

August 13, 2014

John Hayward writes on Hillary's back stabbing.

Barack Obama's disaster in Iraq is so huge that it's already tearing the Democrat Party in half. Hillary Clinton was always going to have to position herself as a critic of Obama's failed presidency in order to run as the "different kind of Democrat" who could be trusted to clean up his mess, but as Iraq spirals into chaos and horror, she's pretending she was some sort of silent captive to his horrible policies when she was his Secretary of State. Clinton slipped the knife between Obama's shoulder blades during an interview with [The Atlantic](#):

President Obama has long ridiculed the idea that the U.S., early in the Syrian civil war, could have shaped the forces fighting the Assad regime, thereby stopping al Qaeda-inspired groups—like the one rampaging across Syria and Iraq today—from seizing control of the rebellion. In an interview in February, the president told me that "when you have a professional army ... fighting against a farmer, a carpenter, an engineer who started out as protesters and suddenly now see themselves in the midst of a civil conflict—the notion that we could have, in a clean way that didn't commit U.S. military forces, changed the equation on the ground there was never true."

Well, his former secretary of state, Hillary Rodham Clinton, isn't buying it. In an interview with me earlier this week, she used her sharpest language yet to describe the "failure" that resulted from the decision to keep the U.S. on the sidelines during the first phase of the Syrian uprising.

"The failure to help build up a credible fighting force of the people who were the originators of the protests against Assad—there were Islamists, there were secularists, there was everything in the middle—the failure to do that left a big vacuum, which the jihadists have now filled," Clinton said.

This would be the same Hillary Clinton that once hailed Syrian dictator Bashar Assad as a "reformer." The Hillary Clinton who accomplished absolutely nothing during her term as Secretary of State, except racking up frequent flyer miles. Now we're supposed to believe she was silently fuming over all the obvious mistakes her irresponsible boss was making?

Jeffrey Goldberg of The Atlantic says Hillary took care to pat the boy-President on the head by calling him "incredibly intelligent" and "thoughtful," but presumably stopped short of praising him as a "mainstream African-American who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy," the way Joe Biden did in 2007. With the faint praise out of the way, Hillary resumed damning her former boss: ...

... I hope the American electorate has not degenerated enough to buy Hillary Clinton's pathetic claims to have been a strong but silent critic of the President she fully supported when she was Secretary of State. If nothing else, that's exactly the kind of thinking that got us into all of our current messes: short-term political gain over all. If Clinton had spoken up back in the day, she'd have crippled Obama's re-election effort, so what she's telling you today is that she thinks Democrat partisan political gain is more important than doing and saying the right thing when it counts. That's exactly the kind of "leadership" that turned the world into a madhouse under Obama.

Instapundit quotes the campaigner in chief during the 2008 election.

“You have to understand that if you seek that office, then you have to be prepared to give your life to it. Essentially, the bargain that I think every President strikes with the American people is, ‘you give me this office, then in turn my fears, doubts, insecurities, foibles, need for sleep, family life, vacations, leisure, is gone. I am giving myself to you.’”

Is there anything he said in that campaign that wasn't a lie?

And James Taranto spots President WhoMe(?) blaming the present Iraq disaster on W.

At a Saturday press conference, a reporter asked President Obama a question that's been on our mind since Obama announced a new U.S. military intervention in Iraq: "Mr. President, do you have any second thoughts about pulling all ground troops out of Iraq? And does it give you pause as the U.S.--is it doing the same thing in Afghanistan?"

"What I just find interesting is the degree to which this issue keeps on coming up, as if this was my decision," Obama replied. "Under the previous administration, we had turned over the country to a sovereign, democratically elected Iraqi government."

Yes, Obama is not only disclaiming responsibility for the troop pullout but blaming it on George W. Bush--among others, as we shall see, but "the previous administration" is the first target of his pointed finger.

Of course Obama is correct that the disposition of the U.S. troop presence was not solely "my decision." With Iraqi sovereignty restored, Washington and Baghdad would both have to consent to a status-of-forces agreement, or SOFA. In the president's telling, the Iraqis balked at signing a SOFA unless the U.S. agreed to unacceptable conditions.

"We needed assurances that our personnel would be immune from prosecution if, for example, they were protecting themselves and ended up getting in a firefight with Iraqis, that they wouldn't be hauled before an Iraqi judicial system," the president said. The Iraqis rejected that demand. "So let's just be clear: The reason that we did not have a follow-on force in Iraq was because . . . a majority of Iraqis did not want U.S. troops there, and politically they could not pass the kind of laws that would be required to protect our troops in Iraq."

In an April story for The New Yorker, Dexter Filkins painted a more complicated picture. U.S. military commanders told Filkins that Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki "said that he wanted to keep [U.S.] troops in Iraq," but that "parliament would forbid the troops to stay unless they were subject to local law." But "President Obama, too, was ambivalent about retaining even a small force in Iraq": ...

Jennifer Rubin has more.

... Unbelievably, Obama now claims he didn't make the decision to pull them all out. Only the commander in chief could pull them out, of course, and he did, just as he had promised throughout his 2008 campaign. In 2011 in a speech to the nation entitled "Ending the War in Iraq," he declared: "As a candidate for president, I pledged to bring the war in Iraq to a

responsible end — for the sake of our national security and to strengthen American leadership around the world. After taking office, I announced a new strategy that would end our combat mission in Iraq and remove all of our troops by the end of 2011. As commander in chief, ensuring the success of this strategy has been one of my highest national security priorities. Last year, I announced the end to our combat mission in Iraq. And to date, we've removed more than 100,000 troops. Iraqis have taken full responsibility for their country's security."

He continued into his second term, bragging in State of the Union addresses that he had brought all the troops home. He touted his full withdrawal in his presidential debate with Mitt Romney. Not until Iraq came apart at the seams did he indicate that he had wanted to leave troops behind.

On "Fox News Sunday," Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) was asked what he'd say about Obama's insistence that it wasn't his decision to pull out troops:

I'm telling the president, you're rewriting history at your own convenience. You got the answer you wanted. You promised to get us out of Iraq and you were hell-bent to get out of Iraq. When everybody told you, you need to leave a force behind, you made it impossible for the Iraqis to say yes. ...

Streetwise Professor posts on the reluctant Iraq warrior.

... Obama infamously labeled ISIS the "junior varsity" in a January interview. I wonder if he still considers that description operative, or regrets that he made it. I note that in contrast to Obama's disparaging remark, only Friday a "senior administration official" said that in its recent attacks, ISIS has demonstrated "tremendous military proficiency." Either ISIS has navigated a very steep learning curve, or Obama was spewing garbage 7 months ago. Not hard to figure out which is true, especially if you were paying attention to ISIS in Syria and Iraq last year and early this year.

Obama's attitude, and his preternatural predisposition to avoid any involvement in Iraq, led him to stand aloof when ISIS scored major breakthroughs in Iraq two months ago, and threatened to capture Baghdad. The inaction then, and in the interim, laid the foundation for what is transpiring outside Erbil today. Obama's consistent Fram Oil Filter foreign policy procrastination ("you can pay me now, or you can pay me later") only deferred the necessity of military action, and allowed ISIS to become stronger in the meantime.

Obama's rationale for letting ISIS run amok is a pedantic one. He is (in some ways understandably) frustrated at the inability of Iraq to form a more inclusive government, and at the dysfunctional Maliki government, and refuses to be "Maliki's artillery". That is, he is withholding US military action against ISIS in order to force a change of government in Baghdad. Apparently only when Sunnis and Shiites and Kurds hold hands and sing Kumbaya will Obama relent.

In the meantime, vast swathes of Iraq are getting a new government. An ISIS government that rules by terror and very credibly threatens genocide. Obama's pickiness about what he considers to be acceptable Iraqi government has given ISIS an open field to consolidate its hold over the regions that it has conquered, and to push for further conquests. ...

Pickerhead always said you can get well by doing good. [The College Fix](#) has a post on a prof who campaigns against poverty while drawing \$200,000 teaching one course per semester.

A controversial, outspoken law professor who frequently bashes Republicans and specializes in poverty issues as a self-proclaimed champion of the poor earns \$205,400 per year – for teaching one class per semester.

The University of North Carolina School of Law pays Professor Gene Nichol \$205,400 annually for his one class per semester workload. On top of his teaching salary, he receives a \$7,500 stipend as director of the law school's Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity.

The News & Observer maintains a public database of public employee and educator salaries, and [lists](#) Nichol's salary at \$212,900. Nichol, in an email to The College Fix, confirmed the figure is accurate. ...

... His wife, chief of staff for the UNC Health Care System and the UNC School of Medicine, [earns](#) \$407,000 annually. Combining his and his wife's salary, the couple makes at least \$612,000 per year.

The Nichol family lives in a Chapel Hill home with a [tax value](#) of more than \$1 million. They also own a [bungalow](#) on the beach at Emerald Isle, [valued](#) by Carteret County at more than \$512,000. In the summer months, Nichol [rents](#) his four-bedroom bungalow for nearly \$2,000 per week.

When asked by *The College Fix* about the large inequality between his income and the income of those in poverty, Nichol refused to respond. ...

Human Events

[Hillary stabs Obama in the back on Iraq](#)

by John Hayward

Barack Obama's disaster in Iraq is so huge that it's already tearing the Democrat Party in half. Hillary Clinton was always going to have to position herself as a critic of Obama's failed presidency in order to run as the "different kind of Democrat" who could be trusted to clean up his mess, but as Iraq spirals into chaos and horror, she's pretending she was some sort of silent captive to his horrible policies when she was his Secretary of State. Clinton slipped the knife between Obama's shoulder blades during an interview with [The Atlantic](#):

President Obama has long ridiculed the idea that the U.S., early in the Syrian civil war, could have shaped the forces fighting the Assad regime, thereby stopping al Qaeda-inspired groups—like the one rampaging across Syria and Iraq today—from seizing control of the rebellion. In an interview in February, the president told me that "when you have a professional army ... fighting against a farmer, a carpenter, an engineer who started out as protesters and suddenly now see themselves in the midst of a civil conflict—the notion that we could have, in a clean way that didn't commit U.S. military forces, changed the equation on the ground there was never true."

Well, his former secretary of state, Hillary Rodham Clinton, isn't buying it. In an interview with me earlier this week, she used her sharpest language yet to describe the "failure" that resulted from the decision to keep the U.S. on the sidelines during the first phase of the Syrian uprising.

"The failure to help build up a credible fighting force of the people who were the originators of the protests against Assad—there were Islamists, there were secularists, there was everything in the middle—the failure to do that left a big vacuum, which the jihadists have now filled," Clinton said.

This would be the same Hillary Clinton that once hailed Syrian dictator Bashar Assad as a "reformer." The Hillary Clinton who accomplished *absolutely nothing* during her term as Secretary of State, except racking up frequent flyer miles. Now we're supposed to believe she was silently fuming over all the obvious mistakes her irresponsible boss was making?

Jeffrey Goldberg of *The Atlantic* says Hillary took care to pat the boy-President on the head by calling him "incredibly intelligent" and "thoughtful," but presumably stopped short of praising him as a "mainstream African-American who is articulate and bright and clean and a nice-looking guy," the way Joe Biden did in 2007. With the faint praise out of the way, Hillary resumed damning her former boss:

HILLARY CLINTON: One of the reasons why I worry about what's happening in the Middle East right now is because of the breakout capacity of jihadist groups that can affect Europe, can affect the United States. Jihadist groups are governing territory. They will never stay there, though. They are driven to expand. Their raison d'être is to be against the West, against the Crusaders, against the fill-in-the-blank—and we all fit into one of these categories. How do we try to contain that? I'm thinking a lot about containment, deterrence, and defeat. You know, we did a good job in containing the Soviet Union, but we made a lot of mistakes, we supported really nasty guys, we did some things that we are not particularly proud of, from Latin America to Southeast Asia, but we did have a kind of overarching framework about what we were trying to do that did lead to the defeat of the Soviet Union and the collapse of Communism. That was our objective. We achieved it.

Now the big mistake was thinking that, okay, the end of history has come upon us, after the fall of the Soviet Union. That was never true, history never stops and nationalisms were going to assert themselves, and then other variations on ideologies were going to claim their space. Obviously, jihadi Islam is the prime example, but not the only example—the effort by Putin to restore his vision of Russian greatness is another. In the world in which we are living right now, vacuums get filled by some pretty unsavory players.

JEFFREY GOLDBERG: There doesn't seem to be a domestic constituency for the type of engagement you might symbolize.

HRC: Well, that's because most Americans think of engagement and go immediately to military engagement. That's why I use the phrase "smart power." I did it deliberately because I thought we had to have another way of talking about American engagement, other than unilateralism and the so-called boots on the ground.

You know, when you're down on yourself, and when you are hunkering down and pulling back, you're not going to make any better decisions than when you were aggressively, belligerently putting yourself forward. One issue is that we don't even tell our own story very well these days.

JG: I think that defeating fascism and communism is a pretty big deal.

HRC: That's how I feel! Maybe this is old-fashioned. Okay, I feel that this might be an old-fashioned idea—but I'm about to find out, in more ways than one.

Great nations need organizing principles, and “Don't do stupid stuff” is not an organizing principle. It may be a necessary brake on the actions you might take in order to promote a vision.

JG: So why do you think the president went out of his way to suggest recently that that this is his foreign policy in a nutshell?

HRC: I think he was trying to communicate to the American people that he's not going to do something crazy. I've sat in too many rooms with the president. He's thoughtful, he's incredibly smart, and able to analyze a lot of different factors that are all moving at the same time. I think he is cautious because he knows what he inherited, both the two wars and the economic front, and he has expended a lot of capital and energy trying to pull us out of the hole we're in.

So I think that that's a political message. It's not his worldview, if that makes sense to you.

Well, at least she's nice enough to help Obama keep his utterly pathetic “everything is Bush's fault” excuses alive for the rest of his term, but she wants to send signals that she won't be as much of a whiny teenager if you let her have the Oval Office in 2016. She probably shouldn't be reminding people that *she's* the one who coined the phrase “smart power,” which is now a joke, a phrase spoken only in mockery of Clinton and Obama's inept foreign policy. Also, if she keeps trying to push Obama under the bus, he and his partisans are going to start reminding people that Clinton voted in favor of the invasion of Iraq, while he did not.

Hillary's crap about positioning herself as a tough Cold Warrior ready to fight Islamism the same way she fought communism and fascism is hilarious. Democrats of her generation were an *obstacle* to defeating communism. And the long, long, long shadow of Benghazi hangs over Clinton's claims to be a sharper analyst of the Islamist threat than Obama was. Hillary is *defined* on foreign policy by her utter inability to perceive the actual situation on the ground in Libya on September 11, 2012. She didn't understand what was actually going on in the state she and Obama ruined (and remember, Obama launched his cowboy unilateral war on Qaddafi largely at her urging.) She was totally on board with Obama's agenda to hide the devastation in Libya as much as possible, rather than taking security precautions that would have raised eyebrows while he was running for re-election.

The result was four dead Americans, followed by a cover-up Hillary Clinton energetically participated in. She's the one who lied right into the faces of the Benghazi families, promising them she'd work tirelessly to take down the YouTube video producer who supposedly got their loved ones killed. She's good at picking *scapegoats*, not detecting global threats.

Hillary Clinton hardly has a monopoly on history revisionism. A desperate Barack Obama has taken to pretending that he was *on fire* to keep American troops in Iraq, but the mean old Iraqi government (created by George Bush's war, dontcha know!) wouldn't let him. Also, the intelligence community let the President down again – remember how he used to blame them for Benghazi, until congressional hearings made it painfully obvious the White House and Secretary of State were ignoring everything knowledgeable intelligence analysts were saying about Libya?

This is such absolute rubbish that even Andrea Mitchell of NBC News, one of the most partisan Democrats in the media, blew her stack during a discussion with Chuck Todd and David Gregory on NBC's *Meet the Press* on Sunday. Recap courtesy of the [Daily Caller](#):

As American bombs again fall on that country, President Obama responded to criticism that we should have left troops inside Iraq after 2011 by claiming the Iraqi government pushed the U.S. out.

"But, this president ideologically did not want to use more influence to —" host David Gregory began.

"Look, this was not an administration that was eager to tell [Iraqi Prime Minister] Maliki, 'Oh, you don't want a status-of-forces agreement?'" Todd agreed, explaining how the White House failed to pursue any agreement that would have left a stabilizing force.

"I've been trying to figure out this man's doctrine now for six years," Todd continued. "He doesn't have one . . . He pushes and pulls between the idea of democracy first and stability first . . . Now he's trying for stability first, and I think in this case he's struggling."

Mitchell slammed President Obama for his other excuse — that the sudden collapse of American allies, the Kurds, against Islamic State fighters was an unforeseen surprise.

"And to say that he didn't have intelligence — this is not a hard target, this is [Kurdish capital] Erbil," she laughed. "We have people there."

"The fact is, there was intelligence," she declared. "And to say that they were shocked by the [Kurdish] Peshmerga [fighters], on Saturday night, being routed is a farce!"

Obama supporters are legendary for their ability to forget everything their man said and did more than three days ago, but everyone else will remember Obama proudly *boasting* of his decision to pull every American out of Iraq. His campaign loudly taunted his 2012 opponent, Mitt Romney, for saying Obama was making a "tragic" mistake.

FACT: President Obama kept his promise to end the war in Iraq. Romney called the decision to bring our troops home "tragic."

— Barack Obama (@BarackObama) [October 22, 2012](#)

Here was Mitt Romney's entirely prescient and accurate warning from the 2012 campaign trail:

You probably know that it is my view that the withdrawal of all of our troops from Iraq by the end of this year is an enormous mistake and a failing by the Obama administration. Secretary Panetta and others had indicated they were working to put in place a Status of Forces Agreement to maintain our presence there, so that we could most effectively transition to the Iraqi military and Iraqi security forces providing security for their country.

The precipitous withdrawal is unfortunate. It's more than unfortunate. I think it's tragic. It puts at risk many of the victories that were hard-won by the men and women who have served there. I hope the risk is not realized. I hope instead that the Iraqis are able to pick up the baton, and despite the fact that we will have walked away on a too-rapid basis.

So don't let either Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton weasel out of their past failures or point fingers of blame at anyone else. They were both wrong about Iraq, wrong about Libya, wrong about Syria, wrong about Russia, wrong about the Arab Spring, and probably wrong about a few more geo-political bombs that will blow up in our faces any day now, especially when the bad actors of the world see Obama bogged down fighting a new war in Iraq that he could have prevented. She famously, and accurately, warned Democrat primary voters that Barack Obama wouldn't be ready to take the 3AM phone call from the front lines of a foreign crisis, but Benghazi Clinton is no more capable of handling that phone call – or making wise long-range policies that would prevent the phone call from being necessary.

I hope the American electorate has not degenerated enough to buy Hillary Clinton's pathetic claims to have been a strong but silent critic of the President she fully supported when she was Secretary of State. If nothing else, that's exactly the kind of thinking that got us into all of our current messes: short-term political gain over all. If Clinton had spoken up back in the day, she'd have crippled Obama's re-election effort, so what she's telling you today is that she thinks Democrat partisan political gain is more important than doing and saying the right thing when it counts. That's *exactly* the kind of "leadership" that turned the world into a madhouse under Obama.

Instapundit

[BARACK OBAMA ON PRESIDENTIAL VACATIONS IN 2008:](#)

"You have to understand that if you seek that office, then you have to be prepared to give your life to it. Essentially, the bargain that I think every President strikes with the American people is, 'you give me this office, then in turn my fears, doubts, insecurities, foibles, need for sleep, family life, vacations, leisure, is gone. I am giving myself to you.'"

Is there *anything* he said in that campaign that wasn't a lie?

WSJ - Political Diary

[Who Left Iraq?](#)

Obama blames George W. Bush (among others).

by James Taranto

At a [Saturday press conference](#), a reporter asked President Obama a question that's been on our mind since Obama announced a new U.S. military intervention in Iraq: "Mr. President, do you have any second thoughts about pulling all ground troops out of Iraq? And does it give you pause as the U.S.--is it doing the same thing in Afghanistan?"

"What I just find interesting is the degree to which this issue keeps on coming up, as if this was my decision," Obama replied. "Under the previous administration, we had turned over the country to a sovereign, democratically elected Iraqi government."

Yes, Obama is not only disclaiming responsibility for the troop pullout but blaming it on George W. Bush--among others, as we shall see, but "the previous administration" is the first target of his pointed finger.

Of course Obama is correct that the disposition of the U.S. troop presence was not *solely* "my decision." With Iraqi sovereignty restored, Washington and Baghdad would both have to consent to

a status-of-forces agreement, or SOFA. In the president's telling, the Iraqis balked at signing a SOFA unless the U.S. agreed to unacceptable conditions.

"We needed assurances that our personnel would be immune from prosecution if, for example, they were protecting themselves and ended up getting in a firefight with Iraqis, that they wouldn't be hauled before an Iraqi judicial system," the president said. The Iraqis rejected that demand. "So let's just be clear: The reason that we did not have a follow-on force in Iraq was because . . . a majority of Iraqis did not want U.S. troops there, and politically they could not pass the kind of laws that would be required to protect our troops in Iraq."

In an April story for *The New Yorker*, [Dexter Filkins](#) painted a more complicated picture. U.S. military commanders told Filkins that Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki "said that he wanted to keep [U.S.] troops in Iraq," but that "parliament would forbid the troops to stay unless they were subject to local law." But "President Obama, too, was ambivalent about retaining even a small force in Iraq":

For several months, American officials told me, they were unable to answer basic questions in meetings with Iraqis--like how many troops they wanted to leave behind--because the Administration had not decided. "We got no guidance from the White House," [James] Jeffrey [the U.S. ambassador to Baghdad in 2011] told me. "We didn't know where the President was. Maliki kept saying, 'I don't know what I have to sell.' " At one meeting, Maliki said that he was willing to sign an executive agreement granting the soldiers permission to stay, if he didn't have to persuade the parliament to accept immunity. The Obama Administration quickly rejected the idea. "The American attitude was: Let's get out of here as quickly as possible," Sami al-Askari, [an] Iraqi member of parliament, said.

This account is consistent with Obama's inasmuch as the Iraqis were making what the Americans regarded as an unreasonable demand. But it also suggests that Obama was eager for a complete pullout and thus happy to see the talks fail.

As *The Weekly Standard's* [John McCormack](#) notes, Obama himself said as much, during the third 2012 presidential debate with Mitt Romney:

Romney: With regards to Iraq, you and I agreed, I believe, that there should have been a status-of-forces agreement. Did you--

Obama: That's not true.

Romney: Oh, you didn't--you didn't want a status of forces agreement?

Obama: No, but what I--what I would not have done is left 10,000 troops in Iraq that would tie us down. That certainly would not help us in the Middle East.

The president went on to repeat that argument Saturday, just after he disavowed responsibility for the withdrawal:

Having said all that, if in fact the Iraqi government behaved the way it did over the last five, six years, where it failed to pass legislation that would reincorporate Sunnis and give them a sense of ownership; if it had targeted certain Sunni leaders and jailed them; if it had alienated some of the Sunni tribes that we had brought back in during the so-called Awakening that helped us turn the tide in 2006--if they had done all those things and we had had troops there, the country wouldn't be holding together either. The only difference would be we'd have a bunch of troops on the ground that would be vulnerable. And however many troops we had, we would have to now be reinforcing, I'd have to be protecting them, and we'd have a much bigger job. And

probably, we would end up having to go up again in terms of the number of ground troops to make sure that those forces were not vulnerable.

So that entire analysis is bogus and is wrong. But it gets frequently peddled around here by folks who oftentimes are trying to defend previous policies that they themselves made.

So he made the right decision when he made the decision that wasn't his decision to make.

Keep in mind that the question Obama was asked was whether he had second thoughts about the decision to withdraw all ground troops from Iraq. He could have simply said no and then delivered what turned out to be the latter half of his answer: that a continued troop presence would have provided little benefit to Iraq and imposed great costs on the U.S. So why did he first go through the exercise of blaming others, including George W. Bush, for the pullout? That implies that he *does* have second thoughts.

But if the president's disavowal of responsibility for the withdrawal seems at odds with his insistence that it was a good policy, there is a common thread that ties them together: a determination not to acknowledge error.

Right Turn

[Obama's latest whopper: If you like the troops, you can keep them in Iraq](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

When the media finally shook themselves from their Obama stupor in the second term, they went after the president for his promise that “you can keep your doctor” and his falsehood that he actually never made such a promise. Now, everyone from former congressman [Barney Frank](#) (D-Mass.) to [Polifact](#) admits that President Obama misled the public (and implicitly accused him, therefore, of lying when he denied saying so). Having caught him egregiously dissembling to the voters on his primary domestic “achievement,” the question now is whether the media will be as tough on his equally dishonest statements on Iraq.

It's generally seen by commentators and many lawmakers on both sides of the aisle that failing to keep troops in Iraq contributed to the disastrous rise of the Islamic State and the near-destruction of Iraq. That's a problem, of course, because Obama pulled them out. The president and his former secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, have now come up with their version of the Obamacare canard: *If you like our troops, you can keep them in Iraq.*

Unbelievably, Obama now claims [he didn't make the decision to pull them all out](#). Only the commander in chief could pull them out, of course, and he did, just as he had promised throughout his 2008 campaign. In 2011 in a speech to the nation entitled “Ending the War in Iraq,” he declared: “As a candidate for president, I pledged to bring the war in Iraq to a responsible end — for the sake of our national security and to strengthen American leadership around the world. After taking office, I announced a new strategy that would end our combat mission in Iraq and remove all of our troops by the end of 2011. As commander in chief, ensuring the success of this strategy has been one of my highest national security priorities. Last year, I announced the end to our combat mission in Iraq. And to date, we've removed more than 100,000 troops. Iraqis have taken full responsibility for their country's security.”

He continued into his second term, [bragging](#) in State of the Union addresses that he had brought all the troops home. He [touted](#) his full withdrawal in his presidential debate with Mitt Romney. Not until Iraq came apart at the seams did he indicate that he had wanted to leave troops behind.

On “Fox News Sunday,” Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) was asked what he’d say about Obama’s insistence that it wasn’t his decision to pull out troops:

I’m telling the president, you’re rewriting history at your own convenience. You got the answer you wanted. You promised to get us out of Iraq and you were hell-bent to get out of Iraq. When everybody told you, you need to leave a force behind, you made it impossible for the Iraqis to say yes.

Mr. President, you authored us getting out of Iraq, and during a debate with Governor Romney, Romney suggested I could support 10,000 troops like the president intends to leave behind, and the president said in the debate, I’m not leaving any troops behind. I’m not going to get entangled in Iraq yet again.

Mr. President, you’re rewriting history.

[What we know from multiple sources](#), including the then-ambassador to Iraq, Ryan Croker, is that the George W. Bush administration had hoped and planned to leave a stay-behind force. The military commanders recommended that 10,000 troops be left in place. However, Obama knocked that number down to 3,000. Meanwhile, Iraqi officials willing to have a U.S. presence in Iraq told the Americans that a guarantee of legal immunity for U.S. troops couldn’t be gotten from parliament but could be given by the Iraqi prime minister. (Recently, the Iraqi government [did precisely that](#), allowing about 800 U.S. advisers to return to the country.) That was not good enough for the Obama-Clinton team — or, if you prefer, provided the pretext for doing what Obama had wanted to do all along. All troops were removed, and Obama was able to brag about it for three years.

There is something truly jaw-dropping about the president’s attempt to deny his responsibility for what was the subject of his 2008 campaign and of his ongoing boasts for *years*. Surely, he is not so disconnected from reality to know that this was *his* aim to bring all the troops home and that *he* thought this was a great accomplishment. Does he really expect the public to buy the notion that someone else made the call or that he was helpless to take the steps that his critics insisted were necessary to retain hard-fought gains? It no doubt is a bitter pill for him to swallow — namely, that Romney, Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and the entire Bush team were right that a stay-behind force was essential — but it’s no justification for rewriting his presidency. In any honest fact-checking or questioning of the president, the media have the obligation to make clear that Obama is now running from a central tenet of his presidency and of leftist dogma for a decade.

The question is then whether the media will hold him to account for misrepresenting what he told the public on Iraq, as they did on his Obamacare excuse. His repeated promise about keeping your doctor was rated the “lie of the year” in some quarters. Surely his latest Iraq whopper rates as high.

Streetwise Professor

[The Obama Fram Oil Filter Foreign Policy: We're Paying Later, and a Lot More](#)

by Craig Pirrong

Confronted by a looming humanitarian catastrophe at Mt. Sinjar, Obama finally ordered airstrikes against ISIS/ISIL, and also mounted a campaign to provide desperately needed supplies to the Yazidis who fled to the mountain before the ISIS onslaught.

This initial set of strikes seems to have a very limited objective: they can best be described as a limited [tank plinking campaign](#) intended to halt the ISIS attack on the Kurds around Erbil. The US is using F/A-18s from the George Bush (CVN77), deployed in ones-eyes and twos-eyes to take out an artillery piece here, and a vehicle there. It will give the Kurds some breathing room, and permit them to make limited counterattacks. But as of yet, it appears that the airstrikes are not intended to deliver a body blow to ISIS. The objectives appear to be narrowly tactical, rather than operational.

Given the nature of ISIS, the humanitarian crisis was inevitable, and eminently predictable. Indeed, ISIS is a rolling bacchanal of head chopping, crucifixion, mass execution, and rape. Wherever this scourge lands, a humanitarian crisis follows.

Obama infamously labeled ISIS the "[junior varsity](#)" in a January interview. I wonder if he still considers that description operative, or regrets that he made it. I note that in contrast to Obama's disparaging remark, only Friday a "senior administration official" said that in its recent attacks, [ISIS has demonstrated "tremendous military proficiency."](#) Either ISIS has navigated a very steep learning curve, or Obama was spewing garbage 7 months ago. Not hard to figure out which is true, especially if you were paying attention to ISIS in Syria and Iraq last year and early this year.

Obama's attitude, and his preternatural predisposition to avoid any involvement in Iraq, led him to stand aloof when ISIS scored major breakthroughs in Iraq two months ago, and threatened to capture Baghdad. The inaction then, and in the interim, laid the foundation for what is transpiring outside Erbil today. Obama's consistent Fram Oil Filter foreign policy procrastination ("you can pay me now, or you can pay me later") only deferred the necessity of military action, and allowed ISIS to become stronger in the meantime.

Obama's rationale for letting ISIS run amok is a pedantic one. He is (in some ways understandably) frustrated at the inability of Iraq to form a more inclusive government, and at the dysfunctional Maliki government, and refuses to be "Maliki's artillery". That is, he is withholding US military action against ISIS in order to force a change of government in Baghdad. Apparently only when Sunnis and Shiites and Kurds hold hands and sing Kumbaya will Obama relent.

In the meantime, vast swathes of Iraq are getting a new government. An ISIS government that rules by terror and very credibly threatens genocide. Obama's pickiness about what he considers to be acceptable Iraqi government has given ISIS an open field to consolidate its hold over the regions that it has conquered, and to push for further conquests.

To the surprise of the administration, that push has been directed at the Kurds instead of Baghdad. The Kurdish Peshmerga, though possessing a reputation for being far more stalwart fighters than the Iraqi Army rabble that disintegrated on contact with ISIS, was sent reeling. It is

uncertain whether this indicates that the Peshmerga was overrated, or underarmed. It is certainly the case that it is outgunned by ISIS, so the latter is a reasonable inference.

The outgunning of the Kurds is also the result of a conscious administration decision. The Kurds have been pleading for arms and ammunition, but the administration has demurred. The reason is rather astounding, especially in light of Obama's stated refusal to aid the Iraqi central government. In refusing to help the Kurds, Obama has deferred to the sensitivities of the very Maliki government that he despises: he does not want to appear to be advancing Kurdish independence, which would outrage Baghdad.

So on the one hand, Obama doesn't want to help the Iraqi central government fight ISIS because he thinks that government is dysfunctional and must change fundamentally, and in particular must become more inclusive, before it deserve US backing. On the other hand, Obama doesn't want to help the Kurds fight ISIS because he thinks that would enable the Kurds to break free of the said same dysfunctional central government.

The only way to square these decisions is to conclude that Obama didn't want to help to fight ISIS, period.

But now his hand has been forced by the prospect of the slaughter of 50,000 Yazidis. I suspect that Obama will only exert enough force to prevent that, and stabilize the situation in the north of Iraq. He will not deal ISIS a blow sufficiently stunning to permit the Iraqi Army, or the Kurds, or both, to defeat the head chopping lunatics. This will provide yet another illustration of the adage (attributed to Macauley and James Arbothnot Fisher) that moderation in war is imbecility.

Obama has repeatedly refused to pay anything now in Iraq. As a result, many have paid a big price later. A price measured in severed heads, mass graves, and systematic rape.

The most realistic alternative right now is to be the Kurds' artillery, and pound ISIS from the air in a serious way, while providing the arms, intelligence, and logistic support that will permit the Kurds to attack them on the ground. In so doing, Obama will be rebuking himself for his past words and actions (or, more accurately, inactions) in Iraq. And that may be the biggest obstacle to his doing the right thing.

College Fix

[Law Prof Who Specializes in Poverty Makes \\$205,400 – Teaching One Class Per Semester](#)

UNC law professor's holdings include \$1.5M in real estate, and meanwhile he chastises Republicans for their 'unforgivable war on poor people'

by Lauren Cooley

A controversial, outspoken law professor who frequently bashes Republicans and specializes in poverty issues as a self-proclaimed champion of the poor earns \$205,400 per year – for teaching one class per semester.

The University of North Carolina School of Law pays Professor Gene Nichol \$205,400 annually for his one class per semester workload. On top of his teaching salary, he receives a \$7,500 stipend as director of the law school's Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity.

The *News & Observer* maintains a public database of public employee and educator salaries, and [lists](#) Nichol's salary at \$212,900. Nichol, in an email to *The College Fix*, confirmed the figure is accurate.



Nichol is slated to teach [federal jurisdiction](#) this fall and [constitutional law](#) in spring 2015.

He told *The College Fix* there is nothing unusual about his compensation.

"I'm a full time faculty member – doing all the varied things faculty members do," he stated. "That's the basis for the salary you quote. Beyond that, I'm paid \$7,500 to run the poverty center – the same as all the other law school center directors."

When asked about his compensation compared to other law professors, Nichol said: "Several make a good deal more than I do at Carolina, some make less."

The *News & Observer* [lists](#) the UNC Distinguished Professor of Law Thomas Lee Hazen's salary at \$222,000. However, he is [slated](#) to teach four classes this fall, and two in the spring. UNC Distinguished Professor of Law Sarah Elizabeth Gibson earns \$200,000 annually, and has a similar [workload](#) to Nichol at one class per semester.

Assistant and associate professors at the UNC School of Law tend to earn about \$130,000 annually, according to the *News & Observer* database. Their work load ranges from one class per semester up to four.

As for Nichol, in the past he served as president of the College of William and Mary from 2005 to 2008, that is, until his contract was [not renewed](#) following a string of controversies.

Among them, he allowed a sex workers' art show on campus and removed a cross from permanent display in the chapel of the historic Christopher Wren building, citing the facility's use for secular events.

Prior to that, Nichol was the dean of UNC's law school from 1999 to 2005.

Today at UNC, Nichol runs the UNC Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity, which was founded by the now-disgraced Democrat John Edwards. The center is a self-proclaimed non-partisan, interdisciplinary institute that aims to study and mitigate poverty in North Carolina and the nation.

In his leadership role there, Nichol is known to use inflammatory political rhetoric.

For example, on the center's website he [writes](#) that "the scourge of debilitating poverty is the largest problem faced by the people of North Carolina – even if our political leaders ignore it, or declare, with a breathtaking stupidity, that it doesn't exist." North Carolina has a Republican-controlled majority of lawmakers.

Yet while Nichol champions the poor – even chastising Republicans in a *March News & Observer* [op-ed](#) for its "unforgivable war on poor people" – it's unclear how well he can relate to those living in poverty.

His wife, chief of staff for the UNC Health Care System and the UNC School of Medicine, [earns](#) \$407,000 annually. Combining his and his wife's salary, the couple makes at least \$612,000 per year.

The Nichol family lives in a Chapel Hill home with a [tax value](#) of more than \$1 million. They also own a [bungalow](#) on the beach at Emerald Isle, [valued](#) by Carteret County at more than \$512,000. In the summer months, Nichol [rents](#) his four-bedroom bungalow for nearly \$2,000 per week.

When asked by *The College Fix* about the large inequality between his income and the income of those in poverty, Nichol refused to respond.

The issue of the UNC poverty center's funding has also been the source of contention in the past because of its ties to Edwards, so much so that campus officials [dedicated](#) a webpage to detailing its financing.

It reads in part: "Nichol earns \$7,500 as a stipend for serving as the Center director. This is in addition to his salary as the Boyd Tinsley Distinguished Professor of Law at UNC School of Law."

Nichol may have earned special attention regarding his salary and role there after he became well-known in North Carolina as a radical, left-leaning writer.

Even the *News & Observer* [describes](#) him as a "well-known liberal," and he publishes regularly in *The Progressive Populist* and has written for *The Nation*, the *Washington Post* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education*.

His work has been so polarizing in the past that when Nichol publishes op-eds, [UNC has asked him](#) to give the administration a couple days' heads up because he has angered so many people. UNC also asks that his columns include the phrase: "He doesn't speak for UNC."

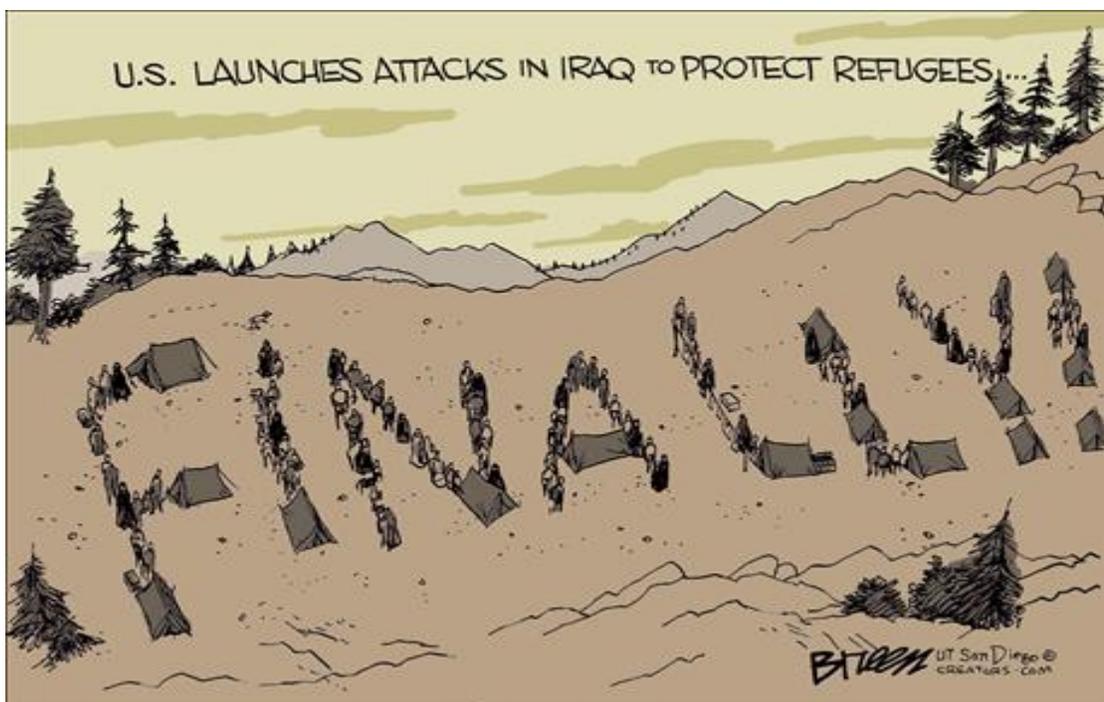
This unusual request came as the result of a column Nichol wrote last October, in which he offered a [scathing review](#) of North Carolina's Republican Governor Pat McCrory in the *News & Observer*. In the piece, Nichol referred to McCrory as "hapless Pat" and wrote that McCrory was "a 21st century successor to Maddox, Wallace and Faubus," referring to three 1960s-era segregationist governors.

When Nichol writes about topics other than poverty, UNC asks he leave his title at the university out completely.

Nichol's writings have caught the ire of many, including the North-Carolina based John William Pope Center for Higher Education Policy, which [states](#) that "Nichol is a radical partisan who has desperately ratcheted up his rhetoric after seeing his preferred party lose control in North Carolina for the first time in more than a hundred years."

"Perhaps more disturbing is Nichol's abuse of his stature at UNC-Chapel Hill to propagate his invective."

College Fix Contributor Lauren Cooley is a recent graduate of Furman University.







TRAMPLED UNDER FOOT.