investments made by the administration cause high returns, the economy will only strengthen.

Americans can only hope that Obama makes the right decisions for the country on a financial and social level, because after all, the concept of hope is what got him into office.

PAKISTAN'S PROMINENT SCIENTIST SET FREE

Mariamawit Tadesse
Assistant Editor

Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, the man who made Pakistan the seventh nuclear power in the world, was pardoned by former Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf in February 2009 after being on house arrest since January 2004 on the charges of passing on Nuclear weapon technology to Libya, Iran and North Korea, reports France 24 International News.

In the 1950's, Dr. Khan's family migrated from India to Pakistan. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in physical metallurgy from the University of Karachi. He went on to work with the engineering department at Delft University of Technology in the Netherlands, and he later earned his PhD in metallurgical engineering from the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium.

Dr. Khan, after confessing his involvement with Iran, Libya and North Korea in 2004, recanted "[his] 2004 confession, saying he only took the blame in return for assurances from Musharraf," reports Al Jazeera News. The BBC's Syed Shoab Hasan in Islamabad said, "Despite his confession and detention, Dr. Khan, remains very popular among many Pakistanis who regard him as a national hero."

After his release in February 2009, Dr. Khan told BBC, "I continue to be a prisoner despite having been released on court orders.

The government has used the judgment of the Islamabad high court by limiting my movement under the guise of providing me security." Even though western countries and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) want to interrogate him about his previous actions, all Dr. Khan wants is to plan a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, "Father of Pakistan's atomic bomb," is 72 years old and plans to dedicate the rest of his life to education.



Photo courtesy huffingtonpost.com