

February 3, 2010

[Fouad Ajami](#) chronicles the rise and fall of The One.

...There is nothing surprising about where Mr. Obama finds himself today. He had been made by charisma, and political magic, and has been felled by it. If his rise had been spectacular, so, too, has been his fall. The speed with which some of his devotees have turned on him—and their unwillingness to own up to what their infatuation had wrought—is nothing short of astounding. But this is the bargain Mr. Obama had made with political fortune.

He was a blank slate, and devotees projected onto him what they wanted or wished. In the manner of political redeemers who have marked—and wrecked—the politics of the Arab world and Latin America, Mr. Obama left the crowd to its most precious and volatile asset—its imagination. There was no internal coherence to the coalition that swept him to power. There was cultural "cool" and racial absolution for the white professional classes who were the first to embrace him. There was understandable racial pride on the part of the African-American community that came around to his banners after it ditched the Clinton dynasty.

The white working class had been slow to be convinced. The technocracy and elitism of Mr. Obama's campaign—indeed of his whole persona—troubled that big constituency, much more, I believe, than did his race and name. The promise of economic help, of an interventionist state that would salvage ailing industries and provide a safety net for the working poor, reconciled these voters to a candidate they viewed with a healthy measure of suspicion. He had been caught denigrating them as people "clinging to their guns and religion," but they had forgiven him. ...

Joe Klein didn't like Ajami's above piece. [Peter Wehner](#) has some things for Joe to think about. *Time magazine's Joe Klein is angry. Again. This time his animus is aimed at the Middle East scholar Fouad Ajami and yours truly. Again. And so, one more time — just for the fun of it — let's take a look at what is fueling Joe's fury and see if we can make some sense of it.*

Here's what [Klein writes](#): ...

In the [WaPo](#), [Richard Cohen](#) is one of the disillusioned liberals. He still has to comment on Bush, of course, but the rest of the article is really quite something.

There is almost nothing the Obama administration does regarding terrorism that makes me feel safer. Whether it is guaranteeing captured terrorists that they will not be waterboarded, reciting terrorists their rights, or the legally meandering and confusing rule that some terrorists will be tried in military tribunals and some in civilian courts, what is missing is a firm recognition that what comes first is not the message sent to America's critics but the message sent to Americans themselves. When, oh when, will this administration wake up? ...

...Administration officials defend what happened in Detroit and assert, against common sense and the holy truth itself, that they got valuable intelligence -- and so what more would you want? But Abdulmutallab went silent before terrorism experts from Washington could get to him. It has been more than a month since he last opened his mouth, and even if he resumes cooperating -- a deal may be in the works -- he now knows just a bit more about the present-day location of various al-Qaeda operatives than does Regis Philbin. ...

...KSM, Abdulmutallab and other accused terrorists should be tried. But these two are not Americans, and they are accused of terrorism, tantamount to an act of war -- a virtual Pearl Harbor, in KSM's case. A military tribunal would fit them fine. If it is good enough for your average GI accused of murder or some such thing, it ought to be good enough for a foreign national with mass murder on his mind. ...

[Nile Gardiner](#), in the [Telegraph Blogs, UK](#), criticizes Obama for his lack of vision and leadership in foreign affairs.

...But the scant attention paid in the State of the Union speech to US leadership was pitiful and frankly rather pathetic. ... Needless to say there was nothing in the speech about the importance of international alliances, and no recognition whatsoever of the sacrifices made by Great Britain and other NATO allies alongside the United States on the battlefields of Afghanistan. ...

...Significantly, the global war against al-Qaeda was hardly mentioned, and there were no measures outlined to enhance US security at a time of mounting threats from Islamist terrorists. Terrorism is a top issue for American voters, but President Obama displayed what can only be described as a stunning indifference towards the defence of the homeland.

The Iranian nuclear threat, likely to be the biggest foreign policy issue of 2010, was given just two lines in the speech, with a half-hearted warning of "growing consequences" for Tehran, with no details given at all. There were no words of support for Iranian protestors who have been murdered, tortured and beaten in large numbers by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's thuggish security forces, and no sign at all that the president cared about their plight. Nor was there any condemnation of the brutality of the Iranian regime, as well as its blatant sponsorship of terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As the example of Iran showed, the advance of freedom and liberty across the world in the face of tyranny was not even a footnote in the president's speech. I cannot think of a US president in modern times who has attached less importance to human rights issues. For the hundreds of millions of people across the world, from Burma to Sudan to Zimbabwe, clamouring to be free of oppression, there was not a shred of hope offered in Barack Obama's address. ...

In the [Washington Examiner](#), [Michael Barone](#) asks who Obama is trying to score points with by being soft on terrorism.

..If the answer to these questions is that we are trying to impress Islamist terrorists, we have clearly failed.

It is a matter of simple fact that the announcement that we would close Guantanamo and other implement policy changes did not prevent Abdulhakim Muhammad from killing U.S. soldiers at the Little Rock recruiting station last June. It did not prevent Nidal Hasan from killing U.S. soldiers at Fort Hood in November. It did not prevent Abdulmutallab from attempting to blow up Northwest Flight 253 over U.S. or Canadian airspace on Christmas day.

Public opinion polls in the Arab and Muslim world have shown only slight upticks in opinion about America in the months after Barack Obama's speeches in Cairo and Turkey and after these administration policy changes. Terrorists did not say, "Gosh, now that Obama is closing Guantanamo and terrorists are being given Miranda rights, I've got to change my mind and decide that the United States is a really nifty country and that freedom and democracy are good things after all."

But perhaps our goal was to convince not terrorists but "world opinion." Are the government and billion people of India going to think better of the United States if we treat terrorists more gently? Not likely; they're the targets of terrorists themselves. ...

In the [National Review](#), [Andrew McCarthy](#) reviews commentary from former CIA director, General Michael Hayden, on the amazingly poor judgment of Attorney General Eric Holder. He ends with an important point about the Abdulmutallab situation that the president can still rectify. Perhaps Obama should hold a national security summit to help him make a decision. *...Remember, though, that this is not a done deal. The Obama administration is treating what everyone now agrees was a mistake as if it were a bell that can't be rung. That is wrong, and it is irresponsible.*

Right this minute, President Obama could designate Abdulmutallab an unlawful enemy combatant (or, as they now call it, an "unprivileged belligerent") and proceed with his interrogation, unimpeded by a defense lawyer or Miranda restrictions. It is a power he has had every minute since Abdulmutallab's capture five weeks ago. The case would still be there, and it would still be a slam-dunk, whether it were tried two, three, or five years from now. The only potential downside for the case is no downside at all: Prosecutors would not be able to use any statements he makes. ...

...Moreover, we're not merely rehashing past mistakes. This is an ongoing problem. After four months of al-Qaeda training in Yemen, Abdulmutallab has valuable information. President Obama still has the legal means to get it. Every day he fails to act — every day he elevates trifling trial strategy over vital intelligence collection — is a new, reckless failure to secure the nation.

And in [The Corner](#), [Dana Perino](#) points out the problems with leaks about Abdulmutallab talking now.

... Now the administration has begun systematically leaking to the press that he started talking again last week after FBI agents prevailed upon his family in Nigeria to convince him to cooperate.

Last week?! So, first of all: How many of his fellow terrorists have rolled up operations since Christmas Day and headed for the hills? They've skedaddled for sure. It's a classic al-Qaeda tactic: hold out for as long as you can so your fellow terrorists can go underground.

But even worse is that someone in the administration is leaking this at all. How does it further our national-security interests to tell Abdulmutallab's fellow terrorists overseas that he is informing on them? What would you do if you were one of those fellow terrorists? If you hadn't already gone to ground, you sure would do so now.

If the administration believed it was important to reassure Congress that Abdulmutallab was cooperating, they should have done so in private in closed session with the Senate and House Intelligence Committees. This kind of sensitive information is shared all the time in that way. It is bad practice to tell the world that a terrorist has agreed to spill the beans on his fellow terrorists who are still walking around free overseas. That is, of course, unless the principal motivation is to try to save political hides at home, even at the expense of actually finding the terrorists Abdulmutallab worked with. ...

[Robert Costa](#) blogs in the [Corner](#) about one of the few budget cuts that the White House has proposed. It is in education, no less. It is not much, only one million dollars. But, what it does show is what a nasty piece of work Barack Obama is. The program to be cut is a scholarship program named after the deceased son of Rep. Bart Stupak (D., Mich). Rep Stupak did not toe the ObamaCare line.

With tax hikes dominating today's budget debate, you will not hear much about the smaller federal grants that President Obama is hoping to slash. One proposed cut sticks out: Obama's budget eliminates a \$1 million scholarship program for aspiring Olympic athletes at Northern Michigan University. Here's why it matters: In 1998, the program was renamed to honor B. J. Stupak, the late son of Rep. Bart Stupak (D.,

Mich.), who committed suicide in 2000. Is the cut related to Stupak's playing hardball on health care last year?

Stupak won't speculate on the politics of the decision, but he does tell NATIONAL REVIEW ONLINE that he is "disappointed" to hear about the cut. He says he found out about it through the media, not the president or the Democratic leadership. He notes, however, "that in the 18 years I've been in Congress, never has a presidential staff called me to tell they are cutting something. Usually everyone around here scrambles after a budget is released."

Stupak pledges to fight for the grant to be reinstated into the budget. "I'll do my appropriations request and put in testimony. I want it to be funded on its own merit. President Bush did the same thing, and we always restored it. We need to do a better job explaining the program." Stupak adds that with the Winter Olympics approaching, it is "time to remind Congress why it is important to provide educational assistance to aspiring young Olympic athletes. We'll all be cheering our athletes next month, but we should remember that programs like this give a major boost to those training for the games. Shani Davis, the first black speed skater to make the U.S. Olympic team, credits the scholarship with keeping in him school. There are hundreds of stories like that. This program has become a small farm team for Olympic education."

Thomas Sowell dispels a few myths that pass as logic for politicians and the MSM.

...The big question that seldom— if ever— gets asked in the mainstream media is whether these are a net increase in jobs. Since the only resources that the government has are the resources it takes from the private sector, using those resources to create jobs means reducing the resources available to create jobs in the private sector.

So long as most people do not look beyond superficial appearances, politicians can get away with playing Santa Claus on all sorts of issues, while leaving havoc in their wake— such as growing unemployment, despite all the jobs being "created." ...

Roger Simon has words for the pseudo-leftism of John Edwards.

Now that we have reached the black comic post-portem stage of the John Edwards scandal with Andrew Young's book out and pundits playing mop up, it's time to address an interesting question: To what degree did John Edwards' "leftism" affect his extraordinarily narcissistic behavior?

The quotes around leftism are, of course, deliberate because Edwards wasn't a real leftist. He is the poster boy for a faux-leftism that permeates our culture. Nothing could be more obvious than that Edwards, who took the furthest left stance of the three Democratic presidential candidates in the last election, cared next to nothing for "the people" but excessively for himself, building the McMansion of McMansions, etc. And "stance" is the operative word here, because his positions always seemed adopted, not felt.

Is there a cause and effect relationship here? We do live in an era when the private behavior and lifestyles of liberal-left politician seem completely out of whack with their public pronouncements. Besides Edwards, Al Gore and Nancy Pelosi come quickly to mind, but there are others. It's doubtful Gore and Pelosi lived personal lives anywhere near as execrable as Edwards' but there are parallels, especially in the area of personal enrichment ("green" or otherwise). ...

A new blog for us, [Doug Jones at Journal](#) us has the lowdown on some of the lowdown uses of military jets by Nancy Pelosi's family.

Is it a legitimate use of military jets to transport the Speaker of the House and her favored Congressional coterie for routine travel? Even if you believe it is -- and, personally, I do not -- any rational taxpayer would admit that it is monumental waste of money. Military flights cost between \$5,000 and \$20,000 per hour to operate. The Speaker and her passengers routinely reimburse the Air Force \$120 to \$400 for each flight.

Since Nancy Pelosi took over as Speaker in 2006, she's rung up millions in military travel expenses to commute between San Francisco and Washington.

Worse still, she also appears to have requisitioned entire flights for the personal use of her children and grandchildren. That is, unaccompanied by any member of Congress, her kids, in-laws and grandchildren are utilizing entire military passenger jets for their routine travel needs. ...

WSJ

The Obama Spell Is Broken

Unlike this president, John Kennedy was an ironist who never fell for his own mystique.

by Fouad Ajami

The curtain has come down on what can best be described as a brief un-American moment in our history. That moment began in the fall of 2008, with the great financial panic, and gave rise to the Barack Obama phenomenon.

The nation's faith in institutions and time-honored ways had cracked. In a little-known senator from Illinois millions of Americans came to see a savior who would deliver the nation out of its troubles. Gone was the empiricism in political life that had marked the American temper in politics. A charismatic leader had risen in a manner akin to the way politics plays out in distressed and Third World societies.

There is nothing surprising about where Mr. Obama finds himself today. He had been made by charisma, and political magic, and has been felled by it. If his rise had been spectacular, so, too, has been his fall. The speed with which some of his devotees have turned on him—and their unwillingness to own up to what their infatuation had wrought—is nothing short of astounding. But this is the bargain Mr. Obama had made with political fortune.

He was a blank slate, and devotees projected onto him what they wanted or wished. In the manner of political redeemers who have marked—and wrecked—the politics of the Arab world and Latin America, Mr. Obama left the crowd to its most precious and volatile asset—its imagination. There was no internal coherence to the coalition that swept him to power. There was cultural "cool" and racial absolution for the white professional classes who were the first to embrace him. There was understandable racial pride on the part of the African-American community that came around to his banners after it ditched the Clinton dynasty.

The white working class had been slow to be convinced. The technocracy and elitism of Mr. Obama's campaign—indeed of his whole persona—troubled that big constituency, much more, I believe, than did his race and name. The promise of economic help, of an interventionist state that would salvage ailing industries and provide a safety net for the working poor, reconciled these voters to a candidate they viewed with a healthy measure of suspicion. He had been caught denigrating them as people "clinging to their guns and religion," but they had forgiven him.

Mr. Obama himself authored the tale of his own political crisis. He had won an election, but he took it as a plebiscite granting him a writ to remake the basic political compact of this republic.

Mr. Obama's self-regard, and his reading of his mandate, overwhelmed all restraint. The age-old American balance between a relatively small government and a larger role for the agencies of civil society was suddenly turned on its head. Speed was of the essence to the Obama team and its allies, the powerful barons in Congress. Better ram down sweeping social programs—a big liberal agenda before the people stirred to life again.

Progressives pressed for a draconian attack on the workings of our health care, and on the broader balance between the state and the marketplace. The economic stimulus, ObamaCare, the large deficits, the bailout package for the automobile industry—these, and so much more, were nothing short of a fundamental assault on the givens of the American social compact.

And then there was the hubris of the man at the helm: He was everywhere, and pronounced on matters large and small. This was political death by the teleprompter.

Americans don't deify their leaders or hang on their utterances, but Mr. Obama succumbed to what the devotees said of him: He was the Awaited One. A measure of reticence could have served him. But the flight had been heady, and in the manner of Icarus, Mr. Obama flew too close to the sun.

We have had stylish presidents, none more so than JFK. But Kennedy was an ironist and never fell for his own mystique. Mr. Obama's self-regard comes without irony—he himself now owns up to the "remoteness and detachment" of his governing style. We don't have in this republic the technocratic model of the European states, where a bureaucratic elite disposes of public policy with scant regard for the popular will. Mr. Obama was smitten with his own specialness.

In this extraordinary tale of hubris undone, the Europeans—more even than the people in Islamic lands—can be assigned no small share of blame. They overdid the enthusiasm for the star who had risen in America.

It was the way in Paris and Berlin (not to forget Oslo of course) of rebuking all that played out in America since 9/11—the vigilance, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, the sense that America's interests and ways were threatened by a vengeful Islamism. But while the Europeans and Muslim crowds hailed him, they damned his country all the same. For his part, Mr. Obama played along, and in Ankara, Cairo, Paris and Berlin he offered penance aplenty for American ways.

But no sooner had the country recovered its poise, it drew a line for Mr. Obama. The "bluest" of states, Massachusetts, sent to Washington a senator who had behind him three decades of service in the National Guard, who proclaimed his pride in his "army values" and was unapologetic in his assertion that it was more urgent to hunt down terrorists than to provide for their legal defense.

Then the close call on Christmas Day at the hands of the Nigerian jihadist Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab demonstrated that the terrorist threat had not receded. The president did his best to recover: We are at war, he suddenly proclaimed. Nor were we in need of penance abroad. Rumors of our decline had been exaggerated. The generosity of the American response to Haiti, when compared to what India and China had provided, was a stark reminder that this remains an exceptional nation that needs no apologies in distant lands.

A historical hallmark of "isms" and charismatic movements is to dig deeper when they falter—to insist that the "thing" itself, whether it be Peronism, or socialism, etc., had not been tried but that the leader had been undone by forces that hemmed him in.

It is true to this history that countless voices on the left now want Obama to be Obama. The economic stimulus, the true believers say, had not gone astray, it only needed to be larger; the popular revolt against ObamaCare would subside if and when a new system was put in place.

There had been that magical moment—the campaign of 2008—and the true believers want to return to it. But reality is merciless. The spell is broken.

Mr. Ajami, a professor at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and a senior fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, is the author of "The Foreigner's Gift" (Free Press, 2007).

Contentions

Joe Klein's Almost Pathological Love Affairs

by Peter Wehner

Time magazine's Joe Klein is angry. Again. This time his animus is aimed at the Middle East scholar Fouad Ajami and yours truly. Again. And so, one more time — just for the fun of it — let's take a look at what is fueling Joe's fury and see if we can make some sense of it.

Here's what [Klein writes](#):

But there is another, more troubling and outrageous aspect of the Ajami argument: the conservative fetish about the President's "self-regard." Ajami is not alone here. Former Bush Deputy Minister of Propaganda—and now a daily predictor of falling skies and presidential implosions—Pete Wehner referred to Obama's "pathological self-regard" a few weeks ago. *Pathological?* Where on earth does that come from? And where on earth does Ajami's notion that Obama "succumbed" to the "Awaited One" expectations that his followers had of him? Where's the evidence?

Oh, I dunno. But if I had to pick some examples, I might begin with the fact that (according to the book *Game Change*) during the campaign Obama surrounded himself with aides who referred to Obama as a "Black Jesus." Obama didn't appear to object. Or I might mention Obama's comment to a Chicago Tribune reporter a few hours before his 2004 convention speech. "I'm LeBron, baby," Obama said. "I can play on this level. I got some game." Or I might point people to [Obama's comments](#) made during the campaign, when he said:

I am absolutely certain that, generations from now, we will be able to look back and tell our children that this was the moment when we began to provide care for the sick and good jobs to the jobless, this was the moment when the rise of the oceans began to slow and our planet began to heal, this was the moment when we ended a war, and secured our nation, and restored our image as the last, best hope on Earth.

Let's see: Jesus, LeBron, and King Canute. That's quite a threesome. I won't even mention Obama's campaign slogan, "we are the ones we've been waiting for."

On second thought, maybe I will.

Perhaps Klein's unhappiness with Ajami and me is rooted in the fact that, from time to time, Joe succumbs to an almost pathological love affair when it comes to presidents. Well, Democratic presidents, anyway. That was certainly the case with Bill Clinton, at least for a time. In his book *All Too Human*, George Stephanopoulos, in recounting a Clinton speech during the 1992 campaign, wrote this:

Joe Klein and I took it all in from the back of the room with tears in our eyes – moved by the emotional moment, expectation, and apprehension. Reporters are paid to be dispassionate, but Joe was either smitten with Clinton or doing a smooth job of spinning me. We talked openly and often now, either on the phone or

when we hooked up with us on the road. As the paying guests sat down to dinner, we retreated to the basement. The campaign was going so well that we slipped into what Joe called a ‘dark-off,’ whispering fears of future misfortune like a couple of black-robed crones spitting in the wind to ward off the evil eye. *We’re peaking too early. It can’t stay this good. Too tempting a target. What goes up must come down.*

“I come from Russian Jews,” Joe said. “Whenever things are good, we start to hear hoofbeats — the Cossacks.”

Fast-forward to the Age of Obama when Klein, in a recent interview with our 44th president, had this [blistering exchange](#):

Klein: Let me ask you one foreign policy question. My sense is that — just my own personal sense, but also from people I talk to — the overall conception of your foreign policy has been absolutely right. Necessary, corrective. Subtle, comprehensive.

Obama: We have a good team.

Klein: But there have been some problems in execution.

Obama: Well, I would not deny that, but let me say that given what’s on our plate — and you know the list. I don’t need to tick them off.

I guess this qualifies as speaking truth to power.

For the record, what Joe reports isn’t quite accurate. [I wrote about](#) Obama’s “*almost* pathological self-regard” in my piece [emphasis added]. (The context was a story in which Representative Marion Berry recounted his meetings with White House officials, reminiscent of some during the Clinton days, Berry said, where he and others urged them not to force Blue Dogs “off into that swamp” of supporting bills that would be unpopular with voters back home. “I’ve been doing that with this White House, and they just don’t seem to give it any credibility at all,” Berry said. “They just kept telling us how good it was going to be. The president himself, when that was brought up in one group, said, ‘Well, the big difference here and in ’94 was you’ve got me.’”)

But on reflection, and in light of Klein’s comments, I do think I phrased things in an inappropriate manner. I probably should have dropped the adverb “almost.”

Washington Post

[Obama administration is tone-deaf to concerns about terrorism](#)

by Richard Cohen

There is almost nothing the Obama administration does regarding terrorism that makes me feel safer. Whether it is guaranteeing captured terrorists that they will not be waterboarded, reciting terrorists their rights, or the legally meandering and confusing rule that some terrorists will be tried in military tribunals and some in civilian courts, what is missing is a firm recognition that what comes first is not the message sent to America's critics but the message sent to Americans themselves. When, oh when, will this administration wake up?

Bit by bit, circumstances are forcing President Obama and his aides to come to grips with reality. The [original plan to try Khalid Sheik Mohammed, the so-called Sept. 11 mastermind, in New York City has apparently been aborted](#). It finally occurred to the Justice Department that cordoning off much of Lower Manhattan and placing a security perimeter around the financial district not only would cost something like

\$200 million a year but also would destroy the economy of the area. A trial there would give KSM, as he is called, a second shot at devastating downtown New York.

It is amazing that no one thought this through. Published reports say that the [Justice Department informed Mayor Michael Bloomberg of its plan just about the time it was announced](#). This alacrity was clearly the product of some excitement down at Justice -- yet another chance to show the world that George W. Bush was gone and with him the odious attempts to treat terrorists as if they were, well, terrorists. A civilian trial! Right in the heart of Manhattan! Obama ought to ask his friend Attorney General Eric Holder what in the world he was thinking -- just as we might ask Obama why he has such faith in Holder's judgment.

In a similar example of poor judgment, an undoubtedly delighted [Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab was told he had something called Miranda rights](#) and could, if he so chose, cease talking about [allegedly attempting to blow up a jetliner as it approached Detroit on Christmas Day](#). Abdulmutallab was Mirandized after just 50 minutes of interrogation and he, having probably seen more than his share of "Law & Order" episodes, promptly shut up.

Administration officials defend what happened in Detroit and assert, against common sense and the holy truth itself, that they got valuable intelligence -- and so what more would you want? But Abdulmutallab went silent before terrorism experts from Washington could get to him. It has been more than a month since he last opened his mouth, and even if he resumes cooperating -- a deal may be in the works -- he now knows just a bit more about the present-day location of various al-Qaeda operatives than does Regis Philbin.

The [announced closing of Guantanamo](#) has also suffered from a peculiar Obama-style naivete. It is now apparent that there are some bad people there who should be detained way past the time they are eligible for AARP membership. It's true that the world does not like Guantanamo, but then it's also true that the world is not an al-Qaeda target.

KSM, Abdulmutallab and other accused terrorists should be tried. But these two are not Americans, and they are accused of terrorism, tantamount to an act of war -- a virtual Pearl Harbor, in KSM's case. A military tribunal would fit them fine. If it is good enough for your average GI accused of murder or some such thing, it ought to be good enough for a foreign national with mass murder on his mind.

No doubt George Bush soiled America's image abroad with what looked like vigilante justice and Dick Cheney's hearty endorsement of ugly interrogation measures. But more is at stake here than America's image abroad -- namely the security and peace of mind of Americans in America. Bush stands condemned by the facts for Sept. 11 -- his watch, his responsibility -- and in all likelihood he bent over backward to ensure that nothing like those attacks would happen again.

The Obama administration, on the other hand, seems to have bent over backward to prove to the world it is not the Bush administration and will, almost no matter what, ensure that everyone gets the benefit of American civil liberties. But the paramount civil liberty is a sense of security and this, sad to say, has eroded under Barack Obama. Repeatedly, the administration has shown poor judgment. Abdulmutallab's silence is a scream that something is wrong.

Telegraph Blogs, Uk

State of the Union: Barack Obama gets an F for world leadership

by Nile Gardiner

As expected, Barack Obama's 70 minute [State of the Union address](#) focused heavily on the economy and the domestic political agenda. This was hardly surprising in the aftermath of last week's catastrophic defeat for his party in the Massachusetts special Senate election, where the Republicans scored an historic victory. American voters are turning strongly against the president's health care reform package as well as his big

government vision for the economy, which has contributed to spiraling public debt and mounting unemployment, now standing at over 10 percent.

But the scant attention paid in the State of the Union speech to US leadership was pitiful and frankly rather pathetic. The war in Afghanistan, which will soon involve a hundred thousand American troops, merited barely a paragraph. There was no mention of victory over the enemy, just a reiteration of the president's pledge to begin a withdrawal in July 2011. Needless to say there was nothing in the speech about the importance of international alliances, and no recognition whatsoever of the sacrifices made by Great Britain and other NATO allies alongside the United States on the battlefields of Afghanistan. For Barack Obama the Special Relationship means nothing, and tonight's address further confirmed this.

Significantly, the global war against al-Qaeda was hardly mentioned, and there were no measures outlined to enhance US security at a time of mounting threats from Islamist terrorists. Terrorism is a top issue for American voters, but President Obama displayed what can only be described as a stunning indifference towards the defence of the homeland.

The Iranian nuclear threat, likely to be the biggest foreign policy issue of 2010, was given just two lines in the speech, with a half-hearted warning of "growing consequences" for Tehran, with no details given at all. There were no words of support for Iranian protestors who have been murdered, tortured and beaten in large numbers by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's thuggish security forces, and no sign at all that the president cared about their plight. Nor was there any condemnation of the brutality of the Iranian regime, as well as its blatant sponsorship of terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As the example of Iran showed, the advance of freedom and liberty across the world in the face of tyranny was not even a footnote in the president's speech. I cannot think of a US president in modern times who has attached less importance to human rights issues. For the hundreds of millions of people across the world, from Burma to Sudan to Zimbabwe, clamouring to be free of oppression, there was not a shred of hope offered in Barack Obama's address.

Obama's world leadership in his first year in office has been weak-kneed and little short of disastrous. He has sacrificed the projection of American power upon the altar of political vanity, with empty speeches and groveling apologies across the world, from Strasbourg to Cairo. He has appeased some of America's worst enemies, and has extended the hand of friendship to many of the most odious regimes on the face of the earth. Judging by the State of the Union address tonight, we can expect more of the same from an American president who seems determined to lead the world's greatest power along a path of decline.

Washington Examiner

Obama impresses 'educated class' but not terrorists

by Michael Barone

Just whom are we trying to impress?

That's a question that occurred to me when, on his second full day in the presidency, Barack Obama announced we would close the Guantanamo detainee facility within one year.

It's a question that has kept occurring to me over the last year and nine days, even though Obama and his administration have proven unable to keep that promise.

Whom are we trying to impress by ruling out enhanced interrogation techniques on unlawful combatants, techniques that produced valuable intelligence that saved American lives? Whom are we trying to impress by limiting questioning to the Army Field Manual?

That's a good guide for handling prisoners of war and other lawful combatants covered by international law. But whom are we trying to impress by extending those protections to those who are not covered by the Geneva Conventions or other treaties we have signed?

Whom are we trying to impress by trying Khalid Sheik Mohammed in civilian courts after he already pleaded guilty to a military tribunal? And trying him in New York City, where the trial will cost something like \$1 billion and tie up Lower Manhattan for years?

Will these people we are trying to impress be that much less impressed if the administration belatedly follows the advice of Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Democratic Sens. Dianne Feinstein and Kirsten Gillibrand and stages that trial on a military base or elsewhere outside of New York City?

And whom are we trying to impress by treating the failed Christmas bomber Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab not as a military combatant but as a common civilian criminal, even though he launched an attack on the United States from outside the country? Whom are we trying to impress by administering Miranda warnings and telling him that he has a right to a lawyer and the right to remain silent?

If the answer to these questions is that we are trying to impress Islamist terrorists, we have clearly failed.

It is a matter of simple fact that the announcement that we would close Guantanamo and other implement policy changes did not prevent Abdulhakim Muhammad from killing U.S. soldiers at the Little Rock recruiting station last June. It did not prevent Nidal Hasan from killing U.S. soldiers at Fort Hood in November. It did not prevent Abdulmutallab from attempting to blow up Northwest Flight 253 over U.S. or Canadian airspace on Christmas day.

Public opinion polls in the Arab and Muslim world have shown only slight upticks in opinion about America in the months after Barack Obama's speeches in Cairo and Turkey and after these administration policy changes. Terrorists did not say, "Gosh, now that Obama is closing Guantanamo and terrorists are being given Miranda rights, I've got to change my mind and decide that the United States is a really nifty country and that freedom and democracy are good things after all."

But perhaps our goal was to convince not terrorists but "world opinion." Are the government and billion people of India going to think better of the United States if we treat terrorists more gently? Not likely; they're the targets of terrorists themselves.

How about the government and billion people of China? My guess is that they see this as weakness that they would never indulge.

The governments and peoples of Europe? Well, certainly some governments would be pleased, as would the readers of left-wing newspapers and those who attend international conferences. But polling shows that European peoples tend to take a tougher stand on these matters than the elites who dominate the international dialogue.

So whom are we trying to impress? The answer seems to be left-wing intellectuals, academics, voters -- "the educated class," in David Brooks's term -- who decried George W. Bush's policies as reeking of fascism and dictatorship. We are making policies to please those who hang out in law school faculty lounges.

Their numbers turn out to be less formidable than the amount of coverage they have received in sympathetic media suggests. For that we have evidence from the commonwealth of Massachusetts, where Republican Senate candidate Scott Brown called for handing over KSM and the Christmas bomber to military tribunals. His Democratic opponent disagreed. She carried "the educated class," blacks and Hispanics. Brown carried just about everyone else and, even in Massachusetts, won.

Which leads me to ask, again: Just whom are we trying to impress?

National Review

The Attorney and the General

General Hayden has it right on Obama's war-by-subpoena.

by Andrew McCarthy

Michael Hayden, the former CIA director, penned a superb op-ed in the *Washington Post* on Sunday. Succinctly, he tallies the wages of having Attorney General Eric Holder make national-security decisions. Unlike the attorney general, Hayden is a real general, and very much worth heeding. He shows that these decisions have been premised on left-wing political calculations that always shortchange intelligence collection and the pursuit of American interests. Holder's judgments are not based on what America's safety requires or on what the law maximally permits U.S. intelligence to do in wartime.

As Hayden points out, the policy decisions that President Obama has allowed Holder to make are significant — not only taken one by one, but in their cumulative effect on the ethos of our intelligence agencies. "Intelligence officers," he writes, "need to know that someone has their back." After Holder forced the release in April of classified memos prepared by Bush Justice Department lawyers, laying out interrogation tactics and the legal rationale for permitting them, "CIA officers began to ask whether the people doing things that were currently authorized would be dragged through this kind of public knothole in five years. No one could guarantee that they would not."

The paralysis wrought by this decision transcends the narrow subject of interrogations. All intelligence collection is infected. If you can't/don't collect intelligence in a war against a secretive, transnational jihadist network, you stand to lose — and a lot of Americans stand to die. Thus, Hayden concludes, "Some may celebrate that the current Justice Department's perspective on the war on terrorism has become markedly more dominant in the past year. We should probably understand the implications of that before we break out the champagne."

In connection with the attempted massacre of 288 Americans in the Christmas airplane attack by al-Qaeda agent Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, two other points should be made, in the nature of "It's Even Worse Than He Says It Is."

First, General Hayden writes, "After the first [brief, 50-minute interrogation] session, the FBI *Mirandized* Abdulmutallab and — *to preserve a potential prosecution* — sent in a 'clean team' of agents who could have no knowledge of what Abdulmutallab had provided before he was given his constitutional warnings. As has been widely reported, Abdulmutallab then exercised his right to remain silent."

Believe it or not, the general is giving the Justice Department too much credit. The FBI did not send in a "clean team" to preserve the *prosecution*. It did so merely to preserve the *statements*. In fact, it did so not to preserve an actual confession, but something even more remote: the possible admissibility at trial of any statements Abdulmutallab *might* make — but had not made — once *Miranda* warnings were given. To explain briefly, the FBI was trying to forestall an eventual objection by Abdulmutallab's defense lawyer: namely, that the agents who obtained the 50 minutes' worth of non-*Mirandized* confession were "tainted," and that this taint would extend to any further, post-*Miranda* interrogation if they participated. But Abdulmutallab committed his "crime" (really, his act of war) in front of 288 people. It's a slam-dunk witness case — they actually have about 286 witnesses more than they need.

Any prosecutor would like to have a confession. It usually means a defendant will plead guilty rather than put everyone through the burden and expense of a trial. But no competent prosecutor would need a confession to convict this guy.

Even if you're a fan of the law-enforcement approach to counterterrorism (and I'm not), the Justice Department in this case was playing with house money. They had to know they did not need a confession. They could have dispensed with *Miranda* warnings entirely. They could have just kept interrogating

Abdulmutallab, knowing the worst that could happen was that statements unnecessary to their prosecution would be ruled inadmissible. Instead, the Holder DOJ so obsessed over the case that everything was done with an eye toward getting any edge, no matter how slight, in the eventual trial. Through that upside-down prism, it is somehow more important to preserve the possibility that we can get an admissible confession we don't need — to win the game 150–0 instead of just 100–0 — than to get information for such non-trial trivialities as saving American lives.

Second, General Hayden continues, “In retrospect, the inadvisability of this approach seems self-evident. Perhaps it didn't appear that way on Dec. 25 because we have, over the past year, become acclimated to certain patterns of thought.” He's clearly right about that, and he goes on to address those patterns of thought. Remember, though, that this is not a done deal. The Obama administration is treating what everyone now agrees was a mistake as if it were a bell that can't be unrung. That is wrong, and it is irresponsible.

Right this minute, President Obama could designate Abdulmutallab an unlawful enemy combatant (or, as they now call it, an “unprivileged belligerent”) and proceed with his interrogation, unimpeded by a defense lawyer or *Miranda* restrictions. It is a power he has had every minute since Abdulmutallab's capture five weeks ago. The case would still be there, and it would still be a slam-dunk, whether it were tried two, three, or five years from now. The only potential downside for the case is no downside at all: Prosecutors would not be able to use any statements he makes.

People can blame the attorney general, and there certainly is plenty for which he should answer. But Holder is a sideshow. These decisions are presidential decisions. The fact that Obama evidently delegates them to Holder does not change that. The policy of surrendering enemy combatants to the civilian-justice system and giving them all the rights of the American citizens whom they are trying to kill is an Obama policy being implemented by Holder; it's not a Holder policy.

Moreover, we're not merely rehashing past mistakes. This is an ongoing problem. After four months of al-Qaeda training in Yemen, Abdulmutallab has valuable information. President Obama still has the legal means to get it. Every day he fails to act — every day he elevates trifling trial strategy over vital intelligence collection — is a new, reckless failure to secure the nation.

Andrew C. McCarthy is a senior fellow at the [National Review Institute](#) and the author of [Willful Blindness: A Memoir of the Jihad](#) (Encounter Books, 2008).

The Corner

[The Saga of Abdulmutallab, Underwear Bomber](#) [Dana M. Perino & Bill Burck]

Just when you think it can't get worse . . .

We had to do a double take last night when we saw the news stories about the Christmas Day terrorist, Abdulmutallab. Let us make sure we've got this straight: The administration last week admitted that the none of the intelligence services was consulted when Abdulmutallab was Mirandized after 50 minutes of questioning and then charged as a criminal defendant. Some in the administration even claimed that those 50 minutes were enough time to get everything he knew out of him. (Yeah, right. Former CIA director Michael Hayden demolished this ridiculous idea in his Sunday op-ed in the *Washington Post*.)

Now the administration has begun systematically leaking to the press that he started talking again last week after FBI agents prevailed upon his family in Nigeria to convince him to cooperate.

Last week?! So, first of all: How many of his fellow terrorists have rolled up operations since Christmas Day and headed for the hills? They've skedaddled for sure. It's a classic al-Qaeda tactic: hold out for as long as you can so your fellow terrorists can go underground.

But even worse is that someone in the administration is leaking this at all. How does it further our national-

security interests to tell Abdulmutallab's fellow terrorists overseas that he is informing on them? What would you do if you were one of those fellow terrorists? If you hadn't already gone to ground, you sure would do so now.

If the administration believed it was important to reassure Congress that Abdulmutallab was cooperating, they should have done so in private in closed session with the Senate and House Intelligence Committees. This kind of sensitive information is shared all the time in that way. It is bad practice to tell the world that a terrorist has agreed to spill the beans on his fellow terrorists who are still walking around free overseas. That is, of course, unless the principal motivation is to try to save political hides at home, even at the expense of actually finding the terrorists Abdulmutallab worked with.

It will be interesting to find out what kind of deal Abdulmutallab has received in exchange for his "cooperation." Less prison time? A room with a view? Who knows?

The CIA interrogation program disbanded by President Obama produced an enormous amount of intelligence from people like KSM, according to former CIA Director Hayden. KSM most assuredly did not get a deal for his cooperation.

Seriously, you can't make this stuff up.

Dana M. Perino is former press secretary to Pres. George W. Bush. Bill Burck is a former federal prosecutor and deputy counsel to President Bush.

The Corner

[Stupak: 'Disappointed' With Obama's Scholarship Cut](#) [Robert Costa]

With tax hikes dominating today's budget debate, you will not hear much about the smaller federal grants that President Obama is hoping to slash. One proposed cut sticks out: Obama's budget eliminates a \$1 million scholarship program for aspiring Olympic athletes at Northern Michigan University. Here's why it matters: In 1998, the program was renamed to honor B. J. Stupak, the late son of Rep. Bart Stupak (D., Mich.), who committed suicide in 2000. Is the cut related to Stupak's playing hardball on health care last year?

Stupak won't speculate on the politics of the decision, but he does tell NATIONAL REVIEW ONLINE that he is "disappointed" to hear about the cut. He says he found out about it through the media, not the president or the Democratic leadership. He notes, however, "that in the 18 years I've been in Congress, never has a presidential staff called me to tell they are cutting something. Usually everyone around here scrambles after a budget is released."

Stupak pledges to fight for the grant to be reinstated into the budget. "I'll do my appropriations request and put in testimony. I want it to be funded on its own merit. President Bush did the same thing, and we always restored it. We need to do a better job explaining the program." Stupak adds that with the Winter Olympics approaching, it is "time to remind Congress why it is important to provide educational assistance to aspiring young Olympic athletes. We'll all be cheering our athletes next month, but we should remember that programs like this give a major boost to those training for the games. Shani Davis, the first black speed skater to make the U.S. Olympic team, credits the scholarship with keeping in him school. There are hundreds of stories like that. This program has become a small farm team for Olympic education."

There was a recent flap because three different members of the Obama administration, on three different Sunday television talk shows, gave three widely differing estimates of how many jobs the president has created.

That should not have been surprising, except as a sign of political sloppiness in not getting their stories together beforehand. They were simply doing what Barack Obama himself does — namely, just pulling numbers out of thin air. However, being more skilled at creating illusions, the president does it with more of an air of certainty, as if he has gone around and counted the new jobs himself.

The big question that seldom— if ever— gets asked in the mainstream media is whether these are a net increase in jobs. Since the only resources that the government has are the resources it takes from the private sector, using those resources to create jobs means reducing the resources available to create jobs in the private sector.

So long as most people do not look beyond superficial appearances, politicians can get away with playing Santa Claus on all sorts of issues, while leaving havoc in their wake— such as growing unemployment, despite all the jobs being "created."

Whatever position people take on health care reform, there seems to be a bipartisan consensus— usually a sign of mushy thinking— that it is a good idea for the government to force insurance companies to insure people whom politicians want them to insure, and to insure them for things that politicians think should be insured.

Contrary to what politicians expect us to do, let's stop and think.

Why aren't insurance companies already insuring the people and the conditions that they are now going to be forced to cover? Because that means additional costs— and because the insurance companies don't think their customers are willing to pay those particular costs for those particular coverages.

It costs politicians nothing to mandate more insurance coverage for more people. But that doesn't mean that the costs vanish into thin air. It simply means that both buyers and sellers of insurance are forced to pay costs that neither of them wants to pay. But, because soaring political rhetoric leaves out such grubby things as costs, it sounds like a great deal.

It is not just costs that are left out. It is consequences in general.

With all the laments in the media about skyrocketing unemployment among young people, and especially minority young people, few media pundits even try to connect the dots to explain why unemployment hits some groups much harder than others.

Yet unusually high unemployment rates among young people is not something new or even something peculiar to the United States. Even before the current worldwide recession, unemployment rates were 20 percent or more among workers under 25 years of age in a number of Western European countries.

The young have less experience to offer and are therefore less in demand. Before politicians stepped in, that just meant that younger workers were paid less. But this is not a permanent situation because youth itself is not permanent, and pay rises with experience.

Enter politicians. By mandating a minimum wage that sounds reasonable for most workers, they put a price on inexperienced and unskilled labor that often exceeds what it is worth.

Mandated pay rates, like mandated insurance coverage, impose on buyers and sellers alike things that they would not choose to do otherwise.

Workers of course prefer higher wage rates. But the very fact that the government has to impose those wage rates means that workers were unwilling to risk not having a job by refusing to work for less than the wage rate that has been mandated. Now that choice has been taken out of their hands, with the hidden cost in this case being higher unemployment rates.

It is of course no secret that there is no free lunch. It is just an inconvenient distraction that gets left out of political rhetoric.

Roger L. Simon

[The typicality of John Edwards' pseudo-leftism](#)

Now that we have reached the black comic post-portem stage of the John Edwards scandal with Andrew Young's book out and [pundits playing mop up](#), it's time to address an interesting question: To what degree did John Edwards' "leftism" affect his extraordinarily narcissistic behavior?

The quotes around leftism are, of course, deliberate because Edwards wasn't a real leftist. He is the poster boy for a faux-leftism that permeates our culture. Nothing could be more obvious than that Edwards, who took the furthest left stance of the three Democratic presidential candidates in the last election, cared next to nothing for "the people" but excessively for himself, building the McMansion of McMansions, etc. And "stance" is the operative word here, because his positions always seemed adopted, not felt.

Is there a cause and effect relationship here? We do live in an era when the private behavior and lifestyles of liberal-left politician seem completely out of whack with their public pronouncements. Besides Edwards, Al Gore and Nancy Pelosi come quickly to mind, but there are others. It's doubtful Gore and Pelosi lived personal lives anywhere near as execrable as Edwards' but there are parallels, especially in the area of personal *enrichment* ("green" or otherwise). And then there are liberals (or should I say faux-leftists) operating in the public sphere from George Soros to Ariana Huffington about who similar charges could and have been made. And then there's Hollywood, the indigenous home of this kind of behavior.

Why has this happened? Well, it's certainly not new. Back in the Thirties, New York was suffused by a kind of radical chic about Stalin's Soviet Union. This was named "Penthouse Bolshevism" by journalist Eugene Lyons who was the UPI's Moscow correspondent and had seen life the Soviet Union up close. When he returned, he was amazed at the naivete of Le Tout New York's adoration of Stalin. Lyons wrote about this and ended up ostracized for a time. The more things change, etc.

People want to be *seen* as left, but not *be* left. Or at least have to *live* as left. This behavior seems more extreme now because there is more of it, an almost willed separation between what you say and what you do. The MSM has participated greatly in covering up this division, because they are frequently a part of it, profiting from this illusion-reality game whose aim is to fool the self as much as it is to fool others.

But it is breaking down. The Tea Party Movement, with its disdain for hypocrisy, is on the rise. But more importantly, there is a great contradiction (to use a marxist term) confronting us. Almost everyone realizes that socialist economics are ridiculous. They have never worked. That is more than ever the message of our times. So how do you take a position of faux-leftism when you can no longer advertise the faux part? You're trumped.

So most likely no more John Edwardses, at least for now. We'll have to find a new form of scalawag. That shouldn't be hard, alas.

Doug Jones Journal

Pelosi's Children and Grandchildren Used Military Jets As Private Cross-Country Shuttle Service So They Could Avoid Dealing With the Rabble

Is it a legitimate use of military jets to transport the Speaker of the House and her favored Congressional coterie for routine travel? Even if you believe it is -- and, personally, I do not -- any rational taxpayer would admit that it is monumental waste of money. Military flights cost between \$5,000 and \$20,000 per hour to operate. The Speaker and her passengers routinely reimburse the Air Force \$120 to \$400 for each flight.



Since Nancy Pelosi took over as Speaker in 2006, she's rung up millions in military travel expenses to commute between San Francisco and Washington.

Worse still, she also appears to have requisitioned entire flights for the personal use of her children and grandchildren. That is, unaccompanied by any member of Congress, her kids, in-laws and grandchildren are utilizing entire military passenger jets for their routine travel needs.

Using the documents obtained by Judicial Watch's Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, I have discovered the following manifests and travel requests.

22 February 2007

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE
(LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS)

FROM: SAF/LLO

SUBJECT: Congressional Travel

Request your approval to authorize OSD invitational travel for the following as outlined below in accordance with DOD Directive 4515.13R on a reimbursable basis:

NAME: Mr. Paul Pelosi, Jr., son of Speaker Pelosi

ITINERARY AND DATES: From San Francisco, CA to Andrews AFB, MD (22 Feb 07)

PURPOSE: Presidentially-directed shuttle support IAW with DOD/Speaker office guidance

sole travel needs of the Speaker's son, Paul Jr.

22-Feb-2007: A military jet is requisitioned for the

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, DC 20330-1000

SPECIAL ORDER
TAL-0255

13 April 2007

Each of the following are authorized to travel on or about 15 Apr 07 by military aircraft from San Francisco, CA to Washington, DC, for approximately 1 day, in connection with official business of and by the authority of the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, 31 USC 1108(g). Travel is authorized by military transportation. Travel is on a reimbursable basis equivalent to coach fare rate. Authority: DOD 4515.12.

Mr. Alexander Pelosi, Daughter, Speaker Pelosi
Mr. Michiel Vos, Son-in-Law, Speaker Pelosi
Mr. Paul M. Vos, Grandson, Speaker Pelosi

13-Apr-2007: A military jet is utilized for the unaccompanied travel of the Speaker's daughter, son-in-law and grandson.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, DC 20330-1000

SPECIAL ORDER
TAL-0371

15 Jun 2007

Mr. Paul Pelosi, Jr., Son, Speaker Pelosi is authorized to travel on or about 15 Jun 07 by military aircraft from Washington, DC to San Francisco, CA for approximately 1 day, in connection with official business of and by the authority of the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, 31 USC 1108(g). Travel is authorized by military transportation. Travel is on a reimbursable basis equivalent to coach fare rate. Authority: DOD 4515.13R.

15-Jun-2007: A military jet is requisitioned for the sole travel needs of the Speaker's son, Paul Jr.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, DC 20330-1000

SPECIAL ORDER
TAL-0401

9 Jul 2007

Mr. Paul Pelosi, Jr., Son, Speaker Pelosi is authorized to travel on or about 9 Jul 07 by military aircraft from San Francisco, CA to Washington, DC for approximately 1 day, in connection with official business of and by the authority of the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, 31 USC 1108(g). Travel is authorized by military transportation. Travel is on a reimbursable basis equivalent to coach fare rate. Authority: DOD 4515.13R.

09-Jul-2007: A military jet is requisitioned for the sole travel needs of the Speaker's son, Paul Jr.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, DC 20330-1000

SPECIAL ORDER
TAL-0229

13 January 2008

Mr. Paul Pelosi, Jr., Son, Speaker Pelosi is authorized to travel on or about 13 Jan 08 by military aircraft from San Francisco, CA to Washington, DC for approximately 1 day, in connection with official business of and by the authority of the Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, 31 USC 1108(g). Travel is authorized by military transportation. Travel is on a reimbursable basis equivalent to coach fare rate. Authority: DOD 4515.13R.

13-Jan-2008: A military jet is requisitioned for the sole travel needs of Paul Pelosi, Jr., son of the Speaker.

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, DC 20330-1000

SPECIAL ORDER
TAL-0006

29 September 2008

Mr. Paul Pelosi, Jr., Son, Speaker Pelosi is authorized to travel on or about 29 Sep 08 by military aircraft from Washington, DC to San Francisco, CA for approximately 1 day, in connection with official business of and by the authority of the 31 USC 1108(g). Travel is authorized by military transportation. Travel is on a reimbursable basis equivalent to coach fare rate of \$180.00. Authority: DOD 4515.13R.

29-Sep-2008: A military jet is requisitioned for the sole travel needs of Paul Pelosi, Jr., son of the Speaker.

SPECIAL ORDER
TAL-0050

30 October 2008

Each of the following are authorized to travel on or about 2 Nov 08 by military aircraft from San Francisco, CA to Washington, DC for approximately 1 day, in connection with official business of and by the authority of the 31 USC 1108(g). Travel is authorized by military transportation. Travel is on a reimbursable basis equivalent to unrestricted coach fare rate of \$264.50. Authority: DOD 4515.13R.

Ms. Christine Pelosi, Daughter, Speaker Pelosi
Mr. Peter Kaufman

30-Oct-2008: A military jet is requisitioned for the Speaker's daughter and a son-in-law, Peter Kaufman.

SPECIAL ORDER
TAL-0078

25 November 2008

Each of the following are authorized to travel on or about 30 Nov 08 by military aircraft from San Francisco, CA to Washington, DC for approximately 1 day, in connection with official business of and by the authority of 31 USC 1108(g). Travel is authorized by military transportation. Travel is on a reimbursable basis equivalent to coach fare rate of \$199.50. Authority: DOD 4515.12.

Ms. Alexandra Pelosi
Mr. Michael Vos
Mr. Paul Vos
Mr. Thomas Vos

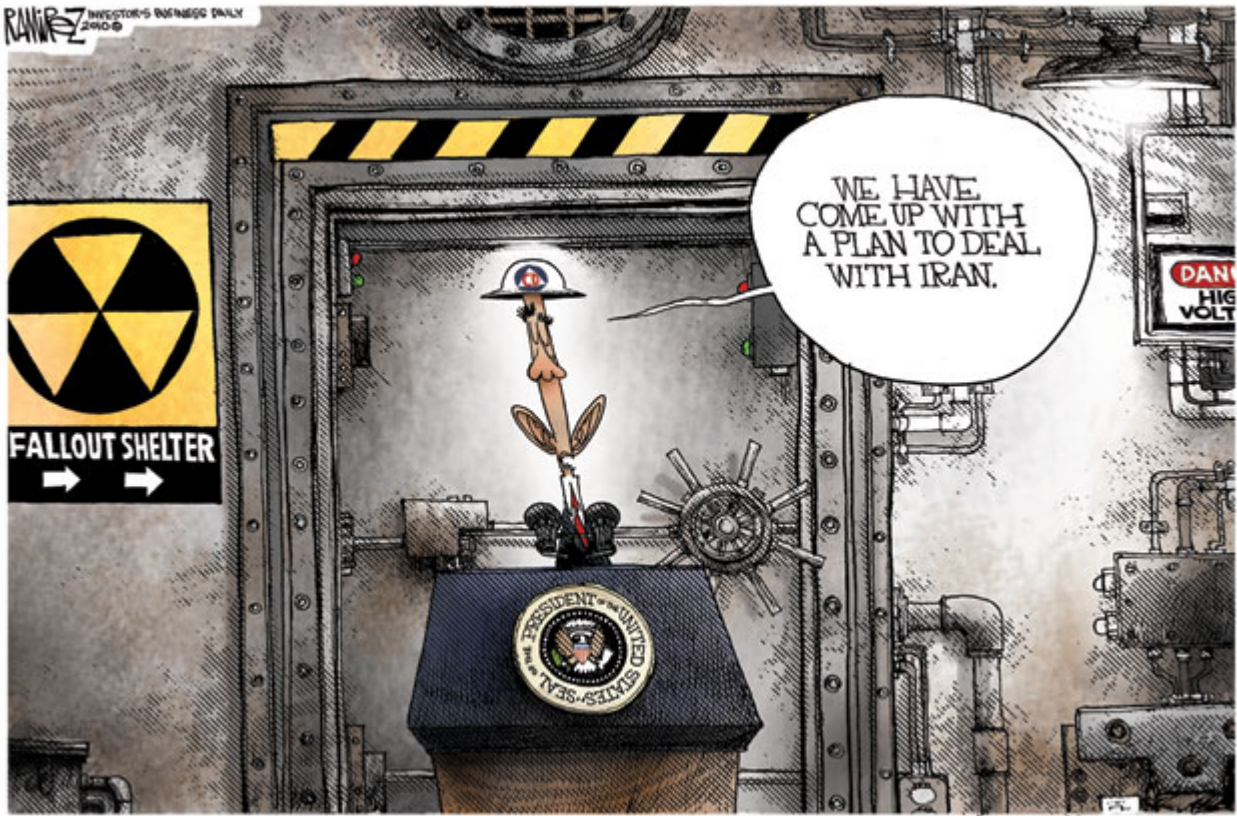
25-Nov-2008: A military jet is requisitioned for the Speaker's daughter, her son-in-law and two grandchildren.

* * *

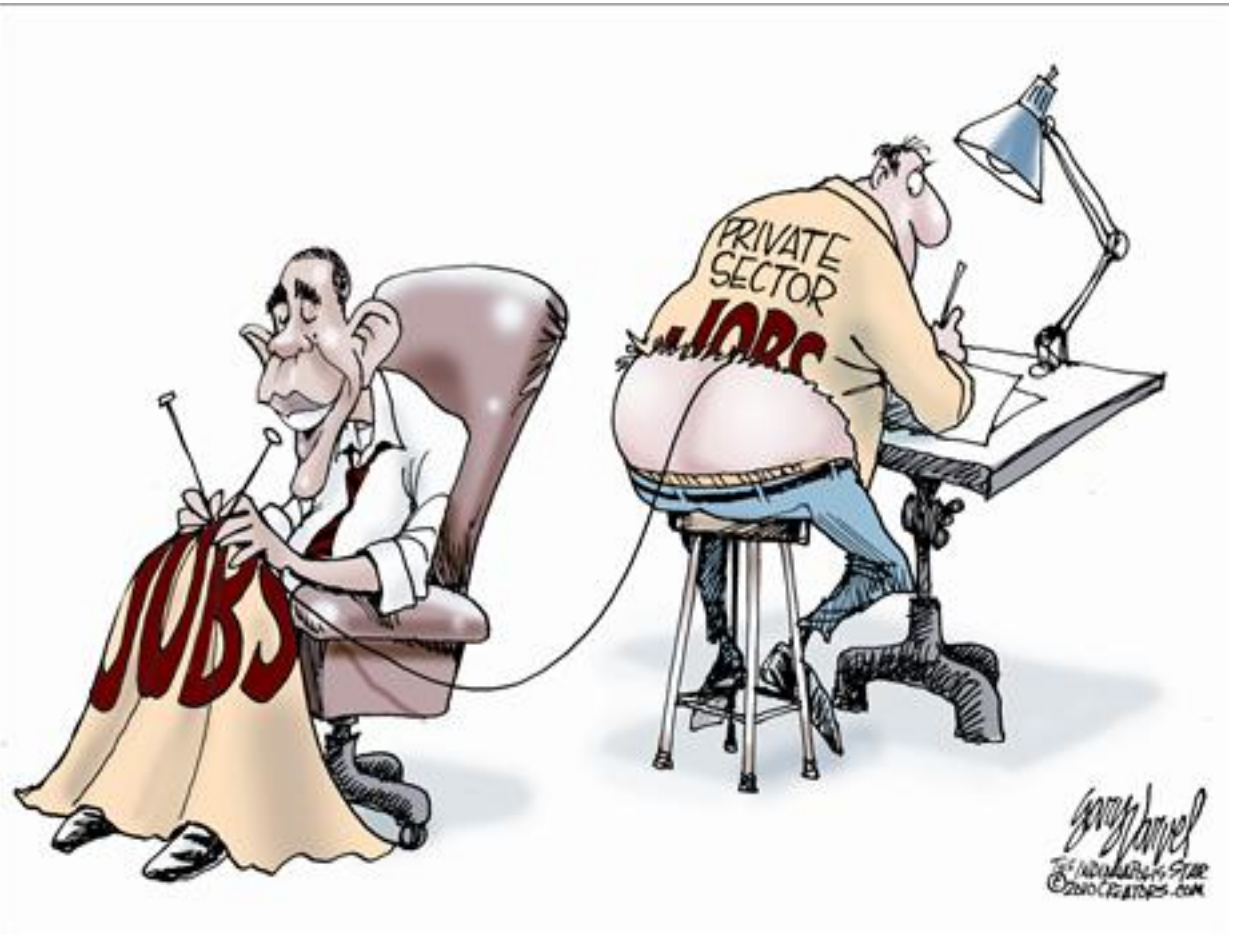
This is not an exhaustive list by any stretch. On dozens of occasions, various of the Pelosi children and grandchildren appear to have traveled with or without the Speaker.

Rep. Nancy Pelosi -- in my humble opinion -- has abused her office by ordering military jets for the travel convenience of her children. It would seem that the instances highlighted above constitute, at minimum, a complete disregard for the American taxpayer's funds.

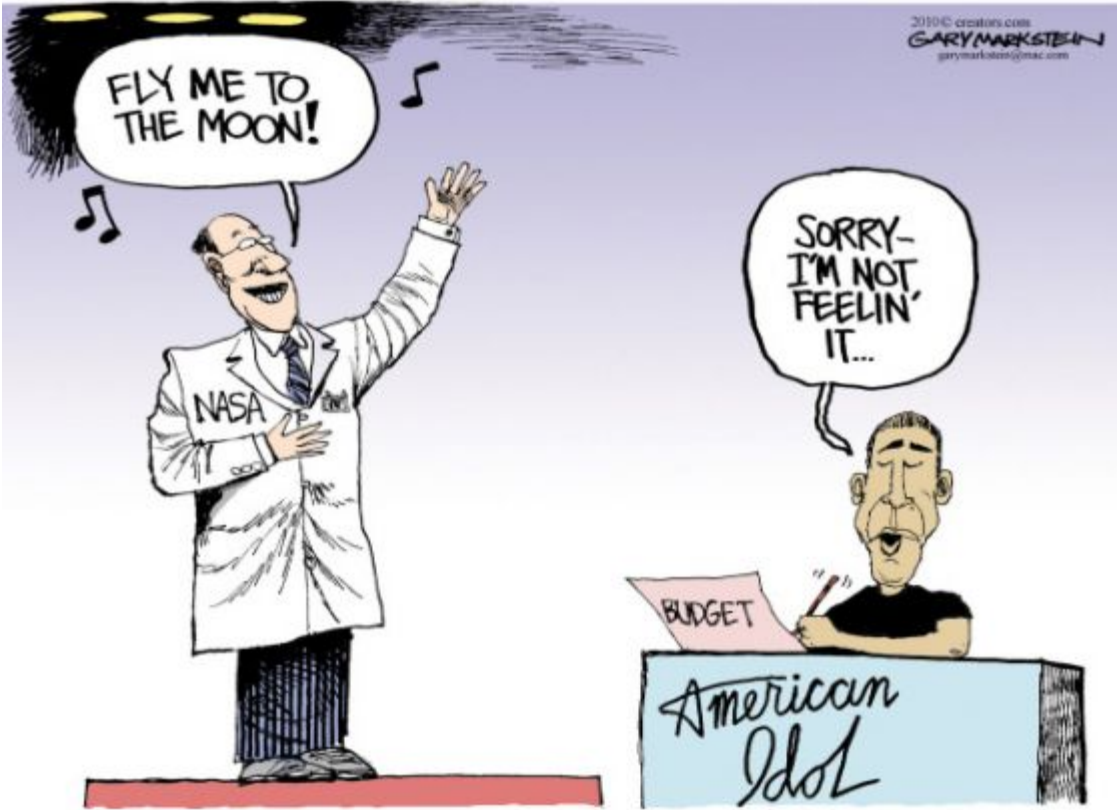
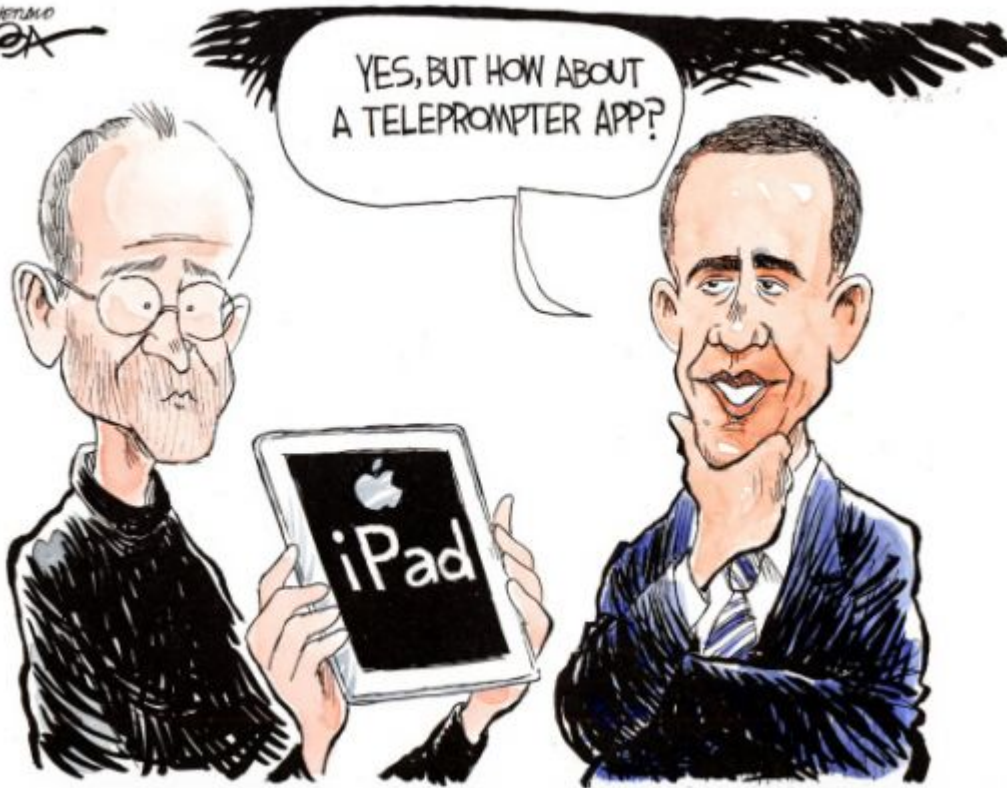
Pelosi must resign. Or she should be forcibly removed out of office. These activities, if not outright criminal, smell to high heaven.



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OLAVS MERLOTTIMO
KOTERDA



WHERE COULD THEY
BE THINKING OF
MOVING THE
9/11 TRIAL?



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AT LAST...
A REASON TO
GO TO MARS

