

## Rumors fly on Bloomberg presidential bid

by UPI

NEW YORK -- Speculation regarding a third-party presidential candidacy by New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg adds fuel to an already competitive presidential field. Bloomberg repeatedly says he is not positioning himself as a third-party candidate, but his actions may suggest otherwise, the Los Angeles Times said Monday. Bloomberg told Ryan Seacrest, the host of the reality series "American Idol," New Year's Eve "I will not run" and Meredith Vieira of NBC's "Today" show, "I'm not running." Yet, Bloomberg's aides revamped his profile pages on the popular social networking sites, Facebook and MySpace, and he spent part of 2007 engaging Chinese officials on economic issues, the Indonesians regarding climate change and Mexican officials about poverty. Bloomberg scheduled a meeting Monday with leading Democratic and Republican leaders at the University of Oklahoma in what some observers see as an impetus for a third-party candidacy, the Times said. The speculation is met by some New Yorkers with a degree of skepticism, however. "He's done great things for (New York City)," one New Yorker said, "but I think if he enters the race as an independent, he's going to be Ralph Nader and he's going to elect a Republican president, and that's not what I want."

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