

October 21, 2014

Yuval Levin with suggestions of what we could learn from the Ebola crisis.
In the growing public debate about Ebola, both sides are basically right. The administration is right that we are not witnessing an outbreak of Ebola and that such an outbreak is unlikely in our highly developed public-health system. But the administration's critics are right that we are witnessing serious failures of that system that should be cause for serious alarm and major improvement.

Ideally, this unusual combination of circumstances — a genuine test of our communicable-disease containment and response system in which the danger to the public at large is actually quite small — would be an opportunity to learn some humbling lessons and make some meaningful changes. We have already learned, for instance, that in the case of a serious public-health crisis, our public officials will have a tendency to express vast overconfidence while relying on plans and procedures that demand an unrealistic level of competence from an enormous number of people in a wide variety of circumstances. The president should not have said that it was unlikely that anyone with Ebola would reach our shores, and the CDC director should not have said that essentially any hospital in America can handle Ebola — and more important, his agency should not have believed that and built its response plan on that premise.

This crucial process of learning lessons has been hampered so far by a peculiar attitude that often emerges in our politics in times of crisis and imbues our debates with the wrong approach to learning from failure. The attitude is premised on the bizarre assumption that large institutions are hyper-competent by default, so that when they fail we should seek for nefarious causes. Not only liberals (who are at least pretty consistent about making this ridiculous mistake) but also some conservatives who should know better respond with a mix of outrage and disgust to failures of government to contend effortlessly with daunting emergencies. ...

Kevin Williamson writes on the Ebola administration.

... The Right has had a good deal of fun this week mocking all of the things that our federal health czars have been paying attention to in recent years rather than horrifying threats such as Ebola — e.g., figuring out why lesbians are commonly fat but gay men aren't, stopping us from bringing home cheese from France but not Ebola from Liberia, etc. But that could very well turn un-funny in short order. It is impossible to tell what will happen with Ebola here or abroad, and the flapping of this viral butterfly's wings represents one of those high-stakes rolls of history's dice, the outcome of which cannot be anticipated. Consider such human, economic, and cultural catastrophes as the Great War, HIV, or Communism: None of those was the obvious outcome of a foreseeable chain of events. Neither Karl Marx nor Gavrilo Princip, to say nothing of that unknown chimpanzee hunter, could have imagined where the currents of history in which they were wading would end up taking us.

I am a long-term optimist, but the politics of fear gets a bad rap. Conservatives and progressives both understand in our bones that — for better and for worse — the world is an uncertain and unpredictable place, and full of dangers as well as unforeseen delights. For the Left, mitigating those risks means mostly offering social-welfare guarantees; for the Right, risk-mitigation means preferring to have a military whose capabilities exceed those of the rest of the world combined several times over. Each of those tendencies runs into problems as it interacts with economic and political realities, and the terrifying thing that must be understood is that those Lockheed contracts — along with the nuclear arsenal and the rest of our national security — are in the hands of the same class of people and institutions responsible for our feckless response to Ebola's arrival on

our shores, a fact that would if well appreciated liberate us from any temptation toward ideological complacency.

Noah Rothman at Hot Air posts on the efforts by the left to blame the Ebola crisis on budget cuts.

... Even those ostensibly nonpartisan actors who insist that Republicans stood in the way of a life-saving vaccine are on the receiving end of a rebuke from their more honest colleagues. Dr. Anthony Fauci, the lead researcher on the NIH's effort to develop an Ebola vaccine, told Time Magazine reporters in early October that there is no vaccine today because, intuitively, "there was no disease around." For the deliberately obtuse, he called this condition "obvious." Today, Fauci reiterated his objection to his director's divisive and baseless claim unequivocally in an interview with Meet the Press moderator Chuck Todd.

Only a desperate partisan would embrace the routine and cynical pleas from an agency head for more funding as the gospel truth, but such is the dire state of Democratic political prospects.

Naturally, the legs having been ripped out from under this reckless attack on Republicans' integrity amid a health emergency, you would expect those Democrats with some self-respect to abandon it, right? Not so fast. ...

John Podhoretz says the Times should get paid for running ads for the administration. *These are difficult times, so it makes sense for America's journalistic institutions to locate new revenue streams.*

Just look at the New York Times, always an industry leader: It's become the official stenographer of the Obama White House.

On Saturday, The Times ran a story about the president and his response to the Ebola outbreak that read like it was dictated word for word by the president's top men.

If I were a stockholder in the New York Times Co., I would certainly hope the paper was properly compensated for the front-page placement of this naked political advertisement.

The only thing missing from it was the opening line that all political commercials are now required to include: "I'm Barack Obama and I approve of this message." ...

The Blog Just One Minute posts on the continuingly shocked and surprised and disappointed President Bystander.

... I have lost track of the number of times we have read that Obama is shocked to learn that big bureaucracies can be clumsy and plagued by poor communication, but I welcome some reminders in the comments; offhand, the Secret Service, the HealthCare.fail rollout and the VA spring to mind, but I also recall he learned about the IRS and Fast and Furious by careful reading of his daily newspapers.

My advice to Team Obama - encourage the Big Guy to take a look around. If he sees a playing field and thousands of screaming fans then he is probably in a luxury skybox somewhere and yes, he is free to cheer and boo like any other spectator. But if he sees a famous desk and slightly curved walls, then he is probably in the Oval Office and might want to remember that he is Chief Executive of the United States and is notionally responsible for the many bureaucracies he purportedly leads.

And I am begging these inside sources offering these seemingly friendly (and seemingly endless) attempts to separate Obama from the debacle du jour - after six years even Obama, a True Believer in Big Government with no actual executive experience, must have noticed that bureaucracies take a bit of coaxing and management. Enough already with the whining and hand-wringing. ...

Glenn Reynolds shares with us Bobby Jindal's tweets on the four stages of obama crisis management.

Stage 1 of Obama Crisis Management: Don't worry, I got this.

Stage 2 of Obama Crisis Management: I'm so mad.

Stage 3 of Obama Crisis Management: More money will fix it.

Stage 4 of Obama Crisis Management: Republicans are obstructing.

Breitbart News picks up on Tina Brown throwing the One under the bus.

"They've got themselves a little better disciplined. But, you know, the fact is that Obama's down with everybody, let's face it, there's a reason," Brown said. "And I think that particularly for women. I don't think it makes them feel safe. I think they're feeling unsafe. Economically, they're feeling unsafe. With regard to ISIS, they're feeling unsafe. They feel unsafe about Ebola. What they're feeling unsafe about is the government response to different crises. And I think they're beginning to feel a bit that Obama's like that guy in the corner office, you know, who's too cool for school, calls a meeting, says this has to change, doesn't put anything in place to make sure it does change, then it goes wrong and he's blaming everybody. So there's a slight sense of that."

Cartoonists are especially good today.

National Review

Lessons of the Ebola Crisis

by Yuval Levin

In the growing public debate about Ebola, both sides are basically right. The administration is right that we are not witnessing an outbreak of Ebola and that such an outbreak is unlikely in our highly developed public-health system. But the administration's critics are right that we are witnessing serious failures of that system that should be cause for serious alarm and major improvement.

Ideally, this unusual combination of circumstances — a genuine test of our communicable-disease containment and response system in which the danger to the public at large is actually quite small — would be an opportunity to learn some humbling lessons and make some meaningful changes. We have already learned, for instance, that in the case of a serious public-health crisis, our public officials will have a tendency to express vast overconfidence while relying on plans and procedures that demand an unrealistic level of competence from an enormous number of people in a wide variety of circumstances. The president should not have said that it was unlikely that anyone with Ebola would reach our shores, and the CDC director should not have said that essentially any hospital in America can handle Ebola — and more important, his agency should not have believed that and built its response plan on that premise.

This crucial process of learning lessons has been hampered so far by a peculiar attitude that often emerges in our politics in times of crisis and imbues our debates with the wrong approach to learning from failure. The attitude is premised on the bizarre assumption that large institutions are hyper-competent by default, so that when they fail we should seek for nefarious causes. Not only liberals (who are at least pretty consistent about making this ridiculous mistake) but also some conservatives who should know better respond with a mix of outrage and disgust to failures of government to contend effortlessly with daunting emergencies. But do we really expect (or even want) our government to have the power and ability to smooth all of life's edges and be ready in an instant to address the consequences of, say, a major hurricane or massive oil spill or deadly disease outbreak? What do we think that government would be doing with that power the rest of the time? What we should want and expect is a government that can respond to unexpected emergencies by calling upon generally plausible prior planning, quickly building up capacity when it is needed, and learning from unavoidable early mistakes.

The most prominent of the arguments from nefarious causes has been the notion that what we're witnessing now is the result of budget cuts—because surely an adequately funded government would also be omnicompetent. And it is especially appalling that this line of reasoning has been helped along by uncharacteristically foolish comments from NIH director Francis Collins. The director of the NIH would of course like the agency to have even more money, and he no doubt wishes his agency had directed more resources to this particular disease in the past. But his agency does have a \$30 billion budget (which was doubled, in my view in a rather reckless way, in the late Clinton and early Bush years). And until this year the most severe known outbreak of Ebola had killed a total of 280 people—so it was perfectly reasonable not to treat it as a high priority in a world where, say, malaria kills 600,000 people every year, and it's not likely that if the NIH had been given more money in recent years it would have directed it to Ebola research. This unexpected outbreak is killing thousands in Africa and could kill many more, and so we are turning our sizable resources to it. That we do not already have a vaccine is not a failure of government. It is a serious problem that our government (with its massive commitment to medical research) and our private pharmaceutical sector are actually pretty well positioned to help address now that it has arisen.

The response of our public health system is certainly another story, but there too there is simply no reason to think budgets are at issue, or that the failures we have witnessed are inexplicable. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is a public-health agency, and public health is an uneasy combination of two very different things: emergency disease containment and nannyist do-goodism. It is a field that exists to save us from the plague and to tell us to drink less soda. To expect the same agency, and many of the same people, to be very good at both of these missions is a lot to ask, and the CDC is much better at the second than the first. Since (thank God) we don't experience many plague outbreaks, public health spends most of its time on that second mission: preaching the virtues of green vegetables and contraception. So the CDC is for the most part an agency engaged in a kind of low-grade, often silly social activism much of the time. When we confront a disease outbreak or similar public-health emergency, the CDC turns to the other part of its mission, and has an impressive core of experts and resources to call upon in doing so. But the turn is no simple matter, and the fact is we (thankfully) just haven't had much experience with public-health emergencies on American soil, so the people charged with handling them haven't had much practice here. It is not hard to imagine how all of this could lead to failures of the sort we have seen.

The question, then, is whether our public-health system, and our political decision makers, are learning lessons from their poor performance so far. It remains to be seen if senior officials from the president on down will be able to stop saying more than they know. But it does seem as though the CDC is backing off from its expectation that the competence required to deal with Ebola will be very widely available in our health-care system. They're saying publicly that they will begin to send specialist SWAT teams to any hospital with a likely case of Ebola, but in practice they're actually doing something better than that: they're moving patients to a few select hospitals (so far Emory University hospital, which works closely with the CDC in Atlanta, and the NIH's own specialty hospital in Maryland) where they know the expertise exists. That should continue. There aren't many such hospitals, but there won't be many patients at this point either and this should be a sustainable model for the time being.

A second lesson, which I suspect is being slowly internalized by the administration, concerns the importance of containing the disease. But the exact implications of this lesson for policy are not as clear. I agree with NR's editors that the United States should impose a travel ban (with ample room for case-by-case exceptions) to our shores from Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone, and should have done so weeks ago. The chief argument of opponents of such a ban, which the NR editorial didn't really take up much, is that a ban would further undermine the economies of the stricken countries and so make it more likely that people, including people with Ebola, would flee those countries and make it more difficult to contain the disease. That's a serious argument, and a serious worry that policymakers have to balance against the need to close off direct routes of potential transmission into our country. It's particularly serious because containing Ebola and fighting it where it is must be the top priority of public-health officials. Allowing the disease to spread into densely populated parts of the world beyond the three nations now affected by it would ultimately be at least as dangerous to the United States as keeping passenger travel from those countries open at the moment. Conversations with a variety of public-health officials and journalists and others who have kept a close eye on this crisis have left me persuaded that the pursuit of this balance ultimately points to imposing a travel ban, and that it would be useful and important to do so now. And I think the administration will impose that ban. But it's not a simple or easy call.

And all of this points to one further lesson that encompasses the rest, and which we probably haven't really learned yet: not to underestimate this disease and this outbreak. This is really the original mistake, made by public-health officials throughout the world who worked to help the West African nations affected. It, too, was understandable. Past outbreaks of Ebola have all involved a very limited number of people in very contained zones. It was becoming apparent by the beginning

of the summer that this one was different, but that's much easier to see in retrospect than it could have been at the time. And no one really has any experience dealing with an outbreak of this particular disease that begins to grow exponentially as this one has. It is out of control in parts of West Africa, and is going to get much, much worse before it gets better.

The very nature of the debate we are now having, including the debate over the travel ban, is evidence of the fact that we probably have not yet learned not to underestimate this outbreak. We are still thinking about it in terms of a crisis in Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone that could reach our shores by the various means that connect us to them. But the real danger, to us and to others, is probably far greater than that. Our greatest worry should not be that the disease could get to the United States from those West African nations but that it will get to Nigeria's larger population centers or to, say, India or other places with massive population density and weak public-health systems, and from there will become an epidemic throughout the third world. The scale that this outbreak is now likely to reach in West Africa will make it rather difficult to prevent that, raising the risk of a far more colossal human catastrophe than the nightmare we are already witnessing and of a greater threat to the U.S. population.

That has not yet happened, and so it is likely preventable, but what the world is doing at this point in West Africa is probably not sufficient to prevent it. The travel bans imposed by many African nations have been effective (and again, I think we should have a similar one) and the increased commitment of resources and expertise by the United States will surely help, but it does seem unequal to the scope of the task.

We must work to see that our domestic public-health authorities learn lessons from the relatively modest problems they confront. But ultimately, the work of containment and prevention in West Africa, combined with intense efforts to develop treatments and vaccines, is what matters most. We are likely still making the original mistake of this crisis — still underestimating the outbreak.

National Review

[The Ebola Administration](#)

Lockheed's nuclear-fusion project sounds promising, but remember: It is the federal government's largest contractor.

by Kevin D. Williamson

Lockheed Martin thinks it may just about have a handle on this nuclear-fusion thing, but the U.S. government cannot manage to keep Ebola patients off a flight to Cleveland. Sometimes, you simply must hate the 21st century.

Lockheed's announcement about its ambitious fusion project, which if successful would represent a fundamental economic and technological shift for the entire world, is the sort of thing that makes one pause to consider the possibilities. The end product would be a relatively compact (small enough to haul on a semi) reactor that could with a few pounds of fuel and no emissions power aircraft and spacecraft that effectively never need refueling, transform and decentralize power grids, and do much more. The libertarian in me is tempted to say, "Aha! There's your private sector in action!" and to prepare my soul to enjoy the spectacle of people who are terrified about carbon dioxide emissions prostrating themselves before Lockheed's research team. But Lockheed Martin isn't really the private sector; it is year in and year out the federal government's largest contractor, and federal contracts account for about three-fourths of its revenue. It relies on a government-dominated enterprise, the universities, for its most important input, raw brainpower.

But if one is willing to let up on the ideological rigidity, the Lockheed outcome is a pretty good one: The firm is largely engaged in helping the federal government provide a legitimate public good — defense — and it does so in a competitive market, throwing off a raft of profits and some very cool innovation in the process. If everything that government had a hand in looked like MIT, DARPA, and Skunk Works shenanigans, it would not be a perfect outcome, by any measure, but it would be a pretty good one. For all of the waste and excess in defense appropriations and contracting, and despite the occasional outbreak of Brigadier General Jack D. Ripper-ism in the commanding echelons, there is a sense that this represents government doing what it is intended to be doing, and doing it relatively well.

It may be that Lockheed's fusion project comes to naught; many great minds and powerful enterprises have foundered upon those particular shoals. On the other hand, that technology might be powering a Mars colony or vast desalination projects by the time today's kindergartners are old enough to drink. If I've learned anything from my excursions into retro-futurism, it is that the safest prediction about the future is that it will look a great deal like the present, but the ways in which it is radically different will be counterintuitive and generally utilitarian, not the sexy things everybody expects: You don't get flying cars, you get Facebook.

It is easy to get the upside wrong, and even easier to get the downside wrong; for an example, review Peter Schwartz and Peter Leyden's originally celebrated, and subsequently mocked, 1997 *Wired* essay "The Long Boom," which was in many way correct about the general trends that would shape the early 21st century but wrong on most of the particulars. Its excessive optimism on the subjects of alternative energy and biotechnology is not impossible to defend, but what looks considerably worse in retrospect is its weak grasp of non-technological factors such as Islamic totalitarianism, Russia's retreat into autocracy, and the persistent toxin of Chinese nationalism — and, as important, the interaction of those non-technological factors with new technology. Instant, frictionless communication makes the world smaller for MIT's selection of online courses, and for jihadists, too. Cheap international travel means that it's a small world after all — for Ebola.

The Right has had a good deal of fun this week mocking all of the things that our federal health czars have been paying attention to in recent years rather than horrifying threats such as Ebola — e.g., figuring out why lesbians are commonly fat but gay men aren't, stopping us from bringing home cheese from France but not Ebola from Liberia, etc. But that could very well turn un-funny in short order. It is impossible to tell what will happen with Ebola here or abroad, and the flapping of this viral butterfly's wings represents one of those high-stakes rolls of history's dice, the outcome of which cannot be anticipated. Consider such human, economic, and cultural catastrophes as the Great War, HIV, or Communism: None of those was the obvious outcome of a foreseeable chain of events. Neither Karl Marx nor Gavrilo Princip, to say nothing of that unknown chimpanzee hunter, could have imagined where the currents of history in which they were wading would end up taking us.

I am a long-term optimist, but the politics of fear gets a bad rap. Conservatives and progressives both understand in our bones that — for better and for worse — the world is an uncertain and unpredictable place, and full of dangers as well as unforeseen delights. For the Left, mitigating those risks means mostly offering social-welfare guarantees; for the Right, risk-mitigation means preferring to have a military whose capabilities exceed those of the rest of the world combined several times over. Each of those tendencies runs into problems as it interacts with economic and political realities, and the terrifying thing that must be understood is that those Lockheed contracts — along with the nuclear arsenal and the rest of our national security — are in the hands of the same class of people and institutions responsible for our feckless response to Ebola's arrival on our shores, a fact that would if well appreciated liberate us from any temptation toward ideological complacency.

Hot Air

The Democrats' embarrassing attempt to blame Republican for Ebola collapses

by Noah Rothman

Projection is a powerful phenomenon, and the American people have been subject to a perfectly cynical display of psychological projection from Democrats this week as the increasing likelihood that the party in power is going to endure a stinging censure from the voters on November 4.

Democrats have spent the better part of the week insisting that Republicans who have urged the president to take stronger measures to contain Ebola in the United States, which he did on Friday with the creation of a federal Ebola response coordinator, are stoking unwarranted fears among the public. At the same time, liberals do not see a contradiction in their behavior when they make the dubious claim that the only reason why there is an Ebola threat to America today is because of Republicans and their pathological attachment to budget cuts.

Last weekend, as the left frantically scrambled for a way to shield the president from criticism after Ebola broke out in the United States despite the assurances of federal authorities that such an eventuality was unlikely, liberals began to ring their favorite bell about reduced federal spending being responsible for this crisis, as well as all other human ills. An authoritative voice joined the chorus last Sunday when National Institutes of Health Director Dr. Francis Collins told The Huffington Post's Sam Stein that the world would have cured Ebola today [but for cuts to his agency's budget](#).

Collins did not assign blame to one political party or the other, but the message had been perfectly received by partisan operatives on the left. "Gee, thanks Republicans," Democratic strategist Paul Begala barked in reaction to the article. He was merely the vanguard of a pageant of liberal critics who emerged certain that this deadly hemorrhagic fever ravaging West Africa and now spreading across the globe was essentially a Republican plot.

Collins' quote to Stein coincided coincidentally with the release of a ham-handed 60-second web ad from a progressive organization which directly blamed Republicans for the spread of Ebola.

"On many levels, this line of attack is absurd," [The Washington Post fact checker Glenn Kessler signed](#).

Obama's Republican predecessor oversaw big increases in public-health sector spending, and both Democrats and Republicans in recent years have broadly supported efforts to rein in federal spending. Sequestration resulted from a bipartisan agreement. In some years, Congress has allocated more money for NIH and CDC than the Obama administration requested.

The beleaguered fact checker awarded the group who released the ad with Four Pinocchios, signifying that even an objective observer inclined to charitably interpret the ad could not find one element of truth to it.

Even those ostensibly nonpartisan actors who insist that Republicans stood in the way of a life-saving vaccine are on the receiving end of a rebuke from their more honest colleagues. Dr. Anthony Fauci, the lead researcher on the NIH's effort to develop an Ebola vaccine, told *Time* Magazine reporters in early October that there is no vaccine today because, intuitively, "there was no disease around." For the deliberately obtuse, he called this condition "obvious." Today, Fauci

reiterated his objection to his director's divisive and baseless claim unequivocally in an interview with *Meet the Press* moderator Chuck Todd.

Only a desperate partisan would embrace the routine and cynical pleas from an agency head for more funding as the gospel truth, but such is the dire state of Democratic political prospects.

Naturally, the legs having been ripped out from under this reckless attack on Republicans' integrity amid a health emergency, you would expect those Democrats with some self-respect to abandon it, right? Not so fast.

"President Barack Obama is preparing to ask Congress for additional funds to combat Ebola, a move that could shift some political pressure from the White House to lawmakers in the last two weeks before midterm elections," [Bloomberg Politics reporter Jonathan Allen reported on Saturday](#). "While the move is unlikely to end criticism of Obama for a faltering response to the first U.S. cases, it could give him and his fellow Democrats a new talking point: that Republicans aren't willing to pay to fight Ebola."

The hollow, vicious, empty assault on the GOP and their supposed attachment to cruel austerity is simply too delicious to let go, so Democrats must create the conditions whereby it could become true enough to repeat with a straight face.

It is no wonder then why Democrats, according to the latest [Wall Street Journal/NBC News/Annenberg](#) poll, enjoy a 10-point lead only among "low information voters."

NY Post

[**How the NYT blatantly spins for Obama on Ebola**](#)

by John Podhoretz

These are difficult times, so it makes sense for America's journalistic institutions to locate new revenue streams.

Just look at the New York Times, always an industry leader: It's become the official stenographer of the Obama White House.

On Saturday, [The Times ran a story about the president](#) and his response to the [Ebola](#) outbreak that read like it was dictated word for word by the president's top men.

If I were a stockholder in the New York Times Co., I would certainly hope the paper was properly compensated for the front-page placement of this naked political advertisement.

The only thing missing from it was the opening line that all political commercials are now required to include: "I'm Barack Obama and I approve of this message."

According to the article, the president isn't actually as supportive of his administration's Ebola-fighting team as he has sounded over the past couple of weeks.

Quite the opposite: "Amid Assurances on Ebola," the headline ran, "Obama Is Said to Seethe."

The White House, anonymously of course, wants people to think the president shares their disbelief at how [ham-handed and inconsistent his team's conduct has been](#) — no matter that he has repeatedly praised it and has himself contributed to the appearance of cluelessness with his own public statements on the Ebola problem.

And so it was time for a story revealing that the president is really quite furious — but in private.

The president's problem with his administration's response is that it's not "tight," whatever that means. He was "visibly angry" when he used the word at a meeting on Wednesday for which he canceled a campaign trip (no! not a campaign trip!).

"White House officials have sought to balance [two] imperatives," wrote Michael D. Shear and Mark Landler: "Insisting the dangers to the American public were being overstated in the news media, while also moving quickly to increase the president's demonstration of action."

That last clause isn't in English, which suggests that Shear's and Landler's skills at shorthand aren't all they should be.

They might want to bone up for the next assignment, lest their jobs be outsourced to a dial-up Dictaphone Call Center in Bangalore.

Just One Minute

[Obama Disappointed \(Again\) By Clunky Big Government Fail \(Again\)](#)

Here we go again, as the NY Times [puts out their obligatory](#) "Obama is as shocked and dismayed by this latest Big Government fail as the rest of you poor suckers" story:

Amid Assurances on Ebola, Obama Is Said to Seethe

WASHINGTON — Beneath the calming reassurance that [President Obama](#) has repeatedly offered during the Ebola crisis, there is a deepening frustration, even anger, with how the government has handled key elements of the response.

Those frustrations spilled over when Mr. Obama convened his top aides in the Cabinet room after canceling his schedule on Wednesday. Medical officials were providing information that later turned out to be wrong. Guidance to local health teams was not adequate. It was unclear which Ebola patients belonged in which threat categories.

"It's not tight," a visibly angry Mr. Obama said of the response, according to people briefed on the meeting. He told aides they needed to get ahead of events and demanded a more hands-on approach, particularly from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). "He was not satisfied with the response," a senior official said.

I have lost track of the number of times we have read that Obama is shocked to learn that big bureaucracies can be clumsy and plagued by poor communication, but I welcome some reminders in the comments; offhand, the Secret Service, the HealthCare.fail rollout and the VA spring to mind, but I also recall he learned about the IRS and Fast and Furious by careful reading of his daily newspapers.

My advice to Team Obama - encourage the Big Guy to take a look around. If he sees a playing field and thousands of screaming fans then he is probably in a luxury skybox somewhere and yes, he is free to cheer and boo like any other spectator. But if he sees a famous desk and slightly curved walls, then he is probably in the Oval Office and might want to remember that he is Chief Executive of the United States and is notionally responsible for the many bureaucracies he purportedly leads.

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WHEN THE CHEERLEADERS PUT DOWN THE POM-POMS... Times Columnist Joe Nocera on the attack:

Failures of Competence

...

When you think about it, many of the Obama administration's "scandals" have been failures of competence. The Secret Service let a man leap over the White House fence and get into the White House. The Veterans Health Administration covered up unconscionable delays in treating veterans. The error-ridden rollout of the Obamacare website was a nightmare for people trying to sign up for health insurance. The Republican right takes it as an article of faith that the national government can't do anything right. Problems like these only help promote that idea.

And now comes the C.D.C. — the most trusted agency in government — thrust in a role for which it was designed: advising us and protecting us from a potential contagion. With every new mistake, it becomes, in the public eye, just another federal agency that can't get it right.

Instapundit

BOBBY JINDAL PUTS THE BOOT IN.

by Glenn Reynolds



Gov. Bobby Jindal

✓ @BobbyJindal

Stage 1 of Obama Crisis Management: Don't worry, I got this.

Stage 2 of Obama Crisis Management: I'm so mad.

Stage 3 of Obama Crisis Management: More money will fix it.

Stage 4 of Obama Crisis Management: Republicans are obstructing.

Apparently we're at Stage Two right now.

Breitbart News

Tina Brown: Obama Makes Women Feel 'Unsafe'

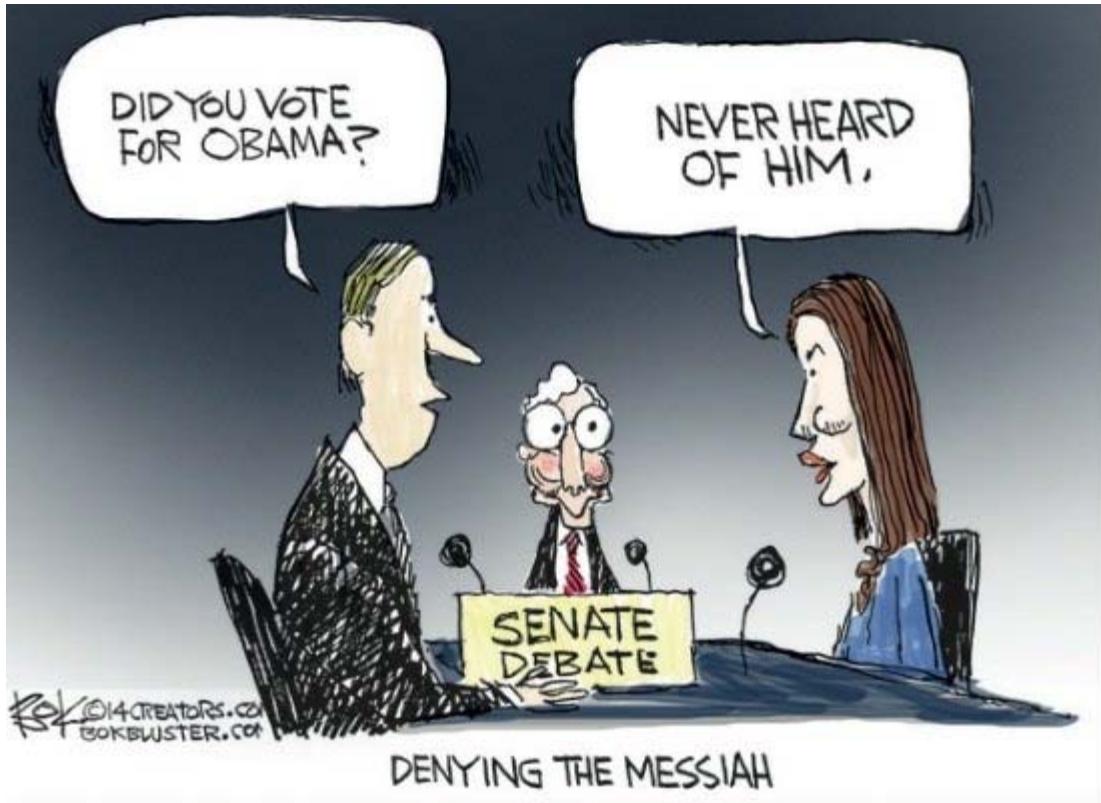
On Monday's "Morning Joe" on MSNBC, author and Daily Beast founder Tina Brown took aim at President Barack Obama and his handling of the several crises facing the country with regards to how women voters view perceive his responses.

Brown explained that Obama's persona has done little to reassure that key voting bloc.

"They've got themselves a little better disciplined. But, you know, the fact is that Obama's down with everybody, let's face it, there's a reason," Brown said. "And I think that particularly for women. I don't think it makes them feel safe. I think they're feeling unsafe. Economically, they're feeling unsafe. With regard to ISIS, they're feeling unsafe. They feel unsafe about Ebola. What they're feeling unsafe about is the government response to different crises. And I think they're beginning to feel a bit that Obama's like that guy in the corner office, you know, who's too cool for school, calls a meeting, says this has to change, doesn't put anything in place to make sure it does change, then it goes wrong and he's blaming everybody. So there's a slight sense of that."

Brown also attack the GOP, saying that while Obama has been underwhelming in some regards, Republicans have done nothing to pick up the slack in her view.

"But at the same time, we ought to think about what Republicans are doing for women, which is very little, you know," Brown added. "I mean, they were against ... they blocked the Paycheck Fairness Act --the fourth time since 2012. You know, they are really just not helping women at all. This gap in the economy is terrible. The fact that women are losing their jobs even more than men because of this whole kind of part-time issue and the economy's terrible. So, you know, it's not good."





RUN! CONTAGION!





PRESIDENT OBAMA WARNING SYSTEM



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