

January 28, 2014

Ron Christie tries to understand the juxtaposition of the dictator and the democrat. ... *There is a sense this White House moves from one news cycle to the next to shape public opinion – which brings us to Mr. Obama’s press availability just prior to his first Cabinet meeting of the year this past Tuesday morning. After noting that he was looking forward to working with Republicans and Democrats, President Obama [made the following startling declaration](#):*

“But one of the things that I’ll be emphasizing in this meeting is the fact that we’re not just going to be waiting for legislation in order to make sure that we’re providing Americans the kind of help that they need. I’ve got a pen and I’ve got a phone—and I can use that pen to sign executive orders and take executive actions and administrative actions that move the ball forward in helping to make sure that our businesses are getting the kind of support and help they need to grow and advance to make sure that people are getting the skills that they need to get those jobs that our businesses are creating.” ...

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More specifically, [the president continued by saying](#): “A lot of people have been saying this lately on every problem, which is just, ‘Sign an executive order and we can pretty much do anything and nullify Congress’... That’s not how it works. We’ve got this Constitution, we’ve got this whole thing about separation of powers. So there is no short-cut to politics, and there’s no shortcut to democracy.”

So which President Obama are we supposed to believe? ...

We circle back to the president's racism remarks with **Craig Pirrong**.

... Race is such a divisive and polarizing issue that a president should do everything possible to downplay, rather than emphasize, racial divisions. He should certainly not attempt to exploit race for petty political purposes, or to excuse his political and policy failures. Racial appeals are more befitting a Jim Crow-era Southern politician than a Lincoln, to whom Obama has compared himself.

Racial appeals are the last refuge of the demagogic scoundrel. They are the last thing we need now. A man of honor who put the country’s interests above his own would eschew such appeals. Indeed, he would chastise his supporters for making such arguments.

But we are talking about Obama, aren’t we?

Andrew McCarthy with a pitchfork president post.

A dour President Obama was in no mood to hear about Wall Street’s troubles. “My administration is the only thing between you and the pitchforks,” he warned a room full of the nation’s banking titans.

They'd been summoned to the White House woodshed over what Dear Leader had decided was excessive compensation for industry execs. The president had been on the job for less than three months, but his community-organizer roots were already showing: the fraudulent narrative — in this instance, "income inequality" — helped along by whatever arm-twisting the occasion required. The narrative camouflages execution of the statist game-plan: (1) government creates problem, (2) government locates scapegoat, and (3) government exploits scapegoat to juxtapose itself as savior — rationalizing more regulation and more power.

The pitchfork imagery leapt to mind this week because Timothy Geithner, Obama's tax-challenged former Treasury secretary, was back in the news — specifically, the extortion news. Turbo Tim had been in the room back in 2009, absorbing the boss's lesson in Alinsky-style government-corporate relations. Now we learn, at least according to Standard & Poor's top honcho, that Geithner made the Obama method his own.

In an affidavit filed in a California federal court, S&P chairman Harold McGraw III alleges that on August 8, 2011 — i.e., when the Obama reelection campaign was gearing up — Geithner tracked him down by phone. The then-secretary was irate because, three days earlier, S&P had downgraded the credit rating of the United States to a notch below triple-A for the first time in history. McGraw had been forewarned by a Geithner associate that the secretary "was very angry at S&P." When the two men finally spoke, Geithner ripped McGraw for having "done an enormous disservice to yourselves and to your country." He further warned that S&P's insolence — er, I mean, S&P's decision — would "be looked at very carefully" and would prompt "a response from the government."

That "response" came in the form of a punitive lawsuit, brought by the government against S&P. At least that's the way S&P sees it, with what appears to be ample reason. ...

Now that Jim Moran is leaving office, perhaps he can be honest. This will make him a Dem nightmare. Two weeks after announcing his retirement, Moran has warned the healthcare act might unravel. [Fox News](#) has the story.

Congressman Jim Moran (D-Va.) is voicing concern that the entirety Affordable Care Act could unravel because not enough young people are signing up.

More than 40,000 Virginians signed up for health insurance on the federal exchange last month. Only 27 percent of those were young adults — the group needed to fund the new system. Moran says he doesn't think those numbers are going to get much better.

"I'm afraid that the millennials, if you will, are less likely to sign up. I think they feel more independent, I think they feel a little more invulnerable than prior generations," Moran says. "But I don't think we're going to get enough young people signing up to make this bill work as it was intended to financially."

Andrew Malcolm posts on the trash talk president.

In his compelling and revealing new memoir, "Duty," former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates describes that tense evening in the White House situation room when the Obama crowd watched the assassination of Osama bin Laden real-time.

When the world's most wanted man had been popped, bagged and was enroute to the bottom of the Indian Ocean, the in-crowd rose to disperse. Obama would soon announce the news, igniting spontaneous street celebrations.

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"That lasted about five hours," Gates recalls sadly. ...

... Now comes another stunning example of Obama's Amateur Hour. He had a recent conversation with David Remnick of the New Yorker. Now Remnick, like Bob Woodward, is a master at getting subjects to talk.

But Obama has just begun the 62d month of his presidency as commander-in-chief of the world's most powerful military. He didn't just fall off the sweet-potato truck. Yes, the Super Bowl looms near, prompting all kinds of inappropriate sports metaphors and analogies.

However, as he sought to explain White House thinking to his journalist visitor, Obama should know better than to stoop to the inflammatory, trash-talking level of a Richard Sherman.

"The analogy we use around here sometimes, [and I think is accurate](#), is if a J.V. team puts on Lakers uniforms, that doesn't make them Kobe Bryant."

Forget for a moment, Mr. President, the fact that the hobbled Bryant has been out since late last year with no return date set. So, right now in basketball warrior terms, Kobe Bryant is useless.

Al Qaeda, on the other hand, has never controlled more territory. Thanks to Obama's impulsive overthrow of Moammar Gadhafi with no replacement at hand, those terrorists now control most of Libya. They're on the winning side of Obama's vanished red line in Syria. ...

More on the "jayvee" talk from **[Power Line](#)**.

... In his New Yorker interview, Obama argued that just because al Qaeda makes territorial gains in areas where a power vacuum exists doesn't mean that its fighters have the desire or the capacity to attack our homeland. But where is the evidence that they lack this desire or capacity? According to [Heritage](#), there have been at least 60 plots to attack the homeland since 9/11, and the number has risen in recent years.

Let's also keep in mind that the pre-9/11 al Qaeda didn't look like "Kobe Bryant" either. Neither the Clinton administration nor the Bush administration took it seriously enough, and this low regard helped pave the way for 9/11.

Let's hope that Obama takes al Qaeda more seriously than his trash-talking interview with the New Yorker suggests. To take al Qaeda lightly would be the approach of a jayvee president. ...

Late Night from Andrew Malcolm.

Leno: Obama is getting tough on the NSA scandal. Says the secret agency will never be used to suppress critics or dissenters. He said he has the IRS for that job.

Letterman: All these snowstorms make driving nightmarish. So be very careful while texting.

Conan: Justin Bieber was arrested in Florida for DUI. Police reports said Bieber's blood contained large amounts of alcohol, pot and Flintstone's Chewables.

Daily Beast

Obama: A President Tests His Limits

How can the President boast of making anything happen with a "phone and pen," while also claiming "there is no shortcut to democracy?"

by Ron Christie

Just two weeks into the New Year, trying to pin down President Obama's national priorities is like looking through a kaleidoscope while sitting on the deck of the S.S. Minnow. The president started the year focused on jobs, followed by a pivot to income inequality. Next up Mr. Obama extolled the virtue of extending unemployment insurance benefits before he turned to an important discussion of promise zones. I don't begrudge a president the opportunity to articulate a vision to the American people; Obama's efforts thus far in 2014 has had the feel of a fly fisherman casting and re-casting his line while looking for a bite from the national press corps to validate and calibrate his focus from the Oval Office.

There is a sense this White House moves from one news cycle to the next to shape public opinion – which brings us to Mr. Obama's press availability just prior to his first Cabinet meeting of the year this past Tuesday morning. After noting that he was looking forward to working with Republicans and Democrats, President Obama [made the following startling declaration](#):

"But one of the things that I'll be emphasizing in this meeting is the fact that we're not just going to be waiting for legislation in order to make sure that we're providing Americans the kind of help that they need. I've got a pen and I've got a phone—and I can use that pen to sign executive orders and take executive actions and administrative actions that move the ball forward in helping to make sure that our businesses are getting the kind of support and help they need to grow and advance to make sure that people are getting the skills that the need to get those jobs that our businesses are creating."

Every president since our founding in 1789 has utilized executive orders—directives issued to personnel within the executive branch by the president of the United States in his capacity as head of this branch of government. These orders must be specifically linked to his executive authority and must not contradict a statute passed by Congress. Given these parameters, it remains difficult to see how President Obama may safely navigate within the limits of the

Constitution to ensure businesses receive support to grow and that people receive the skills they need to obtain jobs. Just yesterday, while delivering remarks at North Carolina State University, Obama noted, “Where I can act without Congress, I’m going to do so.”

Article II, Section 3 of the Constitution provides the president:

“Shall from time to time give to the Congress information of the state of the union and recommend to their consideration such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.”

But there is a difference between the president offering up his legislative wish list to the Congress, which he will do in his State of the Union address on January 28, versus taking unilateral action that Mr. Obama judges to be necessary and expedient. Perhaps the president thinks we don’t pay attention to his words and deeds—how else can one explain Obama’s seemingly contradicting himself on the limits of his executive power just months ago?

During a fundraising speech in San Francisco last November, President Obama responded to a heckler who interrupted his remarks by shouting “Executive Order” to overcome Republican opposition to his policies on Capitol Hill. First, Obama offered that there is “no short-cut to democracy” and that he could not utilize executive orders to bypass Congress.

More specifically, [the president continued by saying](#): “A lot of people have been saying this lately on every problem, which is just, ‘Sign an executive order and we can pretty much do anything and nullify Congress’...That’s not how it works. We’ve got this Constitution, we’ve got this whole thing about separation of powers. So there is no short-cut to politics, and there’s no shortcut to democracy.”

So which President Obama are we supposed to believe? The one who specifically noted that there is no shortcut to democracy and that the Constitution establishes separation of powers amongst the three co-equal branches of government? Or the Obama who boasted that where he could act without Congress he would do so utilizing his pen and a phone?

Rhetorically, the president is back in his comfort zone—campaigning and using catchy slogans to rally his Democratic base. As far as a coherent governing style is concerned, however, this approach seeks to galvanize Obama’s supporters at the expense of finding ways to bring differing viewpoints together on either end of Capitol Hill to govern effectively. If President Obama’s actions thus far in 2014 are any indication, we are in for three more years of poll-tested slogan soundbites from the current occupant of the Oval Office rather than sober, deliberate discussions on how to advance the interests of these United States of America—interests that have become more polarized rather than united during his tenure in office.

Streetwise Professor

[The Last Refuge of the Demagogic Scoundrel](#)

by Craig Pirrong

Obama’s approval rating has plummeted, to Bush 2006 levels. So, of course, the reason must be . . . what, exactly? The utter Obamacare fail? Nope. A foreign policy that only the Keystone Kops could love? Nope. A stagnant economy? Nope.

Come on, dummy. There is only one possible answer. ONE!: [RACISM!!!!](#)

Note that Obama's approval rating has fallen more than 20 percent since his re-election. So is he suggesting that in the past year 20 percent of Americans have all of a sudden decided that they just can't abide the idea of a black guy as president? Because to be logically consistent, and consistent with the data, that would have to be the claim. This is about the delta, not the level.

A claim that would require that attitudes towards race be highly fluid, whereas in fact they are, for better or worse, pretty much fixed in any individual, and if they change, they change slowly (alas).

The far more reasonable explanation is that piss poor performance (but I understate) is finally overcoming the goodwill—much of it based on a fervent desire for a black president to succeed—that Obama has benefited from for years.

I know that these racial theories of opposition to Obama are in the blood of those that inhabit the fever swamps of the left, like some sort of ideological malaria: they are convinced that only a racist could disapprove of Obama. But a president has to transcend the insanity of his most rabid supporters. Indeed, it is quite a testament to Obama's character, and his political desperation, that he feels compelled to dog whistle to the rabid, and has no problems in doing so.

Race is such a divisive and polarizing issue that a president should do everything possible to downplay, rather than emphasize, racial divisions. He should certainly not attempt to exploit race for petty political purposes, or to excuse his political and policy failures. Racial appeals are more befitting a Jim Crow-era Southern politician than a Lincoln, to whom Obama has compared himself.

Racial appeals are the last refuge of the demagogic scoundrel. They are the last thing we need now. A man of honor who put the country's interests above his own would eschew such appeals. Indeed, he would chastise his supporters for making such arguments.

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National Review

[S&P Gets the Pitchfork Treatment](#)

The Obama administration retaliates with a fraud suit . . . or is it a fraudulent suit?

By Andrew C. McCarthy

A dour President Obama was in no mood to hear about Wall Street's troubles. "My administration is the only thing between you and the pitchforks," he warned a room full of the nation's banking titans.

They'd been summoned to the White House woodshed over what Dear Leader had decided was excessive compensation for industry execs. The president had been on the job for less than

three months, but his community-organizer roots were already showing: the fraudulent narrative — in this instance, “income inequality” — helped along by whatever arm-twisting the occasion required. The narrative camouflages execution of the statist game-plan: (1) government creates problem, (2) government locates scapegoat, and (3) government exploits scapegoat to juxtapose itself as savior — rationalizing more regulation and more power.

The pitchfork imagery leapt to mind this week because Timothy Geithner, Obama’s tax-challenged former Treasury secretary, was back in the news — specifically, the extortion news. Turbo Tim had been in in the room back in 2009, absorbing the boss’s lesson in Alinsky-style government-corporate relations. Now we learn, at least according to Standard & Poor’s top honcho, that Geithner made the Obama method his own.

In an affidavit filed in a California federal court, S&P chairman Harold McGraw III alleges that on August 8, 2011 — i.e., when the Obama reelection campaign was gearing up — Geithner tracked him down by phone. The then-secretary was irate because, three days earlier, S&P had downgraded the credit rating of the United States to a notch below triple-A for the first time in history. McGraw had been forewarned by a Geithner associate that the secretary “was very angry at S&P.” When the two men finally spoke, Geithner ripped McGraw for having “done an enormous disservice to yourselves and to your country.” He further warned that S&P’s insolence — er, I mean, S&P’s decision — would “be looked at very carefully” and would prompt “a response from the government.”

That “response” came in the form of a punitive lawsuit, brought by the government against S&P. At least that’s the way S&P sees it, with what appears to be ample reason.

McGraw, it is worth noting, is hardly a tea-partying Obama basher. He runs in the Geithner-trod circles of international finance and, in 2009 — at around the same time the president held his sweat session with the bankers — Obama made McGraw his appointee to the U.S.-India CEO Forum. While there is not likely to be a recording of the phone call with Geithner, it seems a stretch to think McGraw made the whole thing up. The statement submitted in the lawsuit this week is under oath — i.e., subject to penalty of perjury if proven false. McGraw also recalls immediately telling colleagues about it, suggesting there are probably contemporaneous notes corroborating his account.

And beyond that there is what cannot be disputed: Within days of the call, the *New York Times* was reporting that the Obama-Holder Justice Department was investigating S&P. In short order, Justice filed a civil lawsuit against S&P, alleging fraud — a subject in which this administration is well versed — and seeking a ruinous \$5 billion in damages.

The dispute oozes intrigue. For starters, the fraud claimed by the Obama administration has nothing, ostensibly, to do with the downgrade. Instead, the Justice Department reached back several years, to S&P’s activities before the 2008 financial meltdown. Of course, the root cause of that crisis was government coercion of the financial sector. Uncle Sam pressured financial institutions to extend mortgages to poor credit risks — pressure that left-wing activists, such as a young lawyer named Barack Obama, capitalized on by bringing lawsuits that alleged racial discrimination against reluctant lenders.

Ever since the mortgage bubble exploded, Washington has searched every place but within for a scapegoat. Among the most inviting targets are the credit-rating agencies — not just S&P but

Moody's and Fitch. Like bankers, they are not very sympathetic victims. They were content to ride the government-conducted gravy train while it lasted, lavishly paid by banks that courted them to look favorably on securities backed by the suspect mortgages. The pols happily facilitated this doomed arrangement, taking credit for promoting the dream of home ownership while raking in donations from the rigged system's flush players.

But since the bottom fell out, taking the economy with it, the catastrophe's architects have used their control of government's law-enforcement powers to turn on their former accomplices. There have been investigations against banks for making irresponsible loans, and against rating agencies for encouraging the recklessness.

As the *Wall Street Journal* drily notes, the banks that marketed mortgage-backed securities are alternatively portrayed as perps or dupes depending on the Justice Department's whim in any given case. The contradictions plaguing the government's desperation to find a suitable culprit are no more surprising than DOJ's inability to rack up convictions commensurate with the wreckage. It is hard for the government to prosecute people who have a credible "the government made me do it" defense.

This, however, is not the most notable contradiction in Justice's jihad against S&P. That distinction belongs to the absence of an obvious co-defendant: Moody's. If providing imprimaturs for securities backed by bad loans were a game of "anything you can do, I can do better," S&P would probably have been bested by its top competitor. Moody's appears to have been every bit as biddable towards its bank clients, and as delusional in grading their shaky securities, as S&P is alleged to have been. Indeed, after the crash, both rating agencies were investigated by the FBI, the SEC, and state investigators, both (along with another rater, Fitch) were sued by the states of New York and Ohio, and both were grilled by Congress.

Yet, only S&P was sued by the Justice Department — and only after the downgrade. Moody's, a chunk of which is owned by Berkshire-Hathaway, the conglomerate run by Obama pal Warren Buffett, decided not to downgrade the U.S. credit rating in 2011, notwithstanding the government's patent unseriousness about our astronomical debt load and the rating agencies' post-meltdown promises to be more rigorous in their assessments. By sustaining the triple-A rating, Moody's enabled the Obama campaign to dismiss S&P's downgrade as an outlier. And, shocking as this may seem, the Justice Department elected not to slap Moody's with a \$5 billion lawsuit. The pitchforks aim only at S&P.

Of course, the fact that Moody's slipped the noose does not make S&P innocent. It may be that both of them — along with the banks, the regulators, and the Beltway social engineers — were fraudulent, or at least grossly negligent. If, as some experts suggest, Moody's was even more culpable than S&P in hawking mortgage-backed securities, its absence from the suit is the case's second greatest irony.

The first is the Obama administration's accusation that S&P carried out a scheme to defraud based on what prosecutors describe as "repeated" misrepresentations. Whether the rating agency made the product seem too good to be true, and whether the sophisticated financial players in this market were actually swayed by such falsehoods, remains to be seen. But I'm betting that whatever S&P said couldn't hold a candle to "If you like your health-care plan, you can keep your health-care plan, period."

I'm also thinking that, between the pitchforks, the vengeful Treasury secretary, the not-so-mysteriously missing defendant, and the fraud stones being tossed from a glass White House, this case could be a hoot . . . especially for the defense lawyers.

FOX News

[Dem Jim Moran Warns ObamaCare May Unravel, Not Enough Millennials Using Exchange](#)

by Matt Laslo

Congressman Jim Moran (D-Va.) is voicing concern that the entirety Affordable Care Act could unravel because not enough young people are signing up.

More than 40,000 Virginians signed up for health insurance on the federal exchange last month. Only 27 percent of those were young adults — the group needed to fund the new system. Moran says he doesn't think those numbers are going to get much better.

"I'm afraid that the millennials, if you will, are less likely to sign up. I think they feel more independent, I think they feel a little more invulnerable than prior generations," Moran says. "But I don't think we're going to get enough young people signing up to make this bill work as it was intended to financially."

IBD

[Oh, we bad! Our big-boy president takes to trash-talking al Qaeda](#)

by Andrew Malcolm

In his compelling and revealing new memoir, "Duty," former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates describes that tense evening in the White House situation room when the Obama crowd watched the assassination of Osama bin Laden real-time.

When the world's most wanted man had been popped, bagged and was enroute to the bottom of the Indian Ocean, the in-crowd rose to disperse. Obama would soon announce the news, igniting spontaneous street celebrations.

Gates worried about leaks of operational details revealing how Special Ops conducts such raids nightly in the world's deadliest corners. He asked everyone to promise to reveal nothing more of what they saw than the bare facts. We got him. He's dead. All raiders are safe. Everyone agreed.

"That lasted about five hours," Gates recalls sadly.

So intense was the Obama administration's need to gloat, brag, spike the football, chest-bump, end-zone dance that within hours officials, on background without identification, provided reporters the "tick-tock."

That's the beloved minute-by-minute account of some major news event that D.C. media gobble up faster than like free food. The raid timeline, number of raiders, stealth helicopters, refueling stops, radar-jamming, the hard-drives and documents seized, even the name of the SEALs dog, everything, each detail designed to make the campaigning president look good.

And if all this empty braggadocio made life more dangerous for the real combatants, well, that simply wasn't a consideration.

Everyone agrees Obama sat and watched the bin Laden raid with tremendous courage, as the SEALs did their deadly duty half-a-world-away that night. Soon, Obama was repeatedly describing al Qaeda as on the run and decimated by military and drone strikes.

A year later this clearly-crippled and no-longer-effective terrorist organization and its affiliates sacked and burned the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, killing four Americans, including the ambassador. The Obama response was to fabricate a tale about an obscure video as the cause and stick to it, even after documented debunking by his own experts.

Last May [in a major national defense speech](#), trying to pivot from his growing scandals, Obama naively proclaimed this country could not be perpetually at war -- as if that's a unilateral decision he can make regardless of actions by others.

Now comes another stunning example of Obama's Amateur Hour. He had a recent conversation with David Remnick of the New Yorker. Now Remnick, like Bob Woodward, is a master at getting subjects to talk.

But Obama has just begun the 62d month of his presidency as commander-in-chief of the world's most powerful military. He didn't just fall off the sweet-potato truck. Yes, the Super Bowl looms near, prompting all kinds of inappropriate sports metaphors and analogies.

However, as he sought to explain White House thinking to his journalist visitor, Obama should know better than to stoop to the inflammatory, trash-talking level of a Richard Sherman.

"The analogy we use around here sometimes, [and I think is accurate](#), is if a J.V. team puts on Lakers uniforms, that doesn't make them Kobe Bryant."

Forget for a moment, Mr. President, the fact that the hobbled Bryant has been out since late last year with no return date set. So, right now in basketball warrior terms, Kobe Bryant is useless.

Al Qaeda, on the other hand, has never controlled more territory. Thanks to Obama's impulsive overthrow of Moammar Gadhafi with no replacement at hand, those terrorists now control most of Libya. They're on the winning side of Obama's vanished red line in Syria.

And they came within a few days of taking over Mali, but for a U.S. airlift of French troops. A reinforcement rescue the Obama administration was completely unprepared to undertake on 9/11/12 to save embattled Americans in Benghazi.

Remember Obama's misplaced concern over bin Laden's death photos? Never mind giving 317 million Americans the satisfaction of seeing that satanic symbol of murderous evil brought to final justice.

Instead, Obama's ruling worry was over inciting crazy people to still do crazy things. As if sparing their delicate eyes from a bullet-riddled bin Laden would somehow cause terrorists to go easy on the next vest laden with C-4.

But now suddenly it's OK for a dismissive Obama to flippantly liken the homicidal remnants of al Qaeda to pimply teen-aged boys who can't make the varsity basketball team? Seriously? You can bet before the next game this clipping will go up on the bulletin board in al Qaeda's locker room.

Thank goodness, though, Obama finally appears to have gotten his priorities straightened out. Yes, he did vow that 2014 would be a year of action [creating all those promised jobs](#). But that's later.

Today's big issue event for both the president of the United States and the vice president of the United States is to hear recommendations from a special commission they created to reduce wait times for voters. Seriously.

Power Line

[Of jayvee terrorists. . . and presidents](#)

by Paul Mirengoff

In his recent [interview](#) with The New Yorker, President Obama referred to today's al-Qaeda fighters as the "jayvee" team. Obama stated:

The analogy we use around here sometimes, and I think is accurate, is if a jayvee team puts on Lakers uniforms that doesn't make them Kobe Bryant.

It's not surprising that Obama takes this position. As [Steve Bucci](#) of the Heritage Foundation reminds us, before Benghazi, Obama claimed that al Qaeda was essentially defeated. Now that this claim has been undermined, and not just by Benghazi, his fall back position is that al Qaeda is a pale imitation of what it once was.

But this position is dubious. It's true that al Qaeda is much more decentralized than before. But in some ways, this makes it more of a threat because it is harder to pin down

Moreover, according to [CNN](#), "al Qaeda appears to control more territory in the Arab world than it has done at any time in its history." Not bad for a "jayvee" team.

In his New Yorker interview, Obama argued that just because al Qaeda makes territorial gains in areas where a power vacuum exists doesn't mean that its fighters have the desire or the capacity to attack our homeland. But where is the evidence that they lack this desire or capacity? According to [Heritage](#), there have been at least 60 plots to attack the homeland since 9/11, and the number has risen in recent years.

Let's also keep in mind that the pre-9/11 al Qaeda didn't look like "Kobe Bryant" either. Neither the Clinton administration nor the Bush administration took it seriously enough, and this low regard helped pave the way for 9/11.

Let's hope that Obama takes al Qaeda more seriously than his trash-talking interview with the New Yorker suggests. To take al Qaeda lightly would be the approach of a jayvee president.

UPDATE: Israel says it has [foiled](#) an "advanced" al Qaeda plan to carry out a suicide bombing of the U.S. embassy in Tel Aviv, among other targets.

IBD

[Late Night Humor](#)

by Andrew Malcolm

Fallon: A California woman gave birth to a 15-pound baby. The Mom is resting comfortably. The baby drove himself home.

Fallon: More than half of all ObamaCare enrollees are over age 45. No big deal, until you realize they were 25 when they first tried to log onto the website.

Letterman: All these snowstorms make driving nightmarish. So be very careful while texting.

Fallon: Michelle Obama's celebrity birthday party went all the way until 2 a.m. Which explains why the next day Barack expanded ObamaCare to include Gatorade and Tylenol.

Leno: Obama is getting tough on the NSA scandal. Says the secret agency will never be used to suppress critics or dissenters. He said he has the IRS for that job.

Conan: Justin Bieber was arrested in Florida for DUI. Police reports said Bieber's blood contained large amounts of alcohol, pot and Flintstone's Chewables.

Leno: Justin Bieber asked his arresting officer if he knew who he was? The cop said, "Miley Cyrus?"

Leno: TMZ is reporting that Justin Bieber dropped \$75,000 at a strip club. That's still less than he spent on eggs last week.

Letterman: Bad news for Bronco fans. Peyton Manning will not be playing in the Super Bowl this weekend. He's got to film a Papa John's commercial

Fallon: Kanye West and Kim Kardashian may marry at Versailles Palace. They may want to read up on what happened to the last couple who lived there.

Conan: Have you seen that viral photo from the Sochi Olympics showing a bathroom stall with two toilets. Those two-man luge teams do everything together.

Leno: These snowstorms are so bad across the country that Southwest pilots can't even find the wrong airport to land.

Leno: Anthony Weiner reportedly makes about \$400,000 a year as a political consultant. How bad must you be doing to have to ask this guy for advice?

Letterman: New data says 70% of Americans believe we should not sacrifice privacy for security. That's according to numbers intercepted by the NSA.

Conan: Sesame Street's Cookie Monster taped a segment urging children to eat healthy. The segment ends with Cookie Monster looking off camera nervously and asking, "NOW you let Cookie Monster's wife and kids go?"

Fallon: Big business news: Reports that AOL and Yahoo might merge. They've been trying to connect for years, but someone at AOL was always on the phone.





