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Caroline Glick writes on this administration's disastrous Mid East policy.

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Others argued that the only way to truly destroy the tunnels, and keep them destroyed, is for Israel to retake control over the Gaza Strip.

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And he wants it now. ...

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Under Obama, America has switched sides.

More from **Jennifer Rubin**.

There is growing bipartisan awareness that the entire President Obama/Hillary Clinton/John Kerry foreign policy, not simply in Gaza or even Israel generally, is a disaster. The public realizes this.

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Obama has managed to hand the advantage on national security back to the GOP, as voters favor Republicans to protect the country over Democrats (33 to 18 percent). On maintaining the United States' image (27 to 24 percent) and handling international crises (29 to 20 percent), Republicans also best Democrats. ...

... It is therefore a mistake to treat the Obama/Clinton/Kerry foreign policy debacle as a series of discrete errors. Rather, it is their entire worldview that has been flawed from the start. The chickens are only now coming home to roost. To fix what is wrong will require new people, a new outlook and new resources. Those who counseled retreat, retrenchment and reduction in our armed forces should not be entrusted with fixing what they wrecked.

Obama and his minions are so hoping for impeachment that even the mainstream media have noticed. Here's [Time's Joe Klein](#) on the administration's transparently disgraceful wish.

... So, this is smart strategy on the part of the Obama political operation, right? Well, grudgingly, yes. But it's also cynical as hell. The White House is playing with fire, raising the heat in a country that is already brain-fried by partisan frenzy. There is something unseemly, and unprecedented, about an administration saying "Bring it on" when it comes to impeachment. Clinton's White House certainly never did publicly, even though it was clear from polling that the spectacle would be a disaster for Republicans. Of course, President Clinton had done something immoral, if not impeachable, and Obama has not. Another impeachment ordeal would be terrible for the country.

Also terrible for the country, if all too common, is the DCCC's impeachment begging—and the President's constant fat-cat fundraising in a summer of trouble. What if he simply said, "I'm done with fundraising. This is an important election, but there's just too much going on in the world right now"? His political folks would hate it, but I suspect it might be more effective, and presidential, than sending out tin-cup emails.

[Ben Domenech at The Federalist](#) says the president will not be impeached but he will be disgraced.

There's nothing that [President Obama's current distasteful impeachment trolling](#) resembles so much as Alex Rodriguez in 2004. The slumping hitter, frustrated after a difficult season, triggered a bench-clearing brawl in Boston after being hit by a pitch from Bronson Arroyo. Rodriguez threw down his bat, glared, and started cussing at the pitcher. Red Sox catcher Jason Varitek rushed into his path, and as A-Rod cursed the pitcher and accused him of hitting him on purpose, legend has it Varitek shot back, "We don't throw at .260 hitters!" ...

... So Republicans and Independents keep dropping jaws and cracking monocles, but it's not going to do any good, and there's no referee to throw the flag or umpire to call out the president for slapping the glove (well, there is that god-awful record at the Supreme Court, but that works on a delay). Paul Ryan has said that the GOP's current political differences with the president don't add up to high crimes and misdemeanors. But even if Obama does this (**mass amnesty**), and even if the base concludes this is a step too far, there's really nothing Republicans can do other than to laugh at how much of a failed presidency this has become, at the sheer absurdity and elitism of

engaging in mass amnesty at a time when the working class is struggling so much, and get back to winning the argument with the people.

Don't throw at .260 hitters. Impeachment won't stop disrespect of the rule of law from this crew. Only crafting a new governing majority will.

Paul Mirengoff thinks crying impeachment might be a Dem mistake.

The Democrats have been fundraising like crazy based on claims that President Obama is in danger of being impeached by House Republicans. Last night, John wondered whether it's good idea to tell your party's members repeatedly that the leader of their party is in danger of being impeached.

The answer, I think, is that it is a good idea to the extent the message is heard only by party members. Few Democrats will be able to conceive of a rationale for impeaching their leader and nearly all will view the alleged threat of impeachment as confirmation that House Republicans are evil.

And the money will pour in.

But money isn't the key to saving endangered Democrat-held Senate seats and making inroads into the House Republicans majority. Only the votes of independents and true moderates can accomplish these goals.

The Democrats can't keep the "news" of possible impeachment to themselves. The question thus becomes whether it is a good idea for Democrats to cause independents and moderates to believe that President Obama is in danger of being impeached.

I don't think so. ...

Ordinarily we concentrate on the criminal miscreants in DC, but today **Kevin Williamson** turns our attention to Illinois and New York. Of course, here in Virginia we have our own problems. Our last GOP governor is on trial for corruption and our present governor is a former Clinton bagman.

There must be something in the DNA of Democratic governors that gives them a very specific sort of superpower — the ability to endure doses of irony that would disable an ordinary mortal, or at least cause him to blush. In my recent jaunt through Illinois (National Review subscribers can read about my adventures here), I frequently was reminded of the intensity of the violent crime plaguing its cities — not only in murder-happy Chicago ("Gangsterville") but also in the bedeviled city of East St. Louis, where the incidence of criminal violence is five times Chicago's rate. Illinois is of course a wildly corrupt state — its prisons function as pension homes for its politicians — and Governor Pat Quinn, either through sheer fecklessness or with malice aforethought, allowed his signature antiviolence program to be converted into a political slush fund, currently being investigated by federal criminal authorities. Which is to say, Governor Quinn's main anticrime measure is being investigated as a criminal enterprise.

I have a writer's superstition that the fundamental truth about a politician can be revealed through anagrams, though the best I can do for Governor Pat Quinn is "porn-quoting raven," which sounds

like it ought to be a literary motif from the poems of Edgar Allan Poe. Andrew Cuomo's anagram — "Owed ACORN . . . Um?" — is probably more fitting. And Cuomo the Lesser is having some troubles quite similar to those of the flighty Quinn, having empaneled an inquisition into corruption in New York State government, known as the Moreland Commission. The Moreland Commission was supposed to be independent, but it wasn't, and Governor Cuomo is accused of having "interfered" with it, the usage of that word in the context of Albany bringing to mind the ancient euphemism "interfering with children." According to the New York Times, the executive director of the commission, Regina Calcaterra acted as Governor Cuomo's spy on the panel and as his factotum, notably by blocking subpoenas directed at the state real-estate board. Real-estate interests have been among Governor Cuomo's most reliable financial supporters. ...

Jerusalem Post

[Israel, Hamas and Obama's foreign policy](#)

Americans need to be alarmed by what Obama's actions on behalf of Hamas reveal about the general direction of American Middle East policy under his leadership.

by Caroline Glick

When US President Barack Obama phoned Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu on Sunday night, in the middle of a security cabinet meeting, he ended any remaining doubt regarding his policy toward Israel and Hamas.

Obama called Netanyahu while the premier was conferring with his senior ministers about how to proceed in Gaza. Some ministers counseled that Israel should continue to limit our forces to specific pinpoint operations aimed at destroying the tunnels of death that Hamas has dug throughout Gaza and into Israeli territory.

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The IDF's discovery of Hamas's Rosh Hashana plot was the last straw for any Israeli leftists still harboring fantasies about picking up our marbles and going home. Hamas's plan to use its tunnels to send hundreds of terrorists into multiple Israeli border communities simultaneously and carry out a massacre of unprecedented scope, replete with the abduction of hostages to Gaza, was the rude awakening the Left had avoided since it pushed for Israel's 2005 withdrawal from Gaza.

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But then the telephone rang. And Obama told Netanyahu that Israel must lose. He wants an unconditional "humanitarian" cease-fire that will lead to a permanent one.

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And by the way, the eventual terms of that cease-fire must include opening Hamas-controlled Gaza's borders with Egypt and Israel and ending Israel's maritime blockade of the Gaza coast. That is, the cease-fire must allow Hamas to rebuild its arsenal of death and destruction quickly, with US political and financial support.

Until Obama made the call, there was lingering doubt among some Israelis regarding his intentions. Some thought that US Secretary of State John Kerry might have been acting of his own accord last Friday night when he tried to force Israel to accept Hamas's cease-fire terms.

But then Obama made his phone call. And all doubts were dispelled.

Kerry is just a loyal steward of Obama's foreign policy.

Obama is siding with Hamas, and its Muslim Brotherhood patrons in Qatar and Turkey, against Israel, and its Sunni Arab supporters – Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and the United Arab Emirates.

It is Obama who demands that Hamas have open borders so it can resupply, and receive billions of dollars – starting with an immediate cash injection of \$47 million from US taxpayers – so it can pay North Korea for more missiles and import building materials to reconstruct its tunnels.

The fact that the US's current preference for genocidal, Jew-hating jihadists over the only liberal, pro-American, stable US ally in the Middle East is a White House position, rather than that of a rogue Secretary of State was actually exposed even before Obama's phone call.

Sunday CNN's Candy Crowley interviewed Deputy National Security Adviser Ben Rhodes. She asked him what the administration thinks Israel can do to prevent civilians from being killed in Gaza beyond what it is already doing. Rhodes replied, "I think you can always do more."

In other words, Rhodes said that no matter what precautions Israel takes to try to minimize Palestinian civilian deaths in Gaza, the administration will never be satisfied. The White House will never acknowledge that Israel is in the right, or that it is fighting a moral war against a barbaric foe. And since the administration will never be satisfied, Israel can expect to be condemned by various UN bodies, including the Security Council, because no matter what it does to try to earn the support of the administration, it will never receive such support.

The discovery that the Obama administration is entirely in Hamas's corner hit all of Israel hard. But it hit the Left the hardest. Few on the Right, which recognized Obama's hostility from the outset of his presidency, were surprised.

As for political leaders, the government cannot risk giving the administration justification for its anti-Israel policies, so senior ministers have all said nothing.

Consequently, the harshest criticisms of the administration's pro-Hamas position were heard from quarters where rarely a peep of criticism for Obama has been heard.

The Israeli Left went ballistic.

Haaretz, the far-left broadsheet that has seldom taken issue with even the harshest rejections of Israel's rights, went bananas after its reporter Barak Ravid received the details of Kerry's cease-fire agreement. As Ravid put it, Kerry's document, "might as well have been penned by Khaled Mashaal. It was everything Hamas could have hoped for."

Ravid continued, "What Kerry's draft spells for the internal Palestinian political arena is even direr: It crowns Hamas and issues Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas with a death warrant."

And that is really the crux of the issue. The crowd at Haaretz is far more wedded to the PLO and Mahmoud Abbas than it is to the government of Israel. And the administration's support for Hamas exposed the PLO as an irrelevance.

As the paper's Amos Harel wrote the next day, Kerry's pro-Hamas behavior convinced the Egyptians and other actors that the administration is "continuing its secret love affairs with the Muslim Brotherhood in the region."

The Left understands that the administration's behavior has destroyed it.

Leftists can no longer say that Israeli territorial withdrawals will win it international support.

They can no longer say that Israel will receive US support if it places the security of Palestinian civilians above the security of its own civilians and military forces.

They can no longer say that the PLO is the answer.

The Israeli Left has been Obama's ace in the hole since he first ran for office, fresh from the pews in Jeremiah Wright's anti-Semitic church. They were the grease in the wheels that legitimized the administration's anti-Israel pressure group J Street. They were the ones who could be counted on to tell the US media and the American Jews that Netanyahu is to blame for Obama's hostility.

Yet, rather than backtrack, and try to save the Israeli Left, the administration doubled down on Monday, releasing a series of statements condemning the Israeli media's condemnations of Kerry's pro-Hamas position.

By Monday afternoon, the administration went so far as to say that by criticizing Kerry, Israel's media were endangering their country's alliance with the US.

In other words, through his actions, Obama demonstrated that his "love affairs with the Muslim Brotherhood in the region," are so central to his foreign policy calculations that he is willing to destroy the Israeli Left in order to strengthen the Brotherhood.

And this leads us to the larger point about Obama's foreign policy, which his Sunday night telephone call to Netanyahu revealed. As rattled as Israelis are over Obama's decision to support Hamas against Israel, Netanyahu made clear in his remarks Monday night that Israel has no choice but to keep fighting until we defeat this barbaric enemy.

Netanyahu didn't mention Obama, but it was obvious that he was respectfully refusing to hand Israel's head on a platter to Hamas's friend in the White House.

And while it is hard for Israel to ignore Obama, it is impossible for Americans to ignore him. He runs their foreign policy.

Americans are the ones who need to be most alarmed by what Obama's actions on behalf of Hamas reveal about the general direction of American Middle East policy under his leadership.

For the past five years, Americans from all quarters have concluded that the manifold failures of Obama's Middle East policies – from Iraq to Iran, Libya, Afghanistan, Egypt, Syria, Israel, the

Palestinian Authority and beyond – owe to a combination of Obama's personal disinterest in foreign affairs and his presumed preference for withdrawal and isolationism over engagement.

Obama himself has often encouraged this perception with his endless golf games and his talk about fighting “the war at home.”

Obama's open, public engagement in Hamas's war against Israel shows that the popular assessment is wrong.

Obama is as involved in the Middle East as all of his immediate predecessors were. He is personally leading US policy on every front. Kerry is not an independent actor.

The problem is that in every war, in every conflict and in every contest of wills that has occurred in the Middle East since Obama took office, he has sided with Iran and the Muslim Brotherhood, against America's allies.

Under Obama, America has switched sides.

Right Turn

[How Team Obama ruined our foreign policy and made the United States less safe](#)

by Jennifer Rubin

There is growing bipartisan awareness that the entire President Obama/Hillary Clinton/John Kerry foreign policy, not simply in Gaza or even Israel generally, is a disaster. The public realizes this. [The latest Associated Press-GfK poll](#) finds that 59 percent of voters disapprove of Obama's handling of foreign policy (“U.S. role in world affairs”), with only 39 percent approving. In handling relations with other countries, 43 percent approve, 55 percent don't; on Ukraine, 41 percent approve, 57 percent don't; on Israel, 37 percent approve, **60 percent** do not; on Iraq, 41 percent approve and 57 percent don't; and on Afghanistan, 38 percent approve and **60 percent** do not. Obama has managed to hand the advantage on national security back to the GOP, as voters favor Republicans to protect the country over Democrats (33 to 18 percent). On maintaining the United States' image (27 to 24 percent) and handling international crises (29 to 20 percent), Republicans also best Democrats.

The popular impression is confirmed by [bipartisan experts](#). Bill Gertz reports:

The Obama administration's four-year defense strategy lacks funding needed for fulfilling global military missions and the U.S. military faces “high risk” in the world unless changes are made, according to a bipartisan report by a congressionally backed panel of defense experts.

The report by the National Defense Panel, led by former Defense Secretary William Perry and retired United States Army Gen. John Abizaid, criticized the Pentagon's Quadrennial Defense Review for outlining military responsibilities that cannot be met because of sharp defense funding cuts.

The report concluded that the capabilities called for in the QDR “clearly exceed the budget resources made available to the department.”

“This gap is disturbing if not dangerous in light of the fact that global threats and challenges are rising, including a troubling pattern of territorial assertiveness and regional intimidation on China’s part, [and] the recent aggression of Russia in Ukraine.”

In short, conservatives’ argument that we have been shortchanging defense and endangering our national security by rote budget cuts unrelated to external threats was precisely right. (In fairness, right-wing isolationists favored slashing defense budgets as much as Obama.) Gertz quotes outgoing House Armed Services Committee Chairman Buck McKeon as saying, “It is the same conclusion many Americans have already reached: there is a cost when America does not lead and there are consequences when America disengages. What the president fails to understand—which the report points out—is that a strong military underwrites all other tools our nation has for global influence.” The panel recommends rebuilding our navy, keeping our force strength at least at pre-9/11 levels and upgrading our air force.

One is compelled to ask: Did Hillary Clinton not notice? Did she ever urge the president not to hack away at our defense budget? (Maybe she believed that the cuts were fine since we supposedly had “al-Qaeda on its heels” and were “ending a decade of war.”)

Former senator Joseph Lieberman (I-Conn.) provides a big-picture explanation in [the Wall Street Journal](#) for what has gone so terribly wrong: “Too often we have sent a message of uncertainty to our allies and enemies, making the former more anxious and the latter more ambitious.” He recounts Obama’s inaction in Syria and mishandling of the Iran negotiations. (“In the clearly stated opinion of friends like the Saudis, we and the Europeans have been naïve and ineffective and, as a result, they have begun planning how to deal with a nuclear Iran. Those plans include obtaining their own nuclear weapons.”) It is the same story of weakness and unreliability in eastern Europe and Asia. Lieberman concludes, “This is self-evidently not good for America’s security, prosperity or freedom. It can be turned around if we stand more clearly with our allies. Some will say that the U.S. cannot and should not be the world’s policeman. But if we want our allies to join us when we ask for their help in protecting order and freedom in the world, we must take sides and be there when they need our help.”

It is therefore a mistake to treat the Obama/Clinton/Kerry foreign policy debacle as a series of discrete errors. Rather, it is their entire worldview that has been flawed from the start. The chickens are only now coming home to roost. To fix what is wrong will require new people, a new outlook and new resources. Those who counseled retreat, retrenchment and reduction in our armed forces should not be entrusted with fixing what they wrecked.

Time

[Begging for Impeachment](#)

To improve its standing with voters, the White House tries to drum up some trouble for itself

by Joe Klein

At 10:02 on Friday evening, July 25, I received the following personal message from the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee: “THE IMPEACHMENT OF PRESIDENT OBAMA IS NOW A REAL POSSIBILITY.” The capital letters were in red. This was a blast email, of course, sent to everyone on the Democratic Party’s fundraising list, and also to political journalists. It referred to some very calculated remarks that White House communications director Dan Pfeiffer had made earlier that day about impeachment: “I think Speaker Boehner, by going down the path

of this lawsuit [against the President], has opened the door to Republicans possibly considering impeachment at some point in the future.”

This was the beginning of a half-crazed weekend begathon by the Democrats. The next afternoon: “Sorry to email you early on a Saturday—but we’re on full RED ALERT at Democratic Headquarters...According to our records, you haven’t chipped in since Republicans authorized a vote to sue President Obama.” (Or ever chipped in, for that matter.) And Sunday: “MAJOR UPDATE: House Republicans held a closed-door meeting to discuss impeaching President Obama.” On Monday I received a cranky email from Obama himself: “Joe Biden has emailed you. Michelle has emailed you. And now I’ve emailed you. We wouldn’t all be asking if it wasn’t so important. Right now, Republicans in Congress are trying to sue me for simply doing my job.” Later that day, the DCCC re-sent me that email: “Did you see this? President Obama emailed you this morning.”

Holy moley. There is cleverness to the onslaught, of course, a classic use of a political tactic known as jiu-jitsu: take your opponent’s feral vehemence and roll with it. No doubt, Pfeiffer is right. There is a chance that the Republicans will try to impeach the President, especially later in the summer, after he announces a major Executive Order that will affect a large number—millions, perhaps—of the illegal immigrants now in the country. There is speculation that it will be a further expansion of the legal status he conferred on children brought into the U.S. illegally by their parents; perhaps the parents will now be included. There is likely to be an explosion if he does this—the Central American refugee crisis on the U.S.-Mexico border has made immigration the hottest of domestic issues. It is also the most toxic issue for Republicans, who hope to win the presidency someday—and the Senate this November.

House Speaker Boehner has said there will be no impeachment. That’s why he instituted a rather silly lawsuit against the President over—yet again—Obamacare, which aides say could be expanded if Obama goes for broke on the border. Boehner is trying to placate the GOP base. But he also promised that there would be no government shutdown in 2013 and got trampled by his troops. The Speaker knows there’s nothing the Democrats would rather have than impeachment and immigration as the dominant issues in the fall campaign. He also knows there’s nothing Rush Limbaugh would rather have; indeed, it would be a ratings bonanza—the base would go berserk. And on the other end of the Republican evolutionary spectrum, a leading conservative thinker, Yuval Levin, has said the Executive Order that Obama is contemplating would be “the most extreme act of executive overreach ever attempted by an American President in peacetime.” There might be no stopping the primal fury unleashed by what the Republicans are calling “executive amnesty.”

So, this is smart strategy on the part of the Obama political operation, right? Well, grudgingly, yes. But it’s also cynical as hell. The White House is playing with fire, raising the heat in a country that is already brain-fried by partisan frenzy. There is something unseemly, and unprecedented, about an administration saying “Bring it on” when it comes to impeachment. Clinton’s White House certainly never did publicly, even though it was clear from polling that the spectacle would be a disaster for Republicans. Of course, President Clinton had done something immoral, if not impeachable, and Obama has not. Another impeachment ordeal would be terrible for the country.

Also terrible for the country, if all too common, is the DCCC’s impeachment begging—and the President’s constant fat-cat fundraising in a summer of trouble. What if he simply said, “I’m done with fundraising. This is an important election, but there’s just too much going on in the world right now”? His political folks would hate it, but I suspect it might be more effective, and presidential, than sending out tin-cup emails.

The Federalist

Obama Will Be Disgraced, Not Impeached

by Ben Domenech

There's nothing that [President Obama's current distasteful impeachment trolling](#) resembles so much as Alex Rodriguez in 2004. The slumping hitter, frustrated after a difficult season, triggered a bench-clearing brawl in Boston after being hit by a pitch from Bronson Arroyo. Rodriguez threw down his bat, glared, and started cussing at the pitcher. Red Sox catcher Jason Varitek rushed into his path, and as A-Rod cursed the pitcher and accused him of hitting him on purpose, legend has it Varitek shot back, "We don't throw at .260 hitters!" [And, well, this happened.](#) A few months later the half-centaur was swatting at Arroyo's glove, and his reputation in baseball was never the same.

This incident should inform the general Republican Party response to any executive action on amnesty and the Left's other passive-aggressive attempts to divert attention away from the failures of their unpopular, discredited president. Treat him like A-Rod, and don't throw at .260 hitters.

The problem for Republicans is that if Obama does what he's apparently planning to do, it really is blatantly illegal and unconstitutional. [Yuval Levin, no crazy conspiracy theorist he:](#)

"Many people in Washington seem to be talking about the prospect of the president unilaterally legalizing the status of several million people who entered the country illegally as though it were just another political question. But if reports about the nature of the executive action he is contemplating are right, it would be by far the most blatant and explosive provocation in the administration's assault on the separation of powers, and could well be the most extreme act of executive overreach ever attempted by an American president in peacetime."

Whatever your preferred immigration policy solution, yes, this is outrageous. It's the sort of action taken by a monarch, not an elected representative of the people. Total abandonment of the rule of law for blatantly partisan reasons after failing to achieve anything legislatively, betting on the courts to ignore it or do the no standing dance until it's established policy – it's all pretty obscene. But impeachment is a unrealistic and unworkable approach and Republicans know it (though it is amusing to watch the media and Capitol Hill Democrats which [such short memories](#)). There is no court or parliamentary procedure or legal technicality which can defend against Obama's actions at this point or short-circuit the process (or lack thereof) he's going to employ for the rest of his presidency. Under his leadership, his party has thoroughly abandoned the rule of law in pursuit of their policy aims. It might as well be part of the party platform now, and the Joe Biden presidency (lulz) would not be markedly more respectful of it.

So Republicans and Independents keep dropping jaws and cracking monocles, but it's not going to do any good, and there's no referee to throw the flag or umpire to call out the president for slapping the glove (well, there is that god-awful record at the Supreme Court, but that works on a delay). Paul Ryan has said that the GOP's current political differences with the president don't add up to high crimes and misdemeanors. But even if Obama does this, and even if the base concludes this is a step too far, there's really nothing Republicans can do other than to laugh at how much of a failed presidency this has become, at the sheer absurdity and elitism of engaging in mass amnesty at a time when the working class is struggling so much, and get back to winning the argument with the people.

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Power Line

The politics of crying “impeachment”

by Paul Mirengoff

The Democrats have been fundraising like crazy based on claims that President Obama is in danger of being impeached by House Republicans. Last night, [John wondered](#) whether it's good idea to tell your party's members repeatedly that the leader of their party is in danger of being impeached.

The answer, I think, is that it is a good idea to the extent the message is heard only by party members. Few Democrats will be able to conceive of a rationale for impeaching their leader and nearly all will view the alleged threat of impeachment as confirmation that House Republicans are evil.

And the money will pour in.

But money isn't the key to saving endangered Democrat-held Senate seats and making inroads into the House Republicans majority. Only the votes of independents and true moderates can accomplish these goals.

The Democrats can't keep the “news” of possible impeachment to themselves. The question thus becomes whether it is a good idea for Democrats to cause independents and moderates to believe that President Obama is in danger of being impeached.

I don't think so. Unlike Democrats, many independents and moderates understand the Republicans' deep discontent and frustration with Obama. Polls show that these sentiments are no longer confined to Republicans.

Few independents and moderates favor impeaching Obama, and if the House were to move in that direction, these voters would sympathize with the president and blame Republicans. But unless and until impeachment proceedings commence, they will blame Obama for having put himself in a position where impeachment is being discussed by anyone.

If a child tells his parent that his school may suspend him, a normal parent will conclude that the child has put himself in jeopardy by misbehaving. So too, I suspect, with the Democrats' cries of “impeachment.”

If independents and moderates credit the Democrats' claims that Republicans might impeach Obama, they will also blame Republicans for going overboard in their opposition to Obama, just as the parent in the above example will probably worry that the school is overreacting. But there's little reason to believe that many non-Democrats will credit claims that impeachment is in the cards, now that Speaker Boehner has said that it isn't.

Thus, as months pass and no impeachment materializes, no blame will attach to Republicans. The remaining impression will be that of a problematic president whose party cried “wolf.”

There's another dimension to the politics of "impeachment." By some accounts, Obama is poised to grant amnesty to millions of illegal immigrants. There is speculation that the cries of "impeachment" are related to this impending development.

If House Republicans become so outraged by the amnesty that they talk seriously of impeachment, Democrats can say "I told you so" and Boehner may look like a liar. If House Republicans don't talk seriously about impeachment, Obama will have lessened the firestorm and elements of the Republican base may become disillusioned.

But this strategy — if that's what it is — seems too clever by a half. The lawlessness of a unilateral grant of amnesty by Obama will likely upset not just Republicans and conservatives but many independents and moderates. They still won't favor impeachment, but they will understand more clearly why a case for impeachment can be made.

They will probably blame Obama even more for being a president whose name can appear in the same sentence as "impeachment" (is this what "hope and change" has come to?) And some may even credit House Republicans for their forbearance in not impeaching him.

UPDATE: A new AP/GfK poll [finds](#) that 68 percent of Americans now disapprove of Obama's handling of immigration. Lawless action by Obama on an issue that Americans already think he's mishandling will likely strengthen the sense that Obama has brought impeachment talk on himself.

National Review

[Criminal States](#)

In Illinois and New York, the crime-fighters are criminals.

by Kevin D. Williamson

There must be something in the DNA of Democratic governors that gives them a very specific sort of superpower — the ability to endure doses of irony that would disable an ordinary mortal, or at least cause him to blush. In my recent jaunt through Illinois (National Review subscribers can read about my adventures [here](#)), I frequently was reminded of the intensity of the violent crime plaguing its cities — not only in murder-happy Chicago ("[Gangsterville](#)") but also in the bedeviled city of East St. Louis, where the incidence of criminal violence is five times Chicago's rate. Illinois is of course a wildly corrupt state — its prisons function as pension homes for its politicians — and Governor Pat Quinn, either through sheer fecklessness or with malice aforethought, allowed his signature antiviolence program to be converted into a political slush fund, currently being investigated by federal criminal authorities. Which is to say, Governor Quinn's main anticrime measure is being investigated as a criminal enterprise.

I have a writer's superstition that the fundamental truth about a politician can be revealed through anagrams, though the best I can do for Governor Pat Quinn is "porn-quoting raven," which sounds like it ought to be a literary motif from the poems of Edgar Allan Poe. Andrew Cuomo's anagram — "Owed ACORN . . . Um?" — is probably more fitting. And Cuomo the Lesser is having some troubles quite similar to those of the flighty Quinn, having empaneled an inquisition into corruption in New York State government, known as the Moreland Commission. The Moreland Commission was supposed to be independent, but it wasn't, and Governor Cuomo is accused of having "interfered" with it, the usage of that word in the context of Albany bringing to mind the ancient euphemism "interfering with children." According to the [New York Times](#), the executive director of

the commission, Regina Calcaterra acted as Governor Cuomo's spy on the panel and as his factotum, notably by blocking subpoenas directed at the state real-estate board. Real-estate interests have been among Governor Cuomo's most reliable financial supporters.

When the stink of corruption upon the anticorruption panel began to waft as high and wide as the Manhattan penthouses and Bedford mansions in which dwell his masters, Governor Cuomo killed the commission, pronouncing it a waste of taxpayers' money. But not everything about it was an obvious waste: Ms. Calcaterra continued to draw her \$175,000/annum salary after the dissolution of the board. She is, according to the *New York Post*, currently negotiating a comfortable landing place at the State Insurance Fund. One has to admire the lady's chutzpah: She very nearly got herself elected to the New York state senate a few years ago, even though she lives in Philadelphia. She ran an earlier similar investigation into the state's utilities and their response to Hurricane Sandy.

According to the *Times* account of the commission — an excellent piece of journalism, incidentally, one of those periodic reminders that as much as the moribund dinosaur dailies seem intent on annoying us, they perform an irreplaceable service — the trouble began almost immediately. Investigators began looking into the work of a Democratic media-buying firm, which they believed might be connected to violations of campaign-finance law. The firm counts Governor Cuomo among its clients, and his office was quick to declare investigating it verboten: "Pull it back," was the command issued by Lawrence Schwartz, Governor Cuomo's right hand.

And the subpoena was withdrawn.

So much for the independent investigation.

In more civilized times, leaders with the records of Andrew Cuomo or Pat Quinn would go into retirement, tending to the vineyards at their villas in decent obscurity, far from the seat of power. That in our own time such miscreants endure and thrive is enough to make one nostalgic for the Roman practice of exile, if not for the Japanese practice of ritual disembowelment.

The point here is not that the state governments of New York and Illinois are corrupt, or that the Democratic party is, in my friend Michael Walsh's piquant but accurate phrase, a criminal organization masquerading as a political party. We try to publish and discuss news here at National Review, and that is not news. But it is important to take this in context: What is happening in New York and Illinois, and in practically every city and state in which what amounts to one-party Democratic rule is in effect, is not simple, old-fashioned graft, political bosses skimming 10 percent off the top or installing mobsters' nephews in \$400,000-a-year no-show jobs. What is happening instead in today's Democratic party is something very much like the corruption that characterized the Republican machines in the 19th century: not straightforward criminal corruption for financial purposes, but corruption of the political process itself, not only for the purpose of greed but also for the purpose of power. The Apostle Paul advised his correspondent Timothy that the love of money is the root of all evil, but he lived in a gentler time, when the most rapacious political bosses were Herod Agrippa and Augustus Caesar, neither of whom ever dreamt of such pomp and power as accompanies an American president.

This will not end well: While the IRS is being used to persecute the politically unpopular, Governor Cuomo's office is protecting the politically connected from legitimate investigation. While the people of East St. Louis can't get a sidewalk repaired, the program that is supposed to be pacifying their shockingly violent streets is instead being used to fatten the politically connected as part of a vote-buying scheme. Politically supercharged Democratic prosecutors have attempted to imprison Tom DeLay and other political figures for the crime of winning elections — they succeeded only in

ravaging his life and destroying his political career, and that, not prison, was the intended outcome. The persecution of Governor Scott Walker in Wisconsin — complete with gag orders that prevented the targets of political abuse from complaining about it in public — was a straight-up Gestapo operation.

When President Obama confuses himself with President Dredd and shouts “I am the law!” he does so as a colleague and cooperator of Governors Quinn and Cuomo, as a man who has a hand in what they have wrought. When the likes of Ezra Klein and his fellow partisans argue that the law as such is a mere nicety of “grammar” that stands between them and the things that they propose to do with such power as they are able to secure, they, too, have a hand in this. The leap from willfully ignoring the law to actively subverting it requires very little moral athleticism. No doubt Governor Cuomo and Governor Quinn each thinks that he is doing what is best for his state, and that the good things he can do with power justify the wicked things he must do to keep it. No doubt Barack Obama sincerely thinks that, and Lois Lerner, too.

Osama bin Laden was utterly sincere in his beliefs, too.

Sincerity has its limits. And so must political power, if we are to survive and stay free.







