

August 11, 2014

Joel Kotkin says CA Dems risk blue collar rebellion.

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This group, long quiescent, has emerged most notably in opposition to the state's anti-global warming cap-and-trade policies, which will force up energy prices. Recently, some 16 Democratic Assembly members, led by Fresno's Henry Perea, asked the state to suspend the cap-and-trade program, which will add as much as a dollar to what already are among the highest gasoline prices in the nation.

In some senses, this budding blue-collar rebellion exposes the essential contradiction between the party's now-dominant gentry Left and its much larger and less well-off voting base. For the people who fund the party – public employee unions, Silicon Valley and Hollywood – higher energy prices are more than worth the advantages. Public unions get to administer the program and gain in power and employment while venture capitalists and firms, like Google, get to profit on mandated "green energy" schemes.

What's in it for Hollywood? Well, entertainment companies are shifting production elsewhere in response to subsidies offered by other states, localities and companies, so high energy costs and growing impoverishment across Southern California doesn't figure to really hurt their businesses. Furthermore, by embracing "green" policies, the famously narcissistic Hollywood crowd also gets to feel good about themselves, a motivation not to be underestimated.

This upside, however, does not cancel out hoary factors such as geography, race and class. One can expect lock-step support for any proposed shade of green from most coastal Democrats. Among lawmakers, the new Democratic dissenters don't tend to come from Malibu or Portola Valley. They often represent heavily Latino areas of the Inland Empire and Central Valley, where people tend to have less money, longer drives to work and a harder time affording a decent home. Cap and trade's impact on gasoline prices – which could approach an additional \$2 a gallon by 2020 – is a very big deal in these regions. ...

Sherman Frederick posts on Lois Lerner's salty language.

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Get used to it, because periodically the people who run government grow drunk with power and become a toxic combination of corrupt, cruel and petty. It can happen to a president; it can happen to a dogcatcher; and it can happen to all stripes of bureaucrats in between.

There's no better example of this than how the federal government treats the tea party.

Sen. Harry Reid, Rep. Nancy Pelosi and President Barack Obama have all tried to marginalize the tea party movement because it threatens their tax-'n'-spend status quo. Respectively, they have called these citizens "extremists," "Astroturf" (the opposite of grass roots) and "haters."

But perhaps the insult that best captures the attitude of government gone adrift came from embattled former Internal Revenue Service official Lois Lerner. She calls them "ass-----."

Lois Lerner isn't the first government employee to go sour. And Reid, Pelosi and Obama won't be the last pompous politicians to forget the power of a country founded upon extending dignity toward every human being, regardless of race, gender, religion, politics, financial status and all such other external means of discrimination. ...

Mark Tapscott thinks it is time to view the administration as a criminal enterprise. *See a tree with 20 apples hanging on it and reasonable people conclude it's an apple tree. So is it a criminal conspiracy when 20 government employees illegally destroy important official emails?*

If that seems like an extreme question, consider the steadily accumulating evidence about the Obama administration's modus operandi with potentially incriminating documents subpoenaed by Congress: A scandal erupts. Congressional hearings are held. Documents are requested and withheld. Subpoenas are issued. Contempt charges threatened. A few documents dribble out.

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Sharyl Attkisson has more on elusive federal documents.

When it comes to accountability questions, one owes the benefit of the doubt to the U.S. government, whoever may be in charge. Managing the massive federal bureaucracy isn't easy. Responding to the demands from the public, the press and Congress for public information can be time consuming. However, it becomes increasingly difficult to suspend disbelief in the multiple instances in which the Obama administration is obstructing the release of, or losing, documents in major investigations.

In Fast and Furious, President Obama declared executive privilege to withhold documents in a controversy that the White House claimed revealed no evidence of White House involvement. Of course, if all the evidence isn't turned over, then how is one to be confident no evidence exists? Further, multiple federal agencies have refused to turn over many documents requested in the case under the Freedom of Information Act as far back as 2011.

In the instance of Benghazi, the Obama administration failed to turn over requested documents when asked by Congress and requested under Freedom of Information law. Only recently, nearly two years after-the-fact, under court order, did it produce some withheld material to the conservative watchdog group Judicial Watch, which sued the State Department for failing to respond to its Freedom of Information requests. The documents continue to contradict the Obama administration's narratives surrounding the September 11, 2012 Benghazi attacks.

With the IRS, President Obama insisted there wasn't a "smidgen" of corruption surrounding the tax agency's targeting of conservatives. But a key IRS official, Lois Lerner, refused to testify to Congress. And the IRS "lost" subpoenaed documents generated by Lerner and other key officials. These may include documents that Lerner sent to outside agencies and officials. Though the IRS says it will turn over tens of thousands of other documents, it's hard to feel confident that the most damning ones, if any existed, will have been miraculously saved. ...

Further proof of "gangster government" the Examiner editors write on obstruction of inspectors general.

Billions of tax dollars are being lost every day to waste, fraud and corruption in the federal government, but President Obama's administration is blocking inspectors general — the officials who are most likely to find and expose such wrongdoing — from doing their jobs. That's the disturbing message given to Congress and the American people this week from a majority of the federal government's 78 IGs. The blocking occurs when agency lawyers deny the authority of IGs to gain access to relevant documents and officials.

The 47 IGs minced no words: "Each of us strongly supports the principle that an inspector general must have complete, unfiltered, and timely access to all information and materials available to the agency that relate to that IG's oversight activities, without unreasonable administrative burdens. The importance of this principle, which was codified by Congress in Section 6(a)(1) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (the IG Act), cannot be overstated. Refusing, restricting, or delaying an IG's access to documents leads to incomplete, inaccurate, or significantly delayed findings or recommendations, which in turn may prevent the agency from promptly correcting serious problems and deprive Congress of timely information regarding the agency's performance. ...

Jennifer Rubin posts on lateness.

*The Post documents what anyone following President Obama's speeches and press conferences knows: He is really late. A lot. "Obama has been a cumulative **2,121 minutes late** to events in 2014. That's 35 hours, 21 minutes — or almost a day and a half — that his audiences have been waiting for him to speak." On average, that is only 11 minutes per event, but in some cases (for his Wednesday afternoon press conference, for example) he can be an hour late. (George W. Bush was famously punctual.)*

But why is he so late? We can only speculate. But it's a widely studied behavior in the population as a whole, so there is some informed analysis on the topic. Psychologists have several explanations for habitual lateness:

Angry people who behave with almost exaggerated calm and courtesy might nevertheless express their anger through passive means, ...

... lateness is the most obvious form of procrastination. We don't procrastinate tasks that we are adept at and from which we derive satisfaction or praise. In the case of Obama, it's understandable that he procrastinates, given how poorly his speeches and press conferences have been received of late. He is often angry, defensive or evasive — and, more than ever before in his political career, challenged openly. Mainstream media figures routinely rip his performances as either dishonest (e.g. refusing to admit he lied on "you can keep your doctor")

or lackadaisical and detached. I'm sure he'd rather hang around with aides who tell him what a swell job he is doing, how mean his opponents are and how misinformed everyone else is.

We don't really know precisely why he's late, but one thing is for certain. If he cared about keeping others waiting or acknowledged that his behavior is downright rude, he wouldn't do it.

IFL Science says if you forget to get out in the sun, you might forget to.

Adding to an ever-growing body of evidence, a new study has found that vitamin D deficiency is associated with a substantially increased risk of developing Alzheimer's and dementia. While previous studies have drawn similar conclusions, this is the largest, most robust study carried out to date. The results have been published in the journal Neurology.

Vitamin D is an essential vitamin that is produced by the body upon exposure of the skin to sunlight, but it can also be found in small amounts in certain foods such as oily fish. It plays a variety of roles in the body and over recent years our understanding of how it helps to maintain optimum health has dramatically increased. For example, it's thought to reduce the risk of certain bone diseases, bacterial and viral infections and autoimmune diseases.

Interestingly, some studies have hinted that vitamin D may play a neuroprotective role. In support of this idea, several recent studies have found links between vitamin D deficiency and the risk of dementia and cognitive decline. However, one study also found no associations in men.

To find out more, an international team of researchers, headed by scientists at the University of Exeter, ...

The New Geography **Democrats Risk Blue-collar Rebellion**

by Joel Kotkin

If California is to change course and again become a place of opportunity, the impetus is likely to come not from the perennially shrinking Republican Party but from working-class and middle-class Democrats.

This group, long quiescent, has emerged most notably in opposition to the state's anti-global warming cap-and-trade policies, which will force up energy prices. Recently, some 16 Democratic Assembly members, led by Fresno's Henry Perea, asked the state to suspend the cap-and-trade program, which will add as much as a dollar to what already are among the highest gasoline prices in the nation.

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people who fund the party – public employee unions, Silicon Valley and Hollywood – higher energy prices are more than worth the advantages. Public unions get to administer the program and gain in power and employment while venture capitalists and firms, like Google, get to profit on mandated “green energy” schemes.

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Many of these same people historically have worked in industries such as manufacturing and logistics, industries that rely on reasonable energy prices. Companies in these fields increasingly seek locations in lower-cost states, such as Washington, Oregon, Texas, Utah and Arizona, taking generally high-paying blue-collar jobs with them. It’s rare to find a manufacturer, for example, who would move to or expand in, California, outside of a handful of subsidized firms. Even ethnic-food companies are [looking elsewhere](#), despite the fact that the raw materials and a large local market [exist here](#).

The dispute in California over cap and trade – where government limits businesses’ greenhouse gas emissions, and higher-emitting companies buy allowances to exceed their limits – may just be the harbinger of a wider conflict within the party nationally. In Washington, D.C., there is [tension](#) between East Coast and West Coast Democrats on one side and representatives from the Plains and the South on the other. Progressives shrug at the loss of these regions and the associated white working-class voters who, as the liberal website [Daily Kos](#) contended earlier this year, are just a bunch of racists, anyway.

But, at least here in California, much of the working class is made up of minorities, who are increasingly the economic victims of the enlightened ones. One place to see this is in Richmond in Northern California, where a Green Party mayor and a similarly aligned planning department have tried to block the refurbishing of Chevron’s large refinery there, which is also the [economic bulwark of the area](#).

The dispute over the refinery suggests divisions that may become more commonplace. Essentially, you have on one side overwhelmingly white, often very-affluent greens, [allied](#) with powerful Democratic politicians, arrayed to obstruct the refinery. On the other side, you have minorities, many of them union members, whose livelihoods and high-paying jobs [depend on the refinery](#).

The incipient rift between such blue-collar workers and gentry Democrats is inevitable. The [wealthy donors](#) who dominate both local and national Democratic politics, like San Francisco hedge fund mogul Tom Steyer, may have made much of their fortunes in fossil fuels, as the [New York Times](#), among others, have reported. But now, having embraced a stringent

environmentalism, the gentry seek to impose their “green” agenda on the hoi polloi. If this hypocrisy isn’t disturbing enough, consider the increasingly top-down nature of environmentalist politics. In the past, conservationists focused on how to protect people from harm and preserve nature, in part, so people might enjoy it.

Many of today’s progressives not only are determined to protect their privileges, but seek to limit the opportunities for pretty much everyone else. People like Steyer, for example, who is [close](#) to both the Obama White House and [Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid](#), can enjoy their vast estates, while supporting policies that make it improbable for [middle-class families](#) to afford a home with a decent back yard.

In many ways, their approach is reminiscent of the old British aristocracy, who combined a passion for preserving nature within their lands with a commitment to limiting its accessibility to the masses. People like billionaire venture capitalist [Vinod Khosla](#) are big on being green, but don’t want their less well-endowed neighbors to access the beach near their estates. It’s “Animal Farm” for the ecological age: Some animals, it seems, are more equal – and righteously green – than others.

With virtual strangleholds on much of the media, academia and the punditry, the gentry and their allies may be able to limit coverage of this inherent conflict, but it will be difficult to suppress forever the essential contradictions between the gentry and everyone else.

Democratic strategists hope that, by focusing on social issues – immigration, abortion and gay rights – they can keep the peasants in line. And to be sure, [Republicans](#) pushing nativism and social conservatism seem determined to distract Latinos, Asians, women and gays from focusing on the realities of an increasingly neofeudalist California. Political analyst [Michael Lind](#) contends this Democratic strategy may not succeed over time. For one thing, he notes, differences on many social issues are narrowing, in part, as more minorities, singles and gays move into suburban or exurban locales.

As social issues become less heated, political divides figure to develop more along economic lines. This conflict may prove no easier to resolve than the GOP’s internal struggle between the Tea Party and corporatists. The Democratic divide will pit much of the party’s financial and media base, in Hollywood and Silicon Valley, [against the interests and aspirations](#) of middle- and working-class people who make up the vast majority of Democratic voters.

For those who enjoy political combat, this schism guarantees more sharp divisions among the Democrats. More importantly, this conflict should generate greater debate about correcting our current course, which would be good news for the rest of us.

This article first appeared in the Orange County Register.

Joel Kotkin is executive editor of [NewGeography.com](#) and Distinguished Presidential Fellow in Urban Futures at Chapman University, and a member of the editorial board of the Orange County Register. He is author of [The City: A Global History](#) and [The Next Hundred Million: America in 2050](#).

Las Vegas Review-Journal Lois Lerner's salty language

by Sherman Frederick

If you want government to live up to the ideals under which this country was formed, you're going to be called names.

Get used to it, because periodically the people who run government grow drunk with power and become a toxic combination of corrupt, cruel and petty. It can happen to a president; it can happen to a dogcatcher; and it can happen to all stripes of bureaucrats in between.

There's no better example of this than how the federal government treats the tea party.

Sen. Harry Reid, Rep. Nancy Pelosi and President Barack Obama have all tried to marginalize the tea party movement because it threatens their tax-'n'-spend status quo. Respectively, they have called these citizens "extremists," "Astroturf" (the opposite of grass roots) and "haters."

But perhaps the insult that best captures the attitude of government gone adrift came from embattled former Internal Revenue Service official Lois Lerner. She calls them "ass-----."

Lois Lerner isn't the first government employee to go sour. And Reid, Pelosi and Obama won't be the last pompous politicians to forget the power of a country founded upon extending dignity toward every human being, regardless of race, gender, religion, politics, financial status and all such other external means of discrimination.

Every now and again, government needs to relearn that lesson.

The Obama-led government clearly and unfairly hammered tea party groups. The IRS's own inspector general found that the agency picked organizations to hassle based on whether "tea party" was in the group's name. But the president assured us that there was not a "smidgen" of evidence that the inappropriate targeting was systemic.

Of course, we've come to take the president's word with a grain of salt these days after his spectacular lie, "If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor."

And it appears skepticism is justified. Whatever was going on at the IRS, it was not just a regional problem. It was a discriminatory policy within the Obama government that may have extended to the White House. Couple that with the "Three Stooges" act of the IRS in trying to get its story straight before Congress on whether all of Lois Lerner's email exists or not, and this episode goes way beyond the "smidgen" threshold for a Washington scandal.

Other related facts: Lois Lerner, a registered Democrat, gave money to President Obama's election campaign; Lois Lerner aspired to work for an Obama advocacy group; she invoked the Fifth Amendment before Congress; she replied "perfect" when told her internal communications were not retrievable by Congress.

Finally, in response to an IRS colleague complaining about tea party folks demanding fair treatment, Lerner wrote "Great. Maybe we are through if there are that many ass-----." She then added: "(W)e don't need to worry about alien teRrorists (sic). It's our own crazies that will take us down."

All of that makes it clear that if extending dignity to citizens is the hallmark of greatness in government, then this corner of the Obama bureaucracy has very much lost its way. But instead of jumping on the problem and fixing it, the president circled the wagons around the IRS. That may be the biggest clue of all that there's more to this than the Obama administration wants known.

Plainly, the Obama administration can do better.

If this makes me an "ass----," as Lois Lerner so delicately puts it, then fine, I'll wear that T-shirt proudly. And you should, too.

Redcoat generals no doubt called George Washington an "arse" regularly. The tax collector in Boston cursed the Sons of Liberty when they dumped all that tea into the harbor in 1773. And the assistant city transit chief in Montgomery, Ala., probably had more than a few salty words for Rosa Parks when she refused to sit in the back of the bus.

Sometimes you must risk the name-calling to make government do the right and proper thing. So, fellow ass-----, unite — dump that tea and sit in the front row.

All the tea party people want is for the IRS to treat them fairly. In a country where government is supposed to aspire to greatness, that shouldn't be such a big ask.

Sherman Frederick, former publisher of the Las Vegas Review-Journal and member of the Nevada Newspaper Hall of Fame, writes a column for Stephens Media. Read his blog at www.reviewjournal.com/columns-blogs/sherman-frederick.

Examiner

[Is it time to view the Obama administration as a criminal enterprise?](#)

by Mark Tapscott

See a tree with 20 apples hanging on it and reasonable people conclude it's an apple tree. So is it a criminal conspiracy when 20 government employees illegally destroy important official emails?

If that seems like an extreme question, consider the steadily accumulating evidence about the Obama administration's modus operandi with potentially incriminating documents subpoenaed by [Congress](#): A scandal erupts. Congressional hearings are held. Documents are requested and withheld. Subpoenas are issued. Contempt charges threatened. A few documents dribble out.

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Over and over and over ...

The latest example comes from the Department of [Health and Human Services](#), which admitted Wednesday that hundreds of [Obamacare](#) emails subpoenaed in 2013 by the [House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform](#) were destroyed months ago.

This jaw-dropping admission sparked outrage from the committee's chairman, Rep. [Darrell Issa](#):

"Today's news that a senior HHS executive destroyed emails relevant to a congressional investigation means that the Obama administration has lost or destroyed emails for more than 20 witnesses, and in each case, the loss wasn't disclosed to the National Archives or Congress for months or years, in violation of federal law.

"It defies logic that so many senior administration officials were found to have ignored federal record-keeping requirements only after Congress asked to see their emails ...

"Yet again, we discover that this administration will not be forthright with the American people unless cornered."

IRS, EPA, HHS. How many more?

And it's not just emails. As [Christopher Horner wrote](#) earlier this week in the *Washington Examiner*, [Environmental Protection Agency](#) officials routinely destroy official text messages, contrary to law. And let's not forget those fake EPA email names like "Richard Windsor."

And there's this: 47 inspectors-general told Congress in a letter this week that their investigations are often obstructed, delayed or otherwise impeded by top agency officials.

It became abundantly clear several years ago that the Obama administration was waging a campaign of massive resistance to legitimate congressional oversight.

That campaign — and a parallel one against aggressive journalism — has made an utter mockery of Obama's opening-day promise of the "most transparent administration in history."

So what is it these people are so desperate to cover up?

Sharyl Attkisson's Blog

[Six Serious Questions Regarding Elusive Federal Documents](#)

When it comes to accountability questions, one owes the benefit of the doubt to the U.S. government, whoever may be in charge. Managing the massive federal bureaucracy isn't easy. Responding to the demands from the public, the press and Congress for public information can be time consuming. However, it becomes increasingly difficult to suspend disbelief in the multiple instances in which the Obama administration is obstructing the release of, or losing, documents in major investigations.

In *Fast and Furious*, President Obama declared executive privilege to withhold documents in a controversy that the White House claimed revealed no evidence of White House involvement. Of course, if all the evidence isn't turned over, then how is one to be confident no evidence exists? Further, multiple federal agencies have refused to turn over many documents requested in the case under the Freedom of Information Act as far back as 2011.

In the instance of Benghazi, the Obama administration failed to turn over requested documents when asked by Congress and requested under Freedom of Information law. Only recently,

nearly two years after-the-fact, under court order, did it produce some withheld material to the conservative watchdog group Judicial Watch, which sued the State Department for failing to respond to its Freedom of Information requests. The documents continue to contradict the Obama administration's narratives surrounding the September 11, 2012 Benghazi attacks.

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Now, HHS—which has stonewalled subpoenas and Freedom of Information requests in the investigation of HealthCare.gov—has likewise announced that it probably destroyed some materials that have been subpoenaed in that probe.

Assuming the loss of IRS and HHS materials was accidental, it still begs several questions:

1. Is it reasonable any longer to expect accused federal agencies to conduct their own search for records that could implicate themselves and their top officials?
2. In the case of HHS documents that were not kept: why is "retraining" employees an acceptable remedy? If ordinary Americans were to fail retain documents as required under the law for tax purposes or other reasons, would they be allowed to "retrain" and continue on their way with no repercussions?
3. Specifically, is Ms. Tavenner, as the head of her agency (CMS), being disciplined for this apparent serious breach of federal records retention laws?
4. If federal agencies forgive and "retrain" their employees and top officials for failing to follow federal records retention laws, does the federal government retain the moral authority to prosecute, fine, or otherwise hold accountable ordinary Americans who commit similar infractions?
5. When did HHS (and who at HHS) realize(d) that Tavenner was not following federal records retention processes? How was this information communicated, to whom and when?
6. What searches have been conducted, by whom, and when, to retrieve the Tavenner material that she failed to save? (Aren't such materials retrievable on archive systems and through ordinary back up methods?)

Examiner - Editorial

[Inspectors general say Obama aides obstruct investigations](#)

Billions of tax dollars are being lost every day to [waste, fraud](#) and [corruption](#) in the federal government, but [President Obama's](#) administration is blocking [inspectors general](#) — the officials who are most likely to find and expose such wrongdoing — from doing their jobs. That's the

disturbing message given to [Congress](#) and the American people this week from a majority of the federal government's 78 IGs. The blocking occurs when agency lawyers deny the authority of IGs to gain access to relevant documents and officials.

The 47 IGs minced no words: "Each of us strongly supports the principle that an inspector general must have complete, unfiltered, and timely access to all information and materials available to the agency that relate to that IG's oversight activities, without unreasonable administrative burdens. The importance of this principle, which was codified by Congress in Section 6(a)(1) of the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended (the IG Act), cannot be overstated. Refusing, restricting, or delaying an IG's access to documents leads to incomplete, inaccurate, or significantly delayed findings or recommendations, which in turn may prevent the agency from promptly correcting serious problems and deprive Congress of timely information regarding the agency's performance.

Three specific examples were described in the IGs' letter, including blatant obstruction of important investigations at the [Environmental Protection Agency](#), [Department of Justice](#) and the [Peace Corps](#). But many other IGs have "faced similar obstacles to their work, whether on a claim that some other law or principle trumped the clear mandate of the IG Act or by the agency's imposition of unnecessarily burdensome administrative conditions on access. Even when we are ultimately able to resolve these issues with senior agency leadership, the process is often lengthy, delays our work, and diverts time and attention from substantive oversight activities."

The experience of Justice Department IG Michael Horowitz is especially outrageous. In a Senate hearing in April, Horowitz said his office must go through Attorney General [Eric Holder](#) to gain access to DOJ documents and officials. Giving Holder the power to veto an IG's access in that manner egregiously violates the 1978 law and other statutes. Obstruction like Holder's risks "leaving the agencies insulated from scrutiny and unacceptably vulnerable to mismanagement and misconduct – the very problems that our offices were established to review and that the American people expect us to be able to address," the IGs said in their letter to Congress.

It is impossible to know exactly how much the federal bureaucracy loses every year to waste, fraud and corruption. Credible estimates put the total at more than \$200 billion, but in a \$3.5 trillion budget it could easily far exceed that amount. Every time an IG is barred from gaining access to vital documents or officials, it encourages even more wrongdoing. Congress must get tough with people in the [executive branch](#) who obstruct IGs from doing their jobs. And when it's the attorney general doing the obstructing, it's time to bring back independent prosecutors.

Right Turn

[Why is the president always late?](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

[The Post](#) documents what anyone following President Obama's speeches and press conferences knows: He is really late. *A lot*. "Obama has been a cumulative **2,121 minutes late** to events in 2014. That's 35 hours, 21 minutes — or almost a day and a half — that his audiences have been waiting for him to speak." On average, that is only 11 minutes per event, but in some cases (for his Wednesday afternoon press conference, for example) he can be an hour late. (George W. Bush was famously punctual.)

But *why* is he so late? We can only speculate. But it's a widely studied behavior in the population as a whole, so there is some informed analysis on the topic. [Psychologists](#) have several explanations for habitual lateness:

Angry people who behave with almost exaggerated calm and courtesy might nevertheless express their anger through passive means, that is, through (conscious or unconscious) resistance to meeting the reasonable expectations of others. Examples of passive-aggressive behavior include creating doubt and confusion; forgetting or omitting significant facts or items; withdrawing; . . . shifting blame; and, of course, being late—often on a frequent and unpredictable basis. . . .

As we have seen, being late, especially egregiously or repeatedly late, [also] sends out the message, “I am more important than you”.

All of that seems to ring a bell with this president, who during the course of his presidency has become more angry and disagreeable with the media and his critics. (That disdain for candor and openness came to characterize the relationship that former press secretary Jay Carney had with the media. In fact, it's hard to recall any press secretary so openly dismissive and condescending toward the media. He was there because the president *wanted him to be*.)

There may be a couple of other factors at work here. First, Obama's second-term staff is filled with flunkies and cronies who are there because they make the president feel entirely comfortable, unchallenged even. He has weeded out strong personalities with records of accomplishment and a reservoir of public respect. He's left with characters like Valerie Jarrett and Dan Pfeiffer, who are vicious combatants and, above all, presidential loyalists. It is distinctly possible that this is only one instance in which the “don't disturb the king” mentality manifests itself. (And if they can't tell him he is late, imagine how hard it is to tell him he's wrong.)

Second, lateness is the most obvious form of procrastination. We don't procrastinate tasks that we are adept at and from which we derive satisfaction or praise. In the case of Obama, it's understandable that he procrastinates, given how poorly his speeches and press conferences have been received of late. He is often angry, defensive or evasive — and, more than ever before in his political career, challenged openly. Mainstream media figures routinely rip his performances as either dishonest (e.g. refusing to admit he lied on “you can keep your doctor”) or lackadaisical and detached. I'm sure he'd rather hang around with aides who tell him what a swell job he is doing, how mean his opponents are and how misinformed everyone else is.

We don't really know precisely why he's late, but one thing is for certain. If he cared about keeping others waiting or acknowledged that his behavior is downright rude, he wouldn't do it.

IFL Science

[New Study Supports Links Between Dementia And Vitamin D Deficiency](#)

by Justine Alford

Adding to an ever-growing body of evidence, a new [study](#) has found that vitamin D deficiency is associated with a substantially increased risk of developing Alzheimer's and dementia. While

previous studies have drawn similar conclusions, this is the largest, most robust study carried out to date. The results have been published in the journal [Neurology](#).

Vitamin D is an essential vitamin that is produced by the body upon exposure of the skin to sunlight, but it can also be found in small amounts in certain foods such as oily fish. It plays a variety of roles in the body and over recent years our understanding of how it helps to [maintain optimum health](#) has dramatically increased. For example, it's thought to [reduce the risk](#) of certain bone diseases, bacterial and viral infections and autoimmune diseases.

Interestingly, some studies have hinted that vitamin D may play a [neuroprotective](#) role. In support of this idea, several [recent studies](#) have found links between vitamin D deficiency and the risk of dementia and cognitive decline. However, one study also found no associations in men.

To find out more, an international team of researchers, headed by scientists at the [University of Exeter](#), enrolled 1,658 adults aged 65 and over who were able to walk unaided and were free from dementia, cardiovascular disease and stroke. Vitamin D levels were assessed at the start of the study and the participants were then followed for six years in order to investigate who went on to develop Alzheimer's or other forms of dementia.

The researchers [discovered](#) that participants with a moderate vitamin D deficiency had a 53% increased risk of developing any form of dementia, and those with a severe deficiency had a 125% increased risk. Similar results were also found for the risk of developing Alzheimer's, which is the most common form of dementia. Interestingly, they found that there was a threshold level of 50nmol/L vitamin D in the serum, below which the risk of dementia and Alzheimer's was markedly increased.

"We expected to find an association between low vitamin D levels and the risk of dementia and Alzheimer's disease, but the results were surprising- we actually found that the association was twice as strong as we anticipated," lead researcher Dr David Llewellyn said in a [news-release](#).

He also said that trials are warranted in order to investigate whether vitamin D supplementation or eating foods containing vitamin D such as oily fish can delay or prevent the onset of dementia. However, he cautions that the study cannot definitively prove that low vitamin D levels cause dementia. Still, the results are encouraging, [he said](#).

Dr Clare Walton, a researcher communications manager at Alzheimer's Society, also warns about extrapolating from this kind of study. "A study like this can't tell us whether being deficient in vitamin D can cause dementia. At the moment, we are still unclear how the two might be linked and there is even a possibility another unknown factor could cause someone to have both dementia and low vitamin D levels," she told the [BBC](#). However, she agrees that large clinical trials would be useful to find out whether increasing vitamin D levels can reduce dementia in the over 65s.

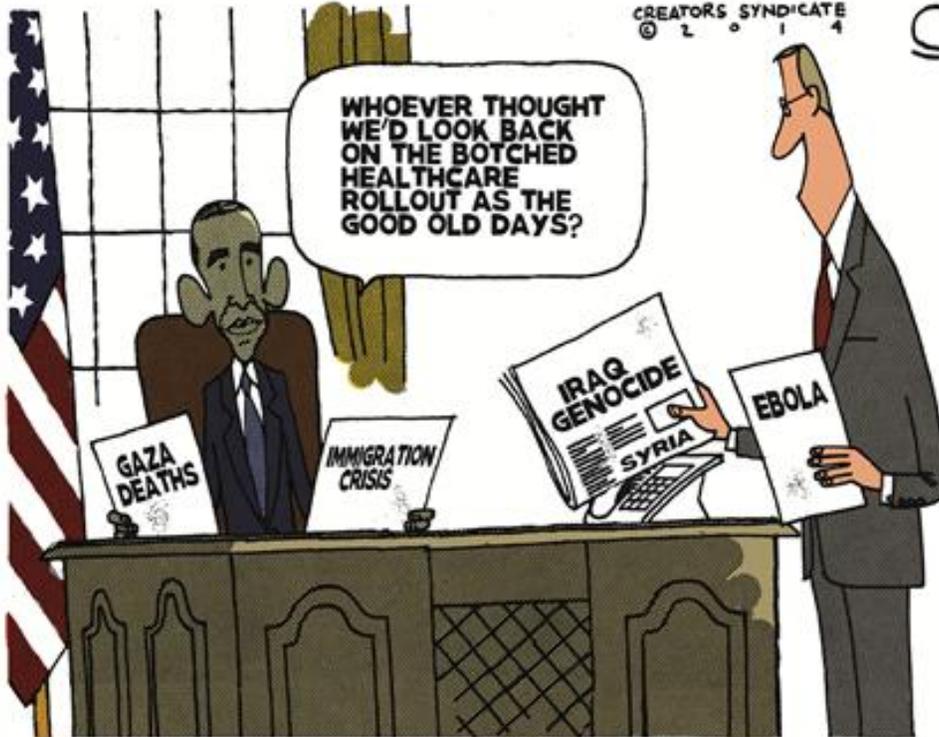


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