

The Obama Timeline – Part II

The Doomed Presidency

February 2013

On February 1 a security guard is killed outside the U.S. embassy in Ankara, Turkey when a suicide bomber detonates an explosive device. Townhall.com reports, “State broadcaster TRT said the attacker was thought to be from The Revolutionary People’s Liberation Party-Front (DHKP-C), which wants a socialist state and is vehemently anti-American, according to the U.S. National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC).” White House press secretary Jay Carney states, “A suicide bombing on the perimeter of an embassy is by definition an act of terror. However, we do not know at this point who is responsible or the motivations behind the attack. The attack itself is clearly an act of terror.” (With the November 2012 election over, the Obama administration is now willing to use the word terrorism. During Hillary Clinton’s four years as Secretary of State in there have been eight attacks on U.S. embassies: Turkey, Indonesia, Yemen, Afghanistan, Sudan, Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya.) [42175, 42193, 42199, 42205, 42216]

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that only 157,000 jobs were created in January. (That number is insufficient to keep up with population growth, let alone help the 23 million Americans who are unemployed or working only part-time because full-time jobs are not available.) The unemployment rate increased to 7.9 percent. (The true figure is actually much higher—probably at least 14 percent—if one includes the millions of Americans who have given up looking for work and who are no longer counted by the government in the “official” unemployment calculations. That number has increased by about 8.5 million since Obama entered the White House, and an estimated 169,000 Americans dropped out of the workforce in January; more people gave up looking for work than found jobs.) If amnesty legislation is passed millions of previously illegal immigrants will enter the legal workforce, further increasing the unemployment rate. (There were about 134.3 million Americans working when Obama took office in January 2009. As of October 2012 the number was only 133.8 million.) [42191, 42204, 42212, 42508]

The White House reacts to the grim job numbers with essentially the same talking points it has regurgitated for four years. Alan Krueger, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors, says, “I think today’s report is the continuation of a pattern where we’re seeing the job market healing. It’s not back to full health... So, January’s numbers are in line with what we’ve been seeing, and we just need to keep building on this progress and making sure that Washington doesn’t give us any self-inflicted wounds. ...That’s why [Obama] has supported investing in more infrastructure to improve our roads and our highways and improve our productivity in the future, make other steps to strengthen the economy while we get the deficit under control. ...I think that what’s important is that the administration and Congress continue to make the steps that build a stronger economy, and an economy that works better for the middle class and helps to put us on a path to a

sustainable budget in a balanced way. ...I think the main risk we face right now is Congressional gridlock [that] could prevent us from [taking] the steps we need to build a stronger economy, an economy that works better for the middle class.” [42202, 42203]

Investors.com reports, “The fly in the ointment of January’s jobs report was the apparent shift to part-time work ahead of a key ObamaCare deadline. Although retail payrolls grew by 32,600, total hours worked in the industry dipped... The explanation? Rank-and-file retail workers logged the shortest workweek since early 2010: just 30.1 hours, on average, vs. 30.4 in December. Remarkably, aggregate hours worked in the retail sector fell below their January 2012 level, even though industry payrolls are up 200,000 over that period. [There are more workers but they are working fewer total hours.] A similar trend showed up in leisure and hospitality: January payrolls rose by 23,000 even as aggregate hours dipped 0.3%. Meanwhile, the ranks of part-time workers due to business conditions or because they can’t find full-time work, trending lower in the past few years, rose by 212,000 to 7.8 million. ...All signs suggest that businesses are starting to adjust their employment policies in response to ObamaCare. It’s possible that much of this shift may occur in the next few months. ...The law exempts companies with fewer than 50 employees from providing health care coverage. Firms with at least 50 workers face fines based on the number of employees who receive ObamaCare subsidies, which are only available to people who lack affordable coverage from an employer. But those fines—up to \$3,000 per ObamaCare subsidized worker—won’t apply for part-time workers, which the law defines as 30 hours per week. An obvious strategy to minimize fines is to cut some workers to just below the 30-hour threshold. Staying below the 50-worker threshold—based on total hours rather than a simple head count—also may be an option.” [42241]

Secretary of Energy Steven Chu announces he will resign his post as soon as Obama appoints a successor. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood has also announced that he is leaving. (Some expect Obama to name former Washington governor Christine Gregoire, a global warming believer and supporter of “cap-and-trade” legislation, to succeed Chu.) [42222, 42250, 42284]

The White House states it is “disappointed” by the testimony of Secretary of Defense nominee Chuck Hagel at the January 31 Senate confirmation hearing. (HotAir.com asks, “If Hagel’s not losing votes (as far as we know) and he’s not going to withdraw, what purpose does it serve for the White House to say it’s disappointed in him? Are they signaling to Senate Dems that they’re now free to vote against him if they wish? But why would they do that when they know most of the public either won’t care or won’t remember on election day what happened yesterday? It’s inexplicable.”) [42201]

The Communist party USA’s PeoplesWorld.org criticizes the tough questioning of Hagel and says he “represent[s] the more sober elements who have called in our national discourse for rejection of the old cold war tactics, the unilateralism and the continual push for wars all over the world.” [42316]

At PJMedia.com Roger Simon comments on Chuck Hagel's Senate confirmation hearing: "Not to mince words, the former Nebraska senator is an uninformed nitwit. He's confused about practically every issue and doesn't even know what the administration's policies are. (Didn't he study for the hearing? If he did, it's even worse.) They had to send him a note in the middle of the proceedings to remind him of the administration's position on Iran and 'containment' and even then Hagel got it wrong. [Democrat Senator] Carl Levin had to explain it to him. I have never seen a nomination hearing so humiliating. (I see why people like Hagel though. He's kind of an affable dope. But a secretary of Defense? Better for bartender at the golf club.) ... Why in the world would [Obama] nominate such a person for such an important position? Well, I think we know—he wanted a Republican ally in gutting the Pentagon, a lackey who would give him cover for his most extreme policies." [42214, 42215]

NBC News president Steve Capus is fired. John Nolte reports at Breitbart.com, "During his tenure, no fewer than the equivalent of five RatherGates happened; and after two, three and four of these incidents, it became glaringly apparent that Capus was the problem. Today, action was finally taken. ... The rap sheet against Capus isn't troubling, surprising, or even disturbing—it is breathtaking: 1. During last year's presidential election, Andrea Mitchell was caught manufacturing a Romney gaffe where none existed. 2. During last year's GOP primary, Ed Schultz edited video of Texas Governor Rick Perry to make him look racist. 3. In April of last year, the 'Today Show' was caught editing audio of a 9-1-1 call to make George Zimmerman look racist. 4. In August of 2009, Contessa Brewer sliced and diced a photograph so it wouldn't look like a black man attended a Tea Party carrying a firearm. [That is, his upper body was hidden so viewers would assume the gun owner was white.] 5. Just this week, NBC News maliciously edited video of a town council meeting to make it look as though Second Amendment civil rights activists heckled a parent [Neil Heslin] who lost his son in Newtown. This isn't bias; this is committing outright fraud in pursuit of a political agenda. And it is no coincidence that every single one of these incidents aided and abetted Obama directly or whatever his agenda was at the time. ... If the history of the media, and specifically NBC News, is any indicator, the new boss is going to look an awful lot like the old boss. But let's not be completely cynical. While NBC's irresponsible and unrelenting left-wing bias will never end, we can at least have some hope that its irresponsible and unforgiving fraud will." [42219]

The Department of Health and Human Services announces an almost insignificant change to its ObamaCare regulation requiring that all insurers provide free contraceptives. FoxNews.com reports, "Conservative and religious groups panned the Obama administration's long-awaited 'accommodation' meant to spare religious-affiliated groups from the so-called contraceptive mandate, calling a proposal unveiled Friday 'radically inadequate.'" The new rule, which was prompted by lawsuits, will exempt "nonprofit religious institutions" from being forced to pay for or provide contraceptive coverage. Churches will therefore be exempted, but owners of businesses will still be forced to provide free coverage for contraceptives, abortifacients, and sterilization—even if their religion forbids such actions. The new rule will exempt an employer only if it has "religious values as its purpose" and only "employ[s] persons who share its religious

tenets.” Thus, a Catholic church or charity that has a non-Catholic janitor would not be exempted, a Catholic-run hospital or university would not be exempted, and a for-profit business that is run by devout Catholics would not be exempted because its purpose is providing a product or a service, not promoting religion. (Obama may have slightly extracted the stick from the eye of the Catholic church, but he stuck it in further for Catholics whose businesses are not non-profit. From Obama’s perspective, freedom of religion only applies on Sunday mornings. Obama has insured that lawsuits challenging his unconstitutional demands will continue all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court.) [42220, 42225, 42309, 42340, 42355]

Liberal activist Sandra Fluke compares not supporting free contraceptive coverage to working at a restaurant or a store “and your boss is able to deny you leukemia coverage... or blood transfusions. ...So the folks who are still objecting have some very extreme ideas about religious freedom...” [42227, 42235]

The Obama administration issues 160 pages of regulations on nutrition standards for school snacks. [42257, 42258, 42259]

Smith & Nephew, a medical technology company, lays off almost 100 employees in Tennessee and Massachusetts in response to the new ObamaCare tax on medical devices. (The 2.3 percent tax is applied to gross sales revenues. That is, even if a company earns a profit of only one percent it must still pay the 2.3 percent tax.) FoxNews.com reports, “The Advanced Medical Technology Association estimates that the medical device tax could cost up to 43,000 U.S. jobs.” It will also, of course, cause the prices of medical devices to increase. [42221, 42248]

The Dow Jones Industrial Average hits 14,000 for the first time since 2007. (Although some argue that the milestone indicates an improving economy, others argue it means only that the Federal Reserve has been pumping newly-created money into the system—and investors are risking it in the stock market because they cannot earn an inflation-adjusted profit anywhere else.) [42223]

According to a January 9–13 Pew Research Center poll, 53 percent of Americans believe the “Federal government threatens [their] personal rights and freedoms.” [42231]

Across Egypt, thousands of people demonstrate against President Mohamed Morsi. Some attempt to enter the grounds of the presidential palace and are repelled by tear gas and water cannons. Protestors chant, “Freedom!” and “Morsi is illegitimate!” One carries a sign that reads, “Obama, your bitch is our dictator.” Another reads, “Down with the American Democratic Party the ally of Morsi, down with Morsi the infiltrator of America.” (Egyptians are learning that, bad as former president Hosni Mubarak may have been, Morsi is worse.) At AtlasShrugs.com Pamela Geller writes, “Poor Obama is squirming to figure out how to blame Bush. Better just to ignore the dead, right, Obama? And stick to your failed economy—still blaming that on Bush. And the media follows suit like the lapdogs that they are. Obama, you own it.” [42233, 42234, 42344]

On February 2 the White House releases an August 4, 2012 photograph of Obama wearing “mom jeans” and firing a shotgun to counteract the ridicule caused by his “We do skeet shooting all the time” claim. Afraid that Obama will further be mocked, the (possibly staged) photograph is accompanied by a warning: “This official White House photograph is being made available only for publication by news organizations and/or for personal use printing by the subject(s) of the photograph. The photograph may not be manipulated in any way and may not be used in commercial or political materials, advertisements, emails, products, promotions that in any way suggests approval or endorsement of [Obama], the First Family, or the White House.” (The warning almost guarantees that the photo will be manipulated and posted on thousands of web sites.) The White House does not state whether Obama complied with Maryland gun regulations for his Camp David outing. Nor does the White House explain how Obama could have been skeet shooting on that date—his 51st birthday—when he spent the day playing golf at Andrews Air Force Base. Nor does it explain how Obama can hit a clay pigeon flying though the air with a weapon fired almost parallel to the ground. The Associated Press, after being ridiculed for describing the scene as “a rifle cocked in his left shoulder,” changes its story to read, “Obama is seen holding a gun against his left shoulder, his left index finger on the trigger and smoke coming from the barrel. He is wearing jeans, a dark blue, short-sleeved polo shirt, sunglasses and headphones.” (Even if it learns the difference between a rifle and a shotgun and what cocking a weapon means, the AP still deserves to be ridiculed for referring to Obama’s noise protection as “earphones.”) Whether a photograph of Obama firing a weapon will result in even greater gun sales remains to be seen.) [42236, 42237, 42238, 42243, 42244, 42246, 42253, 42254, 42256, 42260, 42261, 42262, 42263, 42266, 42320]

The NRA responds to the White House photograph: “One picture does not erase a lifetime of supporting every gun ban and every gun control scheme imaginable.” [42252]

In his weekly Saturday radio/Internet address, Obama says, “[T]his week, we also received the first estimate of America’s economic growth over the last few months. And it reminded us that bad decisions in Washington can get in the way of our economic progress.” (He does not elaborate on what the bad decisions were or who made them.) “2013 can be a year of solid growth, more jobs, and higher wages. But that will only happen if we put a stop to self-inflicted wounds in Washington. Everyone in Washington needs to focus not on politics but on what’s right for the country; on what’s right for you and your families. That’s how we’ll get our economy growing faster. That’s how we’ll strengthen our middle class. And that’s how we’ll build a country that rewards the effort and determination of every single American.... We all agree that it’s critical to cut unnecessary spending. But we can’t just cut our way to prosperity. It hasn’t worked in the past, and it won’t work today. It could slow down our recovery. It could weaken our economy. And it could cost us jobs—now, and in the future. What we need instead is a balanced approach; an approach that says let’s cut what we can’t afford but let’s make the investments we can’t afford to live without. Investments in education and infrastructure, research and development—the things that will help America compete for the best jobs and new industries.” [42247]

CNN reports, “A Secret Service agent suspected of having a romantic relationship with a Mexican woman is dead of an apparent suicide, a law enforcement official told CNN Thursday. The source said Rafael Prieto, 48, was assigned to ...Obama’s protective detail. The Secret Service confirmed Thursday that Prieto’s death last Saturday is currently being investigated by the Metropolitan Police Department in Washington, along with the medical examiner’s office. No official determination of death has been made.” [42255]

On February 3 outgoing Secretary of Defense Leo Panetta appears on *Meet the Press* and admits, “The real story was that in order to put the puzzle of intelligence together that led us to Bin Laden, there were a lot of pieces out there that were a part of that puzzle. Yes, some of it came from some of the tactics that were used at that time, interrogation tactics that were used. But the fact is we put together most of that intelligence without having to resort to that.” (That is, “waterboarding” did result in actionable investigation that led to the capture of Osama bin Laden—who various news sources reported dead in both late 2001 and in 2007. Others claim bin Laden was killed in the May 2, 2011 Navy SEAL operation but was not buried at sea as the Obama administration claimed.) [42265, 42494, 42495]

Former White House press secretary Robert Gibbs also appears on *Meet the Press* and says, “The disconcerting thing, obviously, for anybody that watched [Senate confirmation hearings] was [Chuck Hagel] seemed unimpressive and unprepared on the questions that, quite frankly, he knew was [sic] coming.” [42277]

The National Rifle Association’s Wayne LaPierre appears on *Fox News Sunday* along with retired Navy Captain Mark Kelly, husband of former Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords. LaPierre states, “I’ve been in this fight for 20 years. We proposed [a universal background check but] I don’t think it’s going to happen” because of health privacy rules and concerns and because “criminals won’t comply. I think what they’ll do is they’ll turn this universal check on the law-abiding into a universal registry on law-abiding people. ObamaCare wasn’t a tax until they needed it to be a tax. I don’t think you can trust these people [in government].” Kelly states that semi-automatic weapons are “just too dangerous to be on the streets. Gabby and I know this is going to be a hard problem to solve. I don’t think you’ll find a stronger supporter of the Second Amendment than me. I fought for it [while serving in the Middle East].” (Kelly’s statement is incredibly inconsistent. One cannot support the Second Amendment right to own weapons *while at the same time* calling for a ban on semi-automatic weapons—because the vast majority of civilian-owned weapons in the United States are semi-automatic. “Semi-automatic” means only that the gun does not have to be manually “cocked” to load the next round. The gun uses the recoil force or gas from the firing of a round to cause the spent shell to be ejected and the next round to be chambered automatically. It does *not* mean the fully automatic process of firing multiple rounds *with one trigger pull*, as is the case with “machine guns.” Weapons that are not semi-automatic include lever action shotguns, or revolvers—where the trigger pull advances the cylinder. Banning all semi-automatic weapons would essentially ban almost all guns in the United States, with the exception of single-action rifles, shotguns, and revolvers. That, of course, is what some leftist

politicians want. It is worth noting that since 1998 all gun dealers have been required to perform background checks on all gun sales, using the FBI's National Instant Criminal Background Check System. Those background checks are also required by gun dealers when they sell weapons at gun shows. There is no "gun show loophole" for licensed gun dealers. However, individual gun owners can sell or give weapons to friends and relatives without performing a background check.) [42267, 42268]

With the election over and Barack "An economic recovery has begun" Obama sworn in to his second term, *The New York Times* considers it safe to report on bad economic news, writing, "Young graduates are in debt, out of work and on their parents' couches. People in their 30s and 40s can't afford to buy homes or have children. Retirees are earning near-zero interest on their savings. In the current listless economy, every generation has a claim to having been most injured. But the Labor Department's latest jobs snapshot and other recent data reports present a strong case for crowning baby boomers as the greatest victims of the recession and its grim aftermath. These Americans in their 50s and early 60s—those near retirement age who do not yet have access to Medicare and Social Security—have lost the most earnings power of any age group, with their household incomes 10 percent below what they made when the recovery began three years ago, according to Sentier Research, a data analysis company. Their retirement savings and home values fell sharply at the worst possible time: just before they needed to cash out. They are supporting both aged parents and unemployed young-adult children, earning them the inauspicious nickname 'Generation Squeeze.'" [42272]

In an interview with CBS broadcast before the Super Bowl, Obama calls for higher taxes increases, saying there is "no reason why we can't have really strong [economic] growth in 2013. ... There is no doubt we need additional [tax] revenue, coupled with smart spending reductions in order to bring down our deficit." (He does not explain why raising taxes would not hinder economic growth, or defend not implementing "smart spending reductions" during his first term.) Obama continues, "Washington cannot continually operate under a cloud of crisis. That freezes up consumers, it gets businesses worried. We can't afford these self-inflicted wounds. ... We can't have Washington dysfunction getting in the way." (By "dysfunction" he means not agreeing with his calls for higher taxes and more spending.) Obama calls for reductions in health care spending (even though ObamaCare will increase health care costs) and reducing tax deductions. "If you combine those things together, then we can not only reduce our deficit but we can continue to invest in things like education and research and development that are going to help us grow—without raising rates again." Obama also defends gays in the Boy Scouts and allowing women to serve in combat because women can do "everything that a man can, and more." (If women could do everything a man can do and more, some might wonder why wars have been fought only by men for thousands of years.) [42271, 42274, 42276, 42278, 42286]

On February 4 Obama travels to Minnesota to drum up support for legislation banning semi-automatic "assault" weapons and requiring universal background checks for all gun purchases. Obama states, "No law or set of laws can keep our children completely safe," but he calls for "basic, commonsense steps to reduce gun violence. ... [I]f there's one life

we can save, we've got an obligation to try.” (More than one child's life could be saved by banning swimming pools and bicycles. Whether those are next on Obama's ban list is not known.) [42273, 42281, 42282, 42293]

Obama again misses the annual legal deadline to submit a budget proposal to Congress on the first Monday in February. Congressman Paul Ryan (R-WI) comments, “I'm disappointed [Obama] missed his deadline. But I'm not surprised. In four of the last five years, he's failed to submit his budget on time. We still don't know when we'll receive [Obama's] request. And for nearly four years, Senate Democrats haven't passed a budget at all. We deserve better. We spend \$1 trillion more than we take in each year. In fact, we spend \$3 for every \$2 we take in. And we can't keep that up. If we stay on this path, our finances will collapse. The economy will stall. And the most vulnerable will suffer. We need a budget that reflects our priorities—that expands opportunity. The fact is, we cannot achieve those goals unless we budget responsibly. Every time [Obama] and Senate Democrats shirk their duty, they delay choices we need to make. We've still got time, but it's dwindling. Every missed deadline is a missed opportunity. We need to get serious about spending now.” [42275, 42317]

WashingtonTimes.com reports, “Senate Republicans are sending a letter Monday to the White House budget office arguing that ...Obama's nominee to be treasury secretary, Jacob 'Jack' Lew, was complicit in breaking a Medicare budget law. The letter comes the same day that ...Obama officially missed another deadline in the budget law by failing to submit his blueprint on the first Monday in February. [Obama] has only met that deadline once in his tenure. On the Medicare funding issue, federal law requires that if the program's funding becomes imbalanced, its trustees are required to issue a warning, and [Obama] is required to send Congress a plan to repair the finances. Then-President George W. Bush did just that during his time in the White House, but ...Obama has never filed the submission. 'The administration has failed each of the last four years to respond to these funding warnings despite receiving several communications from Congress urging them to comply,' eight Republicans on the Senate Budget Committee said in a letter to the White House. Mr. Lew was director of the White House budget office in 2010 and 2011 during the time when the Medicare submission was required, and the senators said they want to know whether he was complicit in ignoring the law.” (Lew is more partisan and even less qualified than Obama's current Treasury Secretary, Timothy Geithner—who at least admitted that the government has a spending problem. That Obama selected Lew indicates he has no intention of taking the deficit seriously. With Lew, it will be business as usual for Obama: continue unjustified spending and excoriate Republicans for daring to suggest cuts in any program.) Lew's past tax-shelter investments in the Cayman Islands are likely to be brought up during his confirmation hearing. According to *The New York Times*, Lew's \$56,000 investment was in a “venture capital fund based in the Cayman Islands' notorious Uglad House, a building whose mailboxes are home to nearly 19,000 corporate entities, many of them tax shelters.” Obama himself has called Uglad House “either the biggest building or the biggest tax scam on record.” Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA) notes that “Obama has been almost obsessively critical of offshore investments,” and comments, “That makes this Cayman

Islands investment of his top official and now Treasury secretary nominee worthy of attention. The irony is thick.” [42279, 42283, 42380, 42421, 42444, 42666]

TheHill.com reports, “Samantha Power is leaving her post as the White House’s top human rights official, the White House announced Monday. As director of the Office of Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights at the National Security Council, Power was one of the leading voices urging military intervention against Moammar Gadhafi’s regime in Libya in 2011.” (The strongly anti-Israel Power is married to Cass Sunstein, Obama’s former “regulatory czar.” In March 2008 the Dublin-born Power called Hillary Clinton a “monster” and was forced to leave Obama’s campaign team. In 2002 Power publicly called for an invasion of Israel in order to create a Palestinian state. Sunstein, a Harvard law School pal of Obama’s, believes animals should be allowed to file lawsuits.) [233, 234, 235, 236, 356, 360, 831, 819, 1282, 1311, 2467, 2505, 2618, 6246, 18877, 18878, 18974, 19028, 19056, 19217, 19345, 19346, 42280]

In California, Kathleen O’Leary, Presiding Judge of the 4th District Court of Appeals, reinstates the appeal of plaintiff Orly Taitz in *Taitz v. Obama et al.* [42310, 42315]

On *Washington Watch*, Roland Martin says of Obama’s second term, “The reality is, like anything else, you’d better get what you can while [Obama’s] there because, look, come 2016, that’s it.” (That is, get the federal handouts while you can because they may not last.) Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D-CA) responds, “Well, you know, I don’t know, and I think some people are missing something here. [Obama] has put in place an organization with the kind of database that no one has ever seen before in life. That’s going to be very, very powerful... And that database will have information about everything on every individual on ways that it’s never been done before and whoever runs for president on the Democratic ticket has to deal with that. They’re going to have to go down with that database and the concerns of those people because they can’t get around it. And [Obama has] been very smart. I mean it’s very powerful what he’s leaving in place.” (Waters is referring to Obama’s massive database of campaign information, which helped him get elected and reelected and which she assumes will be relied on again in 2016. She is also implying that the 2016 Democrat candidate has to do more than just run for president; he or she will also have to continue Obama’s policies of taking from the haves to give to the have nots—because that is what the people in the Democrat database expect and will demand.) [42413]

Radio talk show host Laura Ingraham asks former Senator Rick Santorum what advice he would give Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL), who is dealing with Senators Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Dick Durbin (D-IL) on immigration reform. Santorum replies, “That’s a very dangerous group you’re playing with. These are folks who do not have the interest of finding a bipartisan solution. I’ve never, *never*, in twelve years of working with those guys found them to be interested in anything that smacks of anything but capitulation on our side, and if not, demonization if they don’t get their way. So be very careful.” [42285]

On *Hannity*, conservative author and columnist Ann Coulter comments, “[Obama] says if we want to do something to reduce these gun shootings all we have to do is for the American people to want to do something, like the hunters [sic]. No, we need the ACLU and the liberals who will not do anything about the mentally ill to be serious about stopping these shootings. ...Connecticut, Aurora, Tucson ...these are crazy people, that is the problem. ...Everything they’re telling you about what they can do about guns is a lie. ...The only people who are not subjected to background checks are collectors giving guns to their sons or they’re selling one to their brother-in-law or something. ...Universal background check means universal registration; universal registration means universal confiscation; universal [confiscation means] extermination. That’s how it goes in history. Do not fall for universal background checks. ...[T]hey must demonize people who are legal gun owners and Obama, ‘oh look at him, he cares about the children.’ Screw you! You think we don’t care about the children? You’re the one who won’t do anything about the mentally ill.” [42287, 42294]

NBC News obtains a copy of a Department of Justice memorandum that concludes the federal government can order American citizens killed if they are believed to be “senior operational leaders” of al-Qaeda or an “associated force”—even if there is no evidence they may be planning any specific action against the United States. The memorandum was apparently the basis for Obama’s approval of the drone strikes that killed U.S. citizen Anwar al-Awlaki in Yemen. (The strike also killed his teen-aged son.) [42289, 42290, 42292, 42295, 42296, 42335]

Charlottesville, Virginia thumbs its nose at Obama’s increased use of spy drones and passes a resolution that “calls on the United States Congress and the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia to adopt legislation prohibiting information obtained from the domestic use of drones from being introduced into a Federal or State court,” and “pledges to abstain from similar uses with city-owned, leased, or borrowed drones.” [42306, 42351]

On February 5 Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad arrives in Cairo, Egypt for a three-day visit. [42325, 42341]

LATimes.com reports that Obama’s head speechwriter, Jon Favreau, will leave the Obama administration on March 1. “Favreau will turn over his seat to Cody Keenan, a Chicago native who is taking the lead on writing the State of the Union address.” Favreau may be considering “trying his hand at another form of drama—as a screenwriter, perhaps in Los Angeles.” (Why Hollywood needs another unoriginal writer who relies on clichés is not clear.) [42297]

Breitbart.com reports that Keynesian economist and *New York Times* columnist Paul Krugman, at a recent speaking engagement, said, “Eventually we do have a problem [with health care and the deficit]. That the population is getting older, health care costs are rising... there is this question of how we’re going to pay for the programs. The year 2025, the year 2030, something is going to have to give... We’re going to need more

revenue... Surely it will require some sort of middle class taxes as well... We won't be able to pay for the kind of government the society will want without some increase in taxes... on the middle class, maybe a value added tax. ...And we're also going to have to make decisions about health care, doc[tor] pay for health care that has no demonstrated medical benefits. So the snarky version... which I shouldn't even say because it will get me in trouble is death panels and sales taxes is how we do this." (In other words, Sarah Palin was right to warn Americans about the coming Obamacare "death panel.") [42378, 42379]

Asked by reporters about the "drone memo" that Obama used to authorize drone strikes on US. citizens, White House press secretary Jay Carney calls the attacks "legal, ethical, and wise," and says Obama "takes his responsibilities very seriously, and first and foremost that's his responsibility to protect the United States." Obama, claims Carney, is acting "in a way that is fully consistent with the Constitution and all the applicable laws." (Obama and Carney should be reminded of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which states, "No person shall be... deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law...") On MSNBC's *Morning Joe*, host Joe Scarborough comments, "If George Bush had done this, it would have been stopped." Republican Senators are certain to bring up the issue of drone strikes on U.S. citizens at the confirmation hearing of Obama's nominee to head the CIA, John Brennan—a former CIA station chief in Saudi Arabia. According to *The New York Times*, "From his basement office in the White House, Mr. Brennan has served as the principal coordinator of a 'kill list' of Qaeda operatives marked for death, overseeing drone strikes by the military and the C.I.A., and advising ...Obama on which strikes he should approve." [42299, 42300, 42301, 42324, 42342]

Leftists do not cut Obama much slack on the drone issue either. At MotherJones.com Adam Serwer writes, "If a high-ranking administration official does it, it's not illegal. At least not when we're talking about ordering the death of an American citizen the administration believes to be associated with Al Qaeda. ...Although the administration has previously said that ...Obama makes the final call on targeted killing decisions involving Americans, based on recommendations from high-level national security officials, the white paper says that a decision of what it calls 'extraordinary seriousness' need not involve [Obama]—nor even multiple people. Instead, the paper argues, a single 'high level-official,' whose authority is undefined, can approve a death sentence for an American citizen as long as the target is too difficult for the US government to capture and the loss of civilian life that would result from a targeted killing is not deemed excessive. ...The Obama administration claims that the secret judgment of a single 'well-informed high level administration official' meets the demands of due process and is sufficient justification to kill an American citizen suspected of working with terrorists. That procedure is entirely secret. Thus it's impossible to know which rules the administration has established to protect due process and to determine how closely those rules are followed. The government needs the approval of a judge to detain a suspected terrorist. To kill one, it need only give itself permission." [42326, 42345]

Rush Limbaugh questions the broad powers the memorandum grants: “If this provision had been in place back in the seventies, does this mean that Nixon could have assassinated the Weathermen? Does this mean that Nixon coulda taken out Bill Ayers? Does this mean that Richard Nixon could have taken out the New Black Panther Party? It doesn’t mean that? Well, [it states] ‘senior operational leaders’ of al-Qaeda or ‘an associated force’—even if there is no intelligence indicating they are engaged in an active plot to attack the US. ...Remember all the grief that George Bush got for warrantless wiretaps on phone calls? Do you remember that? I remember when Bush was president, the American left was literally having conniption fits. Does that mean Nixon could have killed Bill Ayers? It does mean that. Bill Ayers or the Weathermen. He had an active plot against the US, bombed the Pentagon. If Nixon had assumed the kind of power that Obama’s assuming, he could have sent a commando team out to wipe out Bill Ayers. You can’t kill rogue leaders. No, you cannot. By law, we cannot assassinate foreign leaders. [But apparently] We can now kill Americans, as long as we say they are related to Al-Qaeda somehow. And that link isn’t too tough. Al-Qaeda hates America. All you have to do is hate America and it could be said that you are an associated force. ...Remember all of the anger that the left had over waterboarding. And look at this now. I think I have this right. Constitutional scholar Barack Obama is demanding the right to kill American citizens without making his case to a judge, as long as he thinks the American in question is in an upper tier of operations of Al-Qaeda or a related group. But he can’t waterboard the guy. You can kill him, but we can’t waterboard him. We can kill the son of a... but we can’t torture him. Have I got this right? I think I do. I thought you should know.” [42303]

Doing his best to avoid cutting the federal budget, Obama calls on Congress to enact another short-term “fix” to delay automatic spending cuts scheduled for March 1. Obama states, “Economists and business leaders from across the spectrum have said that our economy is poised for progress in 2013 and we’ve seen signs of this progress over the last several weeks.” (The economy is certainly not “poised for progress” and no signs of such progress have been seen.) “But we’ve also seen the effects that political dysfunction can have on our economic progress... The threat of massive, automatic cuts has already started to affect business decisions. So we’ve been reminded that while it’s critical for us to cut wasteful spending, we can’t just cut our way to prosperity. Deep, indiscriminate cuts to things like education and training, energy, and national security, will cost us jobs and it will slow down our recovery. It’s not the right thing to do for the economy. ...There is no reason that the jobs of thousands of Americans, not to mention the growth of the entire economy, should be put in jeopardy just because folks in Washington couldn’t come together.” (In other words, Obama has no intention of cutting any spending that is not part of the defense budget.) Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell says, “The clock is ticking. It’s time to get serious” about spending cuts. [42302, 42304, 42305]

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) says no to Obama’s calls for more taxes. He states, “...Obama first proposed the sequester and insisted it become law. Republicans have twice voted to replace these arbitrary cuts with common-sense cuts and reforms that protect our national defense. We believe there is a better way to reduce the deficit, but

Americans do not support sacrificing real spending cuts for more tax hikes. [Obama's] sequester should be replaced with spending cuts and reforms that will start us on the path to balancing the budget in 10 years." Congressman Buck McKeon (R-CA), chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, tells Politico, "I'm flabbergasted [by Obama's call for more taxes]. Until he addresses the real problem, which is mandatory spending, he's just whistling in the wind." Congressman Dave Camp (R-MI), chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, states, "Tax reform should be about making the code simpler and fairer for American families and helping employers create more jobs. [Obama's] proposal is nothing more than another tax hike to pay for more Washington spending. That is not what America needs." Congressman Walter Jones (R-NC) states, "There are much smarter ways to make cuts than [Obama's] idea to further kick the can down the road and raise taxes. His plan is a nonstarter. Kicking the can again and raising taxes again is not the way to go." [42311, 42312, 42755, 42756, 42784, 42805]

Congressman John Shimkus (R-IL) states, "[Obama] can announce all he wants. Sequestration is coming. It's coming. We've got to get spending cuts. ...No new revenue. It's all about spending." Congresswoman Nita Lowey (D-NY) states, "Congress has already cut discretionary spending—defense and non-defense—to levels that jeopardize economic growth as well as services and investments critical to families and communities. We must prevent a single-minded focus on spending cuts from further weakening a still fragile economy." Lowey's statement is absurd. Virtually every budget item has increased from year to year under Obama, and some have increased dramatically and far beyond the rate of inflation. There have been no spending cuts, only slight reductions in the rate of growth in some programs. (If a department spends \$50 billion in 2012, asks for \$60 billion in 2013, but is authorized to spend "only" \$56 billion, that is *not* a cut of \$4 billion; it is a \$6 billion increase.) [42311, 42312]

At WashingtonPost.com Marc Thiessen reports that FBI agents are investigating officials "at pretty high levels" of the Obama administration over information leaks confirming that Obama "had personally ordered cyberattacks [sic] on the Iranian nuclear program using a computer virus developed with Israel called Stuxnet. ...This is big. And former senior government lawyers I spoke with recently explained why it could get a whole lot bigger: The leaks clearly came from someone in [Obama's] inner circle. ...Moreover, whoever leaked the information was present when [Obama] discussed this covert action program in the Situation Room. There is a tiny universe of individuals who could have shared the details of ...Obama's personal deliberations on the covert program with the press." Thiessen notes that the information may have been disclosed without Obama's knowledge, which "would be a potential crime and certainly a violation of the official's oath of office "As one former senior Justice Department official told me, 'It would be grounds for firing and likely prosecution, and it would definitely call into question the competency and security of [Obama's] supervision of his White House staff.'" [42313]

Thiessen continues, "If Obama authorized the leak of classified information, that would "potentially [be] an even bigger scandal. Since [Obama] has ultimate declassification authority, this would mean no crime was likely committed. But it is hard to imagine a

credible argument that such a disclosure was made to advance the national security interests of the United States. ...There are no credible national security grounds for such a disclosure. The only person whose interests could possibly be served by such a disclosure was Obama. The leak appeared six months before [Obama] stood for reelection and was clearly intended to make [him] appear strong on foreign policy and counterterrorism. ...If [Obama] authorized the disclosure of national security secrets that exposed a covert action and undermined a U.S. ally in an effort to gain a political advantage in his reelection campaign, that would be a scandal of gigantic proportions. As one former top Justice Department official told me ‘if done for political gain, rather than for a bona fide purpose advancing the public interests of the United States, it could be grounds for impeachment.’” (*The Obama Timeline* considers the most likely suspects to be John Brennan, Valerie Jarrett, and David Axelrod.) [42313]

The Washington Post complains about Americans who make remarks about Michelle Obama’s large posterior, and mentions high school football coach who was suspended for calling her “Fat butt Michelle Obama” and saying, “Look at her. She looks like she weighs 185 or 190. She’s overweight.” (The coach may have been factually correct but not politically correct.) The *Post* claims Rush Limbaugh “has repeatedly called her Michelle ‘My Butt’ Obama.” (In fact, Limbaugh typically refers to her as “Michelle, my belle,” as in the song by the Beatles. The *Post* is trying to create a controversy by lying about Limbaugh.) [42314]

NBCNews.com reports, “The Congressional Budget Office projected Tuesday that the national debt will continue to grow over the next ten years even as the economy recovers, the unemployment rate falls, and tax revenues increase. ...In its annual Budget and Economic Outlook, the CBO said debt held by the public will be bigger by 2023 than in any year since 1951 and will be at 77 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) by 2023, far above the 40-year average of 39 percent of GDP. As a result, the CBO report said, the federal government’s interest costs ‘will be very high’ and will be rising. Interest costs will more than double by the end of the ten-year forecasting period and will be at their highest share of GDP in the past five decades.” [42319, 42322]

The Congressional Budget Office also predicts that ObamaCare will result in seven million Americans losing their health care coverage because the rules encourage businesses to drop coverage and pay the per-employee penalty for not providing it. According to the CBO, ObamaCare will add \$1.165 trillion to the federal deficit over 10 years. [42327, 42339]

According to the CBO the nation’s GDP will grow by a mere 1.4 percent in 2013 and the unemployment rate will remain at or above 7.5 percent. (The real GDP “growth” will be much lower—and actually in negative territory—because the government’s measurement of GDP does not properly factor in inflation—which is intentionally undercounted in order to keep the annual Social Security cost-of-living adjustments at more manageable levels.) Wellington Letter editor Bert Dohmen tells *Newsmax*, “We are already in a recession,” he told *Newsmax* TV in an exclusive interview. “We got into a recession last

year. If you factor in the actual rate of inflation instead of the phony CPI or GDP deflator that the government uses, the economy has been in a recession overall. If you calculate the CPI now as it was calculated in 1980, then inflation is actually around 9 percent.”) [42333, 42592]

The CBO estimates that the government will collect a record \$2.7 trillion in tax revenue in 2013, more than in any year in the nation’s history—yet it will still spend about \$1 trillion more than that amount. [42409]

Via a taped video message, Obama addresses the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL) Pro-Choice America dinner to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* decision that paved the way for tens of millions of abortions. Obama states, “Tonight we celebrate the historic *Roe v. Wade* decision... but we also gather to recommit ourselves to the decision’s guiding principle: that women should be able to make their own choices about their bodies and their health care.” Obama also heaps praise on NARAL’s new president, Ilyse Hogue, a former MoveOn.org activist who has called Tea Party members “racist” and “dangerous,” and during the 2012 presidential campaign asked how long it would take “before we see a President Romney ordering rape victims thrown into the water to see if they float?” [42321]

CNSNews.com reports, “The number of American workers collecting federal disability payments climbed to yet another record high of 8,830,026 in January, up from 8,827,795 in December, according to newly released data from the Social Security Administration. This is the 192nd straight month that the number of American workers collecting federal disability payments has increased.” (How many of the 8.8 million are faking injuries or illnesses in order to receive federal benefits because they cannot find jobs is of course not known.) [42332]

House Minority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) tells Fox News that House Republicans will not support higher taxes. “Absolutely not. ...[Obama] wants to continue down the path of insinuating that somehow taxpayers have got to put more money in when the problem is spending. The problem is spending here. We’ve got to get a handle on it. And that’s why we’re asking [Obama], ‘We want to work with you, but lead. Help us and join us and lead this country out of this deficit spending mess.’ ... You know, we’ve got a real problem in this country. We know we’re spending much more money than we have—to the tune of a trillion-plus dollars a year, and it’s just got to stop. [Republicans have] asked [Obama] to join them in replacing the sequestered cuts with cuts that make sense, with cuts that actually go towards managing down the debt long-term. And to this—to this point, he’s not taken us seriously. The sequester’s here. And so, it’s up to [Obama] to come forward with serious proposals, not something like he did today, which is another kick the can down the road [proposal]. That is not responsible, and I think [he’s] got to know that.” [42334]

On *Special Report*, syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer says of the upcoming

automatic sequestration cuts: “I think the Republicans will do what [House Majority Leader Eric] Cantor is suggesting, which is to do nothing. This is the one time since Election Day where Obama does not have the upper hand. He had the upper hand in the fiscal cliff negotiations, because you would have had automatic hikes in taxes, which is what Republicans did not want. So they had no good options. This time the shoe is on the other foot. This time, if the Republicans do nothing then you will get these severe cuts—\$1.2 trillion [over 10 years], half in domestic, half in defense spending. Obama’s the one who suggested it in negotiations on the debt ceiling in 2011. But now he doesn’t want them at all. The reason is he doesn’t want any of these domestic cuts. He’s not somebody who wants any cuts anywhere anytime, and this will be forced on him. And on the Pentagon cuts, which he would have thought the Republicans would do anything to avoid—he’s the commander in chief. He has to worry about what’s gonna happen with the [armed] forces... So he has to do something about this, and it is unbelievable he would have offered the Republicans a deal in which there are extra tax increases as part of the deal. The Republicans will do nothing, and they should do nothing and demand if [Obama] wants to avoid this, ‘you do the cuts—but do them somewhere else. But no tax increases.’” (It is worth repeating that it is Obama who demanded the sequester cuts be included in the 2011 budget agreement. In fact, he stated, “some in Congress are trying to undo these automatic spending cuts. My message to them is simple: No. I will veto any effort to get rid of those automatic spending cuts to domestic and defense spending. There will be no easy off ramps on this one.” Obama thought he could use threats of defense spending cuts to get Republicans to agree to higher taxes. He was mistaken.) [42323, 42338]

On February 6 the U.S. Postal Service announces that beginning in August it will end Saturday mail deliveries to reduce costs. (The change, which technically requires the approval of Congress, will allegedly save \$2 billion per year—far short of the \$16 billion the USPS lost in 2012.) On MSNBC, Congressman Gerald Connolly (D-VA) blames Republicans for the crisis and says, “all these horrible decisions ... will further kill a viable and vibrant postal service.” (It is unclear how Connolly can consider the Postal Service “viable and vibrant.”) Letter carrier Audrey Humes whines, “Most of our American families, and especially our rural communities, rely on Saturday delivery. Many rural communities get their prescription medications, their financial papers and other transactions in the mail. Our businesses rely on Saturday pick-up to get their invoices and their materials out in the mail.” (The claim is absurd. Those same items get delivered and picked up on Monday through Friday. If Saturday deliveries are for some reason critical, the Postal Service could arguably eliminate Monday services instead and serve the customers Tuesday through Saturday.) [42328, 42369, 42402]

The Egyptian English-language *Al-Ahram Weekly* publishes a letter to Obama from Bahieddin Hassan, head of the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies. Hassan states that the Obama administration’s support for the Muslim Brotherhood regime is causing the bloodshed in the streets, increased violence, and rape. Hassan writes, in part, “[W]hen I spoke with you in 2010, I asked why the U.S. administration condemns repressive practices in Iran while remaining silent when Arab regimes engage in the same violations. Over recent months, statements by your administration have similarly failed to

address violations and have even blamed protesters and victims for violence committed in the context of demonstrations. Indeed, the stances of your administration have given political cover to the current authoritarian regime in Egypt and allowed it to fearlessly implement undemocratic policies and commit numerous acts of repression. Statements that ‘Egypt is witnessing a genuine and broad-based process of democratization’ have covered over and indeed legitimized the undemocratic processes by which the Constituent Assembly passed the new constitution, an issue which has in turn led to greatly heightened instability in the country.” [42532, 42533]

“Calls for ‘the opposition [to] remain non-violent’ and for ‘the government and security forces [to] exercise self-restraint in the face of protester violence’ have allowed the police and the current Egyptian administration to shirk their responsibilities to secure demonstrations and to respond to the demands of the Egyptian people, and have allowed them to place the blame for violence and instability on protesters themselves. Urging ‘the opposition [to] engage in a national dialogue without preconditions’ undermines the ability of the opposition to play a real role in the decision-making processes of the country, as these ‘dialogues’ seldom result in anything more concrete than a photo-op with the president. Is it a coincidence that the statements issued by your administration reflect the same political rhetoric used by the new authoritarian regime in Egypt? But when these statements come from the world’s superpower—the one most able to have a positive or negative impact on policies in Egypt and the region, not to mention the biggest donor and material supporter of the Egyptian regime for the past 35 years—they become lethal ammunition, offering political protection to perpetrators of murder, torture, brutality, and rape. ... My request is quite modest: that spokespeople and officials in your administration stop commenting on developments in Egypt... that as long as they cannot speak the truth about what is happening in Egypt, they keep silent.” [42532, 42533]

FoxNews.com reports, “Supermarket owners argue a pending federal food-labeling rule that stems from the new health care law would overburden thousands of grocers and convenience store owners—to the tune of \$1 billion in the first year alone. Store owner Tom Heinen said the industry’s profit margins already are razor thin. ‘When you incur a significant cost, there is no way that that doesn’t get passed on to the customer in some form,’ he said. The rule stems from an ObamaCare mandate that restaurants provide nutrition information on menus. ... The proposed regulation would require store owners to label prepared, unpackaged foods found in salad bars and food bars, soups and bakery items. Erik Lieberman, regulatory counsel at the Food Marketing Institute, said testing foods for nutritional data will require either expensive software or even more costly off-site laboratory assessments.” (A bagel or a cookie sold at a convenience store would have to be accompanied by nutritional information.) “The proposed regulation would require store owners to label prepared, unpackaged foods found in salad bars and food bars, soups and bakery items. Erik Lieberman, regulatory counsel at the Food Marketing Institute, said testing foods for nutritional data will require either expensive software or even more costly off-site laboratory assessments. Lieberman said failure to get it right comes with stiff penalties: ‘If you get it wrong, it’s a federal crime, and you could face jail time and thousands of dollars worth of fines.’” (Meanwhile, New York City is considering banning Styrofoam cups and containers.) [42404, 42405, 42406]

The Wall Street Journal writes, “Republicans have rightly concluded after two years of being sucker-punched that the sequester is the main negotiating leverage they have and may be the only way to restrain spending. So now Democrats and a gaggle of interest groups are denouncing ...Obama’s fiscal brainchild because the programs they cherish—from job training to education, to the EPA and energy subsidies, to money for Planned Parenthood—are about to get chopped too. Fear not. As always in Washington when there is talk of cutting spending, most of the hysteria is baseless. ...[P]rograms are hardly starved for money. In ...Obama’s first two years, while private businesses and households were spending less and deleveraging, federal domestic discretionary spending soared by 84% with some agencies doubling and tripling their budgets. ...The most disingenuous White House claim is that the sequester will hurt the economy. Reality check: The cuts amount to about 0.5% of GDP. The theory that any and all government spending is ‘stimulus’ has been put to the test over the last five years, and the result has been the weakest recovery in 75 years and trillion-dollar annual deficits.” (HotAir.com points out that Obama is whining about a 5 percent reduction in discretionary spending after increasing it by 14 percent since 2008.) [42356, 42357]

WCPO.com reports, “The Hamilton County [Ohio] Board of Elections [BOE] is investigating 19 possible cases of alleged voter fraud following months of investigation after the 2012 election. ...Melowese Richardson, a Madisonville resident, first learned of the allegations when approached by 9 On Your Side reporter Tom McKee Wednesday. Even though she admits to voting twice in the last election, she said the news came as a surprise. ‘I would think that something this important would come to me first and that I wouldn’t have to be enlightened about this through you,’ said Richardson. According to county documents, Richardson’s absentee ballot was accepted on Nov. 1, 2012 along with her signature. On Nov. 11, she told an official she also voted at a precinct because she was afraid her absentee ballot would not be counted in time. ...According to BOE records, her name appeared on an absentee ballot list prior to Election Day. The board’s report states poll workers should have updated the signature poll book by flagging ‘absentee voter’ next to the names of those who appeared on the list. Upon investigation it was found that none of the voters who appeared on the list were flagged, which included Richardson. The staff could not locate that supplemental list when asked. Richardson voted at the Madisonville Recreation Center where she worked as a paid worker on Election Day. ...The board’s documents also state that Richardson was allegedly disruptive and hid things from other poll workers on Election Day after another female worker reported she was intimidated by Richardson. ...During the investigation it was also discovered that her granddaughter, India Richardson, who was a first time voter in the 2012 election, cast two ballots in November.” Asked if she will fight the charges, Richardson states, “Absolutely. Absolutely, I’ll fight it for Mr. Obama...” (How many Ohioans voted for Obama twice is not known, but the number may be large if poll records were not marked to reflect absentee ballots had already been received. It is later reported that Richardson may have voted for Obama as many as six times.) [42425, 42426, 42710]

At CanadaFreepress.com, Doug Hagmann hears from his Department of Homeland

Security (DHS) insider. The insider states that "...two days after the inauguration, at exactly 7:00 a.m. on January 23, something called 'the Cyber-Warriors for Obama Project' was activated. I heard about this the week after the election, but only saw a hardcopy draft in late December. From what I was told, I believe this is a project that is being paid for through funds from Obama's political corporation, the 501(c)4 Organizing for Obama, I believe it's called. I can't be sure, but that's what I was told. At that time, I was shown a white, three-ring binder with Obama's circular campaign logo imprinted on the outside of the binder with the name 'Cyber-Warriors for Obama' printed in blue across the top. Inside were the names and e-mail addresses of 3,575 'cyber assets,' or 'warriors,' listed in alphabetical order under about a dozen or so 'team leaders.' From a separate sheet I was shown, most of these 'assets' are being paid just over minimum wage, but as I understand it, they work from home and have no overhead. I believe there are about two dozen supervisors who make substantially more. Now I only had the binder for a minute, and could not take it from the room I was in, so this is strictly from memory. It was tabbed, and one section with the word 'targets' had a list of religious web sites, web sites I recognized as Christian. Another section was a listing of conservative Internet sites. There was another tab with the label 'problem sites' that seemed quite extensive. I looked at that section, and it was broken down further into 'birther' sites, 'pro-gun' sites, 'anti-abortion' sites, just to name a few. There was also a section of the usual news sites, like CNN, ABC, you know. Numerous e-mail addresses were conspicuous under each news organization, which also included Fox... The first page of the binder had bullet points labeled 'objectives' and instructions for the cyber-assets. There was also a very detailed non-disclosure agreement with the word 'DRAFT' typed in big, light grey letters across the body of the two-page agreement. The agreement and the instructions were typed on white paper with a warning, printed in red on each page, that the document was not to be copied or disseminated." [42329]

"The instructions [to the 'cyber assets'] seemed very specific. Infiltrate web forums, collect screen names, avatars, and posters' tag lines, and attempt to resolve these to their actual identities. I read one paragraph that listed circumstances when the 'asset' was only to monitor but do not disrupt without authorization. There was another section titled 'Divert, Disrupt and Destroy,' listing 'how to's' in certain cases. There was also a section on maintaining a social media presence, and another on the most effective use of Twitter. Lastly, there was a 'reference section,' which included statistics, specific language to use to marginalize different posters, and effective methods to discredit people while maintaining a sense of legitimacy. It was surreal, to say the least. ...As I said, these 'kids,' or young people I believe, are known collectively as 'Cyber-Warriors for Obama.' The subheading was 'And the truth shall set you free.' Truth? Really? They were hired on their hacking abilities, or more precisely on their abilities to make postings through proxy servers and effectively use alternate identities and multiple e-mail addresses. Their purpose is to spread disinformation, not truth. There were also motivational statements on various pages, including one that referred to Obama as the 'Pharaoh of the Internet,' which I thought was an odd characterization. But what's important is that suddenly, through the use of Internet aliases, multiple e-mail addresses, and screen names, a project that employs 3,575 people will have the appearance and effectiveness of maybe 10,000 or more different people. ...I was told that these people were hired through the [Obama]

campaign offices located throughout the country, and that training meetings were held at various locations. The binders were for instructional purposes, not to hand out. Although I think the people have, or were given, a list of web sites. I don't know any more on the actual mechanics of the project.” [42329]

The DHS insider notes, “There will be, and was, talk of a recovery and a stronger economy, but it's all propaganda. ...[T]he complete inaugural address [was] a ‘Baghdad Bob’ moment... Many economists will use false figures and statistics to deceive the American people. People must not downplay the importance of the economic aspect of this address. The sudden collapse of the U.S. dollar (however it actually plays out) and everything that goes with it (such as social chaos and riots) will be one part of a plan that was set in motion a long time ago. ...The economic devastation that will take place is an attack, a planned attack on the U.S. Just look at it that way. This ‘regime’ already knows the outcome, which is the debasement of our national currency. Like I said, it's been in the works most recently since the 1990s. A collapse does not happen without a lot of pain—people losing everything in their retirement accounts, savings and so on. Don't you think that will cause one hell of a national security problem? And who is running our national or domestic security? DHS. ...[T]here was one important radio program you did that caused a very angry response inside DHS. ...I think you'll find a request was made for the transcript of that program by DHS. The information given by that source was protected, or confidential, especially regarding the actions of big bankers here in the U.S. and the foreign markets. These international bankers are playing a big role in killing the U.S., and although they're bold, they still don't want certain things disclosed before their time. ...Let me spell it out for you, and this is the crux of everything. We have Obama (or whatever his real name is) in the Oval Office. You've said it before, that America is a ‘captured operation.’ Well, it is, and every top level operative at DHS and [the Department of] Justice knows it. They have his dossier. Think about Obama's mother working in microfinance with Timothy Geithner's father. What are the odds? And that's just one ‘coincidence.’” [42329]

“A lot of people won't get this until it's too late, or maybe never get it. But take a good look at Obama and the people who surround him. Look at the 2008 economic crisis under Bush. Look at the run up to where we're at today. The orchestrated boom of the 1990s. The GLB [Gramm Leach Bliley] Act signed into law under Clinton that changed the complexion of our domestic economy [by repealing part of the Glass Steagall Act and giving banks more power]. Look at the people who are still around, the architects of this. It's a big lie! It's all been rigged, and the insiders know this! Look at the continuity of agenda since ‘Bush senior.’ Now listen to what I am telling you. This is a continuing operation that involves many of the same people on both sides of the aisle in Washington. This is one of the reasons why no one wants to talk about Obama's past. He is the product of a continuing intelligence operation, put in power to oversee the dismantling of the U.S., with the economy being the lynchpin of our destruction. Obama, [Valerie] Jarrett, and the Clintons are in constant contact with all high level operatives inside the DHS. Perhaps not directly in all cases but through their contacts. They are working together to see to it that the U.S. economy is brought down, robbing the people of their wealth and then blaming partisan politics for the crash. For the first time in recent history,

you're going to see people hungry and out in the streets. Those unprepared or those thinking this is all [expletive deleted], desperate and begging for food. Think Katrina, but on a national scale. That's what is being planned for Americans, and few people are willing to see what's happening, or willing to believe it. Now here's where DHS, my sources and information comes in." [42329, 42330]

"Everybody is looking at the gun 'problem' in America. Fights over the Second Amendment. State laws that go against the Constitution. Blame it on Sandy Hook or [Aurora,] Colorado. Tell people we need to be disarmed because it's for the children. It's all [expletive deleted]. Most people know it's all [expletive deleted], but that's where their rational assessment stops. Why do you think the people in power want to—no—need to disarm the public? It's because they are planning an economic collapse, and an armed and informed populace is a danger to their plan. ...There are several scenarios or models they have commissioned. They exist in printed form and have been given to Obama and Jarrett specifically. It's war gaming with the American people. That caused some mid-level military people with a conscience to ask what the hell is going on, and some even refused to take part in these exercises. By the way, Napolitano is the go-to person for these models. Anyway, there is a fear that their own people won't be loyal to them when everything begins to implode. You've been seeing purges lately. Remember what Jarrett supposedly said about being 'hell to pay' after the re-election? That process has started. ...They've been threatened. ...Some were not worth even being threatened and became 'examples. ...[L]ook at the recent mysterious deaths. Pick one. ...[But] Some will talk when the time is right. Some have 'insurance policies' that will be used at the right time, when they will make the most difference. ...The DHS will oversee the domestic crackdown that will happen when the perfect storm bears down on us. And the perfect storm is the economy, meaning the U.S. dollar collapse and hyperinflation, racial or class riots sparked by a high-profile incident, and another mass causality event involving guns. Watch for these three things to happen all at once, or in close succession. The polarization caused by these events will be sufficient to cause a second civil war." [42329]

"I don't have a crystal ball, but I have seen various reports referencing unprecedented 'drills' to take place in later March and April. I'll mention this because I know a lot of people on the inside at DHS have seen this. A document called 'Operation Thunderdome.' It's maybe 50 or 60 pages, I'm not certain. It describes an economic collapse in the U.S., followed by an attack on the government by 'a made-up patriotic group.' It combines gun owners, Constitutionalists, and even Christians into an enemy group that pulls off an attack in Washington. But don't fall into the trap of trying to pick the time of these events. Their plans are flexible, but their objectives are carved in stone. ...They have plans and back-up plans and back-ups for the back-ups. And in spite of the warnings, and history, enough people will be outraged and side with the government. This brings me to my final point. What do you think all of the pre-positioning of paramilitary assets, caches of ammunition, and the opening of non-descript buildings owned or leased by the federal government are for? It's for you and people like you. It's for those who are turned in by their neighbors, friends, co-workers, and others who are hungry, broke and broken. What we are about to experience will be like it was during the

Civil War, only worse. People will be outgunned, surveillance will be everywhere, and it will be much more difficult to hide and fight back. Not impossible, but more difficult.” [42329]

“...Believe it or not, part of the model, or at least one of them, includes the depiction of a somewhat ‘normal’ society, at least after the initial ‘hostilities.’ People will be controlled by the national government, centralized—in order to escape the chaos. Think of it this way. You want food and medical care? You will not be able to own a gun, period. The current federal legislation is all window dressing—a distraction. No one expects anything meaningful to pass. It won’t have to. States, yes, but those states are lining up for federal money. The elected leaders are of the same ideology as Obama, but aside from those, we’ll see many people turning in their weapons for food, shelter, medical care, and false guarantees of safety. That’s what the new normal will look like. As I said, you’ve got to think bigger—much bigger. The lies are bigger than most people can imagine. The people at the top are laughing at us. Think about that. They are laughing at us because it’s right in front of our noses. And you know, the bigger the lie... I’ve given you as much information as I know, as I have seen. Watch the economy—the indicators. Watch for a false flag. We are being baited. Let people pooh-pooh this information, seek information through FOI [Freedom of Information Act] requests. Not gonna happen. We’re talking about an operation so black and so big, and one that has to be done in the next few years, under Obama. This is something that is international in scope. The plan is international, and is dedicated to the dismantling or destruction of America. It’s happening right in front of us, but too few can actually see it. ...People need to wake up. Believe me or don’t. It’s their choice.” (*The Obama Timeline* has no way of confirming the DHS insider’s claims. His warnings are presented here because they relate to Obama and to accept them would not be inconsistent with Obama’s past.) [42329]

At WhiteHouseDossier.com Keith Koffler reports on how ratings agency Standard & Poor’s is getting the “Chicago treatment” from the Obama administration. “[T]he Justice Department is suing Standard & Poor’s to the tune of \$5 billion for giving all those nice ratings to banks’ subprime mortgage-backed securities even while the market began to fall apart—as homeowners figured out they should have rented, bought cheaper homes, or moved in with their parents. I have no issue with, at the very least, an investigation of these ratings agencies, which profited handsomely from their incestuous relationships from the very banks they were rating. My problem is not that the government is suing S&P. My problem is that it *is not* suing Moody’s and Fitch. Because you see, [it] happens that, of the three credit rating agencies, ONLY S&P INJECTED A NOTE OF HONESTY INTO GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTING by downgrading the federal government’s credit rating last year. ...Is this payback? Could it be? The Obama administration? At the very least, with S&P in the sights of a \$5 billion federal pistol, are they or any other credit agencies going to issue new downgrades of the government? I sure doubt it.” [42331, 42399]

BuzzFeed.com reports, “Obama’s nominee for Secretary of Defense, Chuck Hagel, has informed the Senate Armed Services Committee that he will not provide foreign financial

details for the corporate and nonprofit organizations he was affiliated with since he left the Senate in 2009. Republican members of the committee asked Hagel last week for information on whether any of the organizations received funding from any foreign government, individual, or corporation—a request he declined late Tuesday in a letter citing confidentiality agreements. ...According to a senior GOP aide close to the confirmation process, ‘Senators are not reacting well to this response. Hagel is refusing to answer any of the questions or make any effort to get them the answers,’ the aide said. ‘He is basically telling Senators they have no right to know if he has been unduly influenced by foreign governments or foreign agents over the last five years. What is he hiding? I’m told several Senators, including McCain, who have previously expressed opposition to a filibuster said privately yesterday that failure to disclose foreign funding information would change their thinking.’” (Andrew C. McCarthy later notes at NationalReview.com that “one of Hagel’s funding sources is a group purportedly called ‘Friends of Hamas.’ That might make someone a good fit for president of Egypt, prime minister of Turkey, or any number of advisory posts on the White House staff. But given that being a ‘friend of Hamas’—at least the kind of friend who provides material support to that terrorist organization—is a crime in the United States, it may not be quite what the Senate is looking for in a secretary of defense.” Hagel also sits on the board of the left-wing Ploughshares Fund, which funds the National Iranian American Council (NIAC), “which is basically the Iranian regime’s lobbyist in the U.S.” The NIAC has “deep ties to the Iranian regime [and] it is also an Obama fave—one whose top official, Trita Parsi, visits the White House, consults with Valerie Jarrett, briefs Secretary of State Clinton, lectures the CIA, and so on.”) [42336, 42337, 42415]

The Senate Armed Services Committee delays the vote on Chuck Hagel’s Secretary of Defense confirmation. Chairman Carl Levin (D-MI) says, “I had hoped to hold a vote on the nomination this week, but the committee’s review of the nomination is not yet complete. I intend to schedule a vote on the nomination as soon as possible.” (That probably means that Levin does not have the votes to confirm Hagel.) At NationalReview.com Andrew Stiles later writes, “Multiple sources raised the possibility that the materials Republicans are seeking contain ‘explosive details’ that could prove devastating to Hagel’s prospects for confirmation. Some Hagel opponents strongly suspect he has delivered speeches at events hosted by organizations most Americans would find ‘unsavory.’” (A person’s refusal to provide transcripts of his speeches certainly suggests there is something in them he wants to hide.) “...One aide suggests that electoral concerns could explain Levin’s decision to delay a vote on Hagel’s nomination until more information comes to light. If troubling details were to come to light after Levin chose to rush through Hagel’s nomination at the committee level, the political consequences could be ‘devastating.’” (Levin is up for reelection in 2014.) [42416, 42417]

According to the House Ways and Means, Education and Workforce Committee and the House Energy and Commerce Committee, paperwork compliance for ObamaCare will consume more than 127 million man-hours—enough to build 1,040 Mount Rushmores or 18 Empire State Buildings. Congressman Dave Camp (R-MI) states, “This is just another example of the Obama Administration placing the burden of their policies on the backs of

those who are already doing more with less time and resources—families and small businesses. With many rules and regulations yet to come, these 127 million burden hours—many of them due to complying with new taxes—are just the tip of the iceberg. Worst of all, the law has failed to deliver what Americans need most—affordable health care.” [42359, 42360]

In support of gun control (which is more accurately referred to as people control), comedian Chris Rock appears at an event sponsored by the Mayors Against Illegal Guns and The Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence. Rock says, “I am just here to support [Obama]. ...[He] is our boss, but he is also, you know, [he] and the first lady are kind of like the mom and the dad of the country. And when your dad says something, you listen, and when you don’t it usually bites you in the ass later on. So, I’m here to support [Obama].” At the same event, singer Tony Bennett makes the nonsensical statement, “It’s the kind of turn that happened to the great country of Germany, when Nazis came over and created tragic things, and they had to be told off. And if we continue this kind of violence and accept it in our country, the rest of the world’s going to really take care of us, in a very bad way. We should learn that we’re the greatest country, because we’re all different nationalities and all different religions. And we should show the rest of the world how to behave.” (For the record, had German citizens been allowed to own guns Hitler and his Nazi regime may have been stopped and tens of millions of deaths may have been prevented.) [42352, 42368, 42370]

On February 7 Obama and his new Secretary of State John Kerry yawn through most of the remarks at the annual National Prayer Breakfast. WhiteHouseDossier.com notes, “Obama appeared exceedingly sleepy... looking like he was having trouble staying awake as others spoke and delivering his own remarks ponderously, with heavy eyelids and a tired visage. Obama, who rarely holds a publicly announced event before 10:00 am and is known to be a nighthawk, was forced to show up at the breakfast at 7:55 am. While listening to the warm-up speakers, [Obama’s] eyes were frequently downcast, he appeared drawn, and he was chewing gum, presumably the Nicorette he is known to use to satisfy his nicotine addiction without smoking. He occasionally brushed a finger onto an eye, as if trying to remove morning crust or wetness. He sometimes seemed to miss his cues to laugh or smile politely at jokes. Obama appeared to labor particularly hard to stay awake while opera singer Andrea Bocelli performed a dirge-like classical song accompanied only by piano.” According to the media pool report, “Kerry began yawning 7 minutes into Dr. [Benjamin] Carson’s inspirational speech and basically didn’t stop. ...And the uncontrolled yawning continued during Obama’s speech, along with eye-rubbing.” [42361, 42362, 42376]

Dr. Benjamin Carson, a well-renowned surgeon and director of Johns Hopkins Hospital Pediatric Neurosurgery (who was portrayed by actor Cuba Gooding, Jr. in the movie *Gifted Hands*), indirectly criticizes ObamaCare, deficit spending, a progressive tax system, and big government. Carson’s remarks no doubt annoy Obama—whose well-known inability to accept criticism is likely reduced even more by the fact that Carson happens to be black. (Obama was possibly not warned that Carson is a conservative,

probably because White House staffers mistakenly assumed there is no such thing as a black conservative.) Carson suggests income taxes should be like church tithing, with everyone paying the same percentage. “Well, some people say, they say, ‘Well, that’s not fair because it doesn’t hurt the guy who made \$10 billion as much as the guy who made ten.’ Where does it say you have to hurt the guy? He just put a billion dollars in the pot!” (Sitting five feet from Carson is Obama, who spent the entire 2012 campaign calling for wealthier Americans to be punished with higher tax rates.) “You know, we don’t need to hurt him. It’s that kind of thinking that has resulted in 602 banks in the Cayman Islands. That money needs to be back here, building our infrastructure and creating jobs.” (In other words, the tax system endorsed by Obama is driving wealth out of the United States.)” [42375, 42377, 42411, 42431, 42438, 42440, 42442, 42458, 42552, 42671]

On health care, Carson says, “Here’s my solution: When a person is born, give him a birth certificate, an electronic medical record, and a health savings account [HSA] to which money can be contributed—pretax—from the time you’re born ’til the time you die. When you die, you can pass it on to your family members, so that when you’re 85 years old and you’ve got six diseases, you’re not trying to spend up everything. You’re happy to pass it on and there’s nobody talking about death panels. ...And also, for the people who were indigent who don’t have any money we can make contributions to their HSA each month because we already have this huge pot of money. Instead of sending it to some bureaucracy, let’s put it in their HSAs. Now they have some control over their own health care.” (Carson is saying—to Obama’s face—that ObamaCare is not the solution to the problem. It will, in fact, cause more problems, and the free market should instead be relied on to provide better health care and promote cost efficiencies. Carson’s remarks at the National Prayer Breakfast are, not surprisingly, essentially ignored by the mainstream media—but not by conservatives, some of whom almost immediately push for Carson to run for president in 2016. At AtlasShrugs.com Pamela Geller later writes, “Pity that America’s first black president wasn’t someone like Dr. Carson instead of a radical demagogue bent on ‘transforming’ (i.e. breaking) America.”) (Carson receives a standing ovation; Obama remains seated.) [42375, 42377, 42411, 42431, 42438, 42440, 42442, 42458, 42615]

Judge Andrew Napolitano comments on the Justice Department’s memorandum that attempts to justify Obama’s “right” to assassinate American citizens via drone strikes. The memorandum “claims that if an American is likely to trigger the use of force 10,000 miles from here, and he can’t easily be arrested, he can be murdered with impunity. This notwithstanding state and federal laws that expressly prohibit non-judicial killing, an executive order signed by every president from Gerald Ford to Obama prohibiting American officials from participating in assassinations, the absence of a declaration of war against Yemen, treaties expressly prohibiting this type of killing, and the language of the Declaration [of Independence], which guarantees the right to live, and the [U.S.] Constitution, which requires a jury trial before the government can deny that right. The president cannot lawfully order the killing of anyone, except according to the Constitution and federal law. Under the Constitution, he can only order killing using the military when the U.S. has been attacked or when an attack is so imminent that delay would cost innocent lives. He can also order killing using the military in pursuit of a

declaration of war enacted by Congress. Unless Obama knows that an attack from Yemen on our shores is imminent, he'd be hard-pressed to argue that a guy [Anwar al-Awlaki] in a car in the desert 10,000 miles from here—no matter his intentions—poses a threat so imminent to the U.S. that he needs to be killed on the spot in order to save the lives of Americans who would surely die during the time it would take to declare war on the country that harbors him, or during the time it would take to arrest him. Surely, CIA agents can use deadly force defensively to protect themselves and their assets, but they may not use it offensively. Federal laws against murder apply to the president and to all federal agents and personnel in their official capacities, wherever they go on the planet.” [42343, 42373]

“Obama has argued that he can kill Americans whose deaths he believes will keep us all safer, without any due process whatsoever. No law authorizes that. His attorney general has argued that [Obama's] careful consideration of each target and the narrow use of deadly force are an adequate and constitutional substitute for due process. No court has ever approved that. And his national security adviser has argued that the use of drones is humane since they are ‘surgical’ and only kill their targets. We know that is incorrect, as the folks who monitor all this say that 11 percent to 17 percent of the 2,300 drone-caused deaths have been those of innocent bystanders. Did you consent to a government that can kill whom it wishes? How about one that plays tricks on federal judges? How long will it be before the presidential killing comes home?” [42343]

Noting that the Obama administration opposes “waterboarding” but supports drone strikes, DailyCaller.com asks, “Is it okay to pour water on a terrorist's face if it's dropped from an unmanned drone?” Obama “can kill any American citizen he wants, as long as somebody he decides is informed and high-level says it's okay. And our friends on the left are okay with that, because [Obama] isn't George Bush or some other evil Republican. Water on the face: ‘You monsters. It's the end of the republic!’ Hellfire missile in the face: ‘Whatever you think is best, Barry.’ In related news, if *you* determine that someone is posing a threat to *your* personal safety, you're not informed or high-level enough to defend yourself as specified in the Second Amendment.” [42349]

According to a poll conducted for Pulse Opinion Research for the Center for Immigration Studies, 52 percent of likely voters “...preferred to see illegal immigrants in the United States go back to their home countries, compared to just 33 percent who would like them to be given legal status. ...Of those who want illegal immigrants to head home, 73 percent indicated that they felt ‘very strongly’ about that view, while just 35 percent of those who want illegal immigrants to get legal status said they felt very strongly about this view.” [42346, 42347, 42348]

DailyCaller.com reports, “Obama's newly-named nominee to run the Department of the Interior, REI CEO Sally Jewell, sought and received a waiver from Obamacare requirements for her outdoor clothing and equipment company in 2011. The Washington Examiner's Charlie Spiering dug up the revelation Thursday, noting that Obama welcomed Jewell to the White House in 2009 to jointly argue for the passage of

Obamacare.” (She supports ObamaCare but does not want it to apply to her company. That is, she wants her competitors to face higher operating costs that her best would be able to avoid.) [42350]

Republicans announce that Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) will deliver the response to Obama’s State of the Union address in both English and Spanish. (Whether Obama will deliver his speech in both English and Arabic remains to be seen.) [42353, 42354, 42358]

Obama’s minor changes to the ObamaCare contraception mandate do not please the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. On behalf of the group Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York states, “Throughout the past year, we have been assured by the Administration that we will not have to refer, pay for, or negotiate for the mandated coverage. We remain eager for the Administration to fulfill that pledge and to find acceptable solutions—we will affirm any genuine progress that is made, and we will redouble our efforts to overcome obstacles or setbacks.” [42393]

Meanwhile, Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio, head of the Catholic diocese of Brooklyn, New York, writes in *The Tablet*, “The so-called ‘pro-choice’ movement has its roots in the ideology of Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, who understood her call to be one who would ‘assist the race toward the elimination of the unfit.’ Of course, a young Barack Obama was precisely the sort of unfit child that Sanger and her allies would want to eliminate. Tragically, [Obama] has not been an advocate for those young children faced with similarly difficult circumstances. He has chosen to use the bully pulpit not to call upon us all to be nobler and to embrace each child, regardless of origins and circumstances; rather, he has been a proponent of an expediency that is shameful and criminal in the eyes of Almighty God.” Obama’s contraception mandate would force “Catholic institutions to provide employees with medical procedures and services we believe to be in defiance of the will of God. We know that, today, an administration that is hostile requires contraception and sterilization. However, as government involves itself in our internal affairs, there is little doubt in anyone’s mind that the government would seek to compel religious institutions to provide abortion services in the future. In my view, those who voted for ...Obama bear the responsibility for a step deeper in the culture of death. Under the cover of women’s issues, we now see an assault on religious freedom and personal conscience. ...I would have hoped that [Obama] would have stood on the side of freedom for all. Instead, he stands on the side of political expediency. Mr. Lincoln, with great difficulty, put out into the deep and paid with his life. Would that our political leaders today would have some of the same courage.” [42367, 42393]

Retired Army Lt. Gen. William G. Boykin, former commander of U.S. Special Forces Command and deputy undersecretary of defense for intelligence, tells CNSNews.com, “There is no question that we could have moved an airplane in there [Benghazi] and we could have also put boots on the ground at the embassy. State [Department] should have coordinated with DOD [Department of Defense] and said: ‘We’ve got to have an airplane. The Department of Defense could have provided an airplane in there. All they had to do was ask.’” [42363]

At a hearing on the September 11, 2012 attack in Benghazi that led to the deaths of four Americans, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta tells the Senate Armed Services Committee, “We were not dealing with a prolonged or continuous assault which could have been brought to an end by U.S. military response very simply, although we had forces deployed to the region. Time, distance, the lack of an adequate warning, events that moved very quickly on the ground, prevented a more immediate response. Despite the uncertainty at the time, the Department of Defense and the rest of the U.S. government spared no effort to do everything we could to save American lives. Before, during and after the attack, every request that the Department of Defense received, we did—we accomplished. But again, four Americans lives were lost. We all have a responsibility to make sure that doesn’t happen again.” [42364, 42423]

Both Panetta and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey tell Senator Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) they were aware that Ambassador Christopher Stevens had warned that the facility in Benghazi could not withstand a coordinated attack. Panetta and Dempsey both state that the State Department had not requested assistance. Although Panetta and Dempsey were aware of Stevens’ cable, neither brought it to Obama’s attention or discussed the situation with then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Although the military was on “heightened alert” because it was September 11, Dempsey says F-16s were not deployed from a base in Italy because it would have taken “up to 20 hours” to ready them. Panetta admits that throughout the evening of the attack in Benghazi he spoke with Obama *only once*. Panetta states that Obama “basically said do whatever you need to do to be able to protect our people there” and did not ask what assets were in the area, how quickly they could respond, or what could be done. Panetta spoke with Obama only once and with no one else in the White House, and Obama never called back to ask about the progress of the events. (Obama was therefore not in the Situation Room keeping close track of the events as they unfolded. Where he was is anybody’s guess.) [42366, 42400, 42423]

Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) asks, “In between 9:42 p.m., Benghazi time, when the first attacks started, and 5:15 am, when Mr. Doherty and Mr. Woods lost their lives, what conversations did either of you have with Secretary Clinton?” Amazingly, Panetta responds, “We did not have any conversations with Secretary Clinton.” Dempsey also states that he had no conversations with Clinton. [42372, 42382, 42400, 42423]

Senator John McCain (R-AZ) asks, “Why didn’t you put forces in place to be ready to respond?” Dempsey replies, “Because we never received a request to do so, number one. And number two, we—” McCain: “You never heard of Ambassador Stevens’ repeated warnings about the lack of security?” Dempsey: “I had, sir, through General [Carter] Ham [head of the U.S. Africa command]. But we never received a request for support from the State Department, which would have allowed us to put forces—” McCain: “So it’s the State Department’s fault?” Dempsey: “I’m not blaming the State Department. I’m sure they had their own—” McCain: “Who would you blame?” Dempsey: “I stand by the report of the Accountability Review Board...” (That board essentially blamed no one and

was a whitewash to shield Obama and Clinton from criticism. The review board was hardly impartial. It was headed by Admiral Mike Mullen and Thomas Pickering. Pickering is a co-chair of the International Crisis Group—which is funded by Obama’s billionaire leftist pal, George Soros. Mullen was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Neither Pickering nor Mullen were prepared to conclude that the Benghazi fiasco was a massive foul-up followed by a cover-up by the Obama administration.) [42374, 42381, 42423, 42462, 42652]

Panetta’s responses to questions from Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) do nothing to put Obama or Clinton—or Panetta himself—in a better light: Graham: “Are you surprised that [Obama] never called you, Secretary Panetta, and say, ‘how’s it going?’” Panetta: “I, you know, normally in these situations—” Graham: “Did he know the level of threat that—” Panetta: “Let—well, let me finish the answer. We were deploying the forces. He knew we were deploying the forces. He was being kept updated—” Graham: “Well, I hate to interrupt you, but I [have] got limited time. We didn’t deploy any forces. Did you call him back—” Panetta: “No, but the event—the event was over by the time we got—” Graham: “Mr. Secretary, you didn’t know how long the attack would last. Did you ever call him and say, ... ‘it looks like we don’t have anything to get there anytime soon?’” Panetta: “The event was over before we could move any assets.” Graham: “It lasted almost eight hours. And my question to you is during that eight-hour period, did [Obama] show any curiosity about how’s this going, what kind of assets do you have helping these people? Did he ever make that phone call?” Panetta: “Look, there is no question in my mind that [Obama] was concerned about American lives and, frankly, all of us were concerned about American lives.” Graham: “With all due respect, I don’t believe that’s a credible statement if he never called and asked you, are we helping these people; what’s happening to them? We have a second round, and we’ll take it up then.” (Ed Morrissey reacts at HotAir.com: “Graham just demolished the entire White House defense on Benghazi in less than ten minutes of cross-examination.”) [42400, 42419, 42423]

The public is supposed to believe that for the Osama bin Laden operation Obama was in the Situation Room, fully involved in the process and making critical decisions. Yet in the case of Benghazi, with Americans under attack, Obama purportedly did nothing more than tell Panetta at about 5:00 pm Washington time, “Do what you have to do,” and then disappeared from sight. The attack lasted more than eight hours, yet the public is supposed to believe that the greatest military force in the world could do nothing because “there was not enough time” to ready an operation—even though one would assume everyone was already on alert because it was the anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. (The huge protests at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo earlier in the day and elsewhere in the Arab world should also have suggested to Panetta and Dempsey that they might want to pay attention to the Benghazi hotbed as well.) Although Panetta claims the military “spared no effort” to save the lives of Ambassador Stevens and three other Americans, it appears that the military did nothing—despite having no way of knowing how long the attack would last—and Navy SEALs were even told to “stand down.” Aircraft were not dispatched to Benghazi from a nearby base in Italy because Obama had not approved a cross border authority. Why did he not do so? Where was he? Why did he allow four Americans to be killed? As suggested previously in this *Timeline*,

it may be that Obama did not believe any American lives were at risk because the Valerie Jarrett “plan” was for Ambassador Stevens to be captured and later exchanged for Omar Abdel Rahman (the “blind sheikh”). Perhaps Obama simply went upstairs to the White House living quarters, watched a basketball game, and went to bed—expecting that the prisoner exchange deal would make him a hero and guarantee his reelection. But the plan went awry and Stevens was inadvertently killed. Of course, there may have been no scheme to trade Stevens for Rahman and Obama simply made terrible decisions that night. In either case, Panetta and Dempsey are left to cover for Obama, who knows the leftist media will not pursue the questions their testimony raised.

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the current economic “recovery” is the weakest since World War II, with total GDP growth of only 7.5 percent since June 2009. [42365]

On CNBC, Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) says, “All these people carping about sequestration being harmful to the economy, that would presume that the government creates wealth by spending money. I think that’s a ridiculous Keynesian notion that’s been disproved for the last 40 years, so I think cutting spending is precisely what you should do to spur the economy. When money comes to Washington and it’s spent, that’s how it’s destructive and spent inefficiently. Let’s leave that money in the marketplace. ...The sequester barely cuts any icing off the top of the cake. Spending’s gonna rise \$9 trillion over the next 10 years. The sequester takes \$1 trillion off of that; spending still goes up \$8 trillion over the next 10 years. That’s why [the] Bowles-Simpson [commission] said we need [to cut] at least \$4 trillion, and that’s why people like me who are truly fiscally conservative say, ‘freeze spending.’ But do you know what a freeze in spending would be? That would be considered [by many] to be a \$9 trillion cut if we don’t spend more than we’re currently spending. ...[Obama] is not willing to lead, or save Social Security or save Medicare. They’re both bankrupt. Social Security spends and gives out more than comes in. Medicare gives out \$3 for every dollar that comes in, and he’s taking them off the table and accusing Republicans of wanting to cut them, [but] we’re the ones that want to save the entitlement programs, but they will only be saved by reforming them. He takes them off the table and says, ‘Oh, let’s go squeeze more money out of rich people.’” [42412]

“It was a mistake to reelect [Obama] and it’s also a mistake to squeeze more money out of the private economy. That’s where jobs are created. I want to leave more money in the private economy and send less money to Washington. [Obama] wants to do the opposite. He’s wrong, and he is why the economy is languishing, because his policies are wrong and they’ve been wrong for a long time. ...I think Americans are gonna wake up. When Americans discover how bad ObamaCare is and when ObamaCare starts bankrupting state governments, I think you’re gonna see a huge rebellion against [Obama] and his policies. ...We’re borrowing \$50,000 a second and it can’t go on. ...I think people need to know that the Federal Reserve has probably been the biggest culprit towards the worsening of the business cycle that we’ve had. ...People need to know that interest rates, the price of money, needs to fluctuate like other prices. When the Federal Reserve

sets the interest rates it incorporates and brings in these massive boom-bust cycles, the housing bubble being the most prominent of these, and that the Federal Reserve needs to be scrutinized.” [42412]

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei states, “Negotiations will not solve the problems between Iran and the U.S. ...[The Americans] are pointing the gun at Iran and say either negotiate or we will shoot. The Iranian nation will not be frightened by the threats. ...Some naive people like the idea of negotiating with America [but] negotiations will not solve the problems. If some people want American rule to be established again in Iran, the nation will rise up to face them. ...Does imposing, in your own words, crippling sanctions show goodwill or hostility? Iran will not accept to negotiate with he who threatens us with pressure. The offer of talks is meaningful when the other side shows goodwill.” [42371]

John Brennan, Obama’s nominee to head the CIA faces questioning by the Senate Intelligence Committee. Not surprisingly, a fair amount of time is spent on Obama’s belief that he has the legal authority to order Americans killed via drone strikes if he thinks they are involved in terrorist activities. Senator Ron Wyden (D-OR) says, “It’s the idea of giving any president unfettered power to kill an American without checks and balances that’s so troubling. Every American has the right to know when their government believes it’s allowed to kill them.” Brennan says, “We only take such actions as a last resort to save lives when there’s no other alternative.” (The beginning of the hearing is interrupted by protesters opposed to drone strikes. After several outbursts, the room is cleared of all non-media observers.) Wyden asks Brennan, “Do you believe [Obama] should provide an individual American with the opportunity to surrender before killing him?” Brennan responds that any American who joins al-Qaeda or any other terrorist organization should expect that he will be a target. Brennan also states that he opposes waterboarding, calling it “something that is reprehensible and should never be done again,” but approves of drone strikes. (Dropping a missile on an American citizen without due process of law is apparently not reprehensible.) [42383, 42403, 42410]

Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) asks Brennan about Ali Harzi, who is suspected of being involved in the Benghazi attack, and why the Obama administration did not try to stop the Tunisian government from releasing him. Brennan responds, “The Tunisians did not have a basis in their law to hold him. ...We didn’t have anything on him, either. If we did, we would have made a point to the Tunisians to turn him over to us, but we didn’t have that.” (That is arguably a lie—made under oath to a Senate committee. At WeeklyStandard.com Stephen F. Hayes later notes, “First, Harzi had a history. He’d been detained by the Tunisian government for five years, from 2006 to 2011, on terrorism charges. Among other concerns, he was then seeking to join his brother, a midlevel operative in Al Qaeda in Iraq. Second, after the Benghazi attack Harzi was detained in Turkey, at least in part on the basis of intelligence provided to the Turks by the U.S. government. Third, Harzi was held in Tunisia for three months on the strength of intelligence the U.S. government collected about his involvement in the Benghazi attacks. According to the Daily Beast, that intelligence included real-time social media updates from Benghazi about the unfolding attack. Fourth, Harzi’s own lawyer says that the

Tunisian courts are still monitoring Harzi because he remains charged with membership in a terrorist group. If Brennan believes the U.S. government doesn't have "anything" on Harzi, it's hard to find others who share that assessment. ...Fawzi Jaballah, an adviser to Tunisia's justice ministry, said the Tunisian attorney general opposed the release. Interior minister Ali Larayedh said in a TV interview that Harzi is 'strongly suspected to have been involved in the attack of Benghazi.' ...An FBI spokesman tells The Weekly Standard: 'I don't think there's anything we can say on the record while this is under investigation.'" [42489]

At a summit of Democrat congressmen in Leesburg, Virginia, Obama encourages them to follow his leftist policies in order to regain power: "It won't be smooth, it won't be simple, there will be frustrations, there will be times when you guys will be mad at me— [but] as a byproduct of doing that good work, I would expect that Nancy Pelosi will be Speaker [of the House] again soon." He calls for higher taxes, gun control and "immigration reform." [42395]

According to a Fox News poll of likely voters, "by a 52-40 percent margin voters think the worst is yet to come on the economy. And more than eight in 10 disagree with [Obama's] notion that the government doesn't have a spending problem. ...[B]y a wide 60-34 percent margin voters say the government's \$800 billion dollar stimulus plan didn't work. ... Nearly half of voters—48 percent—think the country is weaker and less powerful today than it was five years ago. That's twice as many as the 24 percent who see the country as stronger and more powerful. Another 27 percent think it's unchanged." [42384]

In California, a criminal complaint is filed against Obama, Governor Jerry Brown, Secretary of State Kamala Harris, and the Orange County Board of Supervisors charging identity fraud and willful and intentional aiding and abetting a criminal conspiracy. [42422]

The mainstream media selectively edits the 22-page manifesto left by Christopher Jordan Dorner, who shot and killed a police officer and two others, to remove references to his support for gun control, Obama, Joe Biden, Hillary Clinton, MSNBC, CNN, and various leftist news personalities and entertainers. (By the time the media is done, the 22 pages are down to 11.) SooperMexican.com writes, "So should MSNBC and Obama be blamed for this murderous scum targeting cops and their families? NO—but if we applied the same standard that the media does to conservatives and Republicans, then each of the people on this list contributed to the radicalization of a murderer who has taken 3 lives. And why did they edit all of this out? Would they do this for a Tea Party shooter? Somehow I doubt it." (The media has more difficulty hiding the fact that Dorner, a former police officer, is black.) In the search for Dorner, incompetent, trigger-happy Los Angeles police officers mistakenly shoot and injure two women simply because the vehicle they were driving matched the description of the killer's vehicle. (It does not take long for a number of Facebook pages in support of Dorner are set up by anti-gun leftists, black racists, and various anti-police thugs.) [42385, 42386, 42387, 42389, 42391, 42392,

42407, 42430, 42437, 42468, 42476, 42482, 42483, 42484]

On CNBC's *The Kudlow Report*, author Ann Coulter tells host Lawrence Kudlow, "I mean, you really wonder if Democrats would win any elections if we had an honest media in this country. ...As [Democrat pollster] Pat Caddell says, the media is becoming a threat to democracy. The things that they went crazy over when Bush was president—I mean, remember that video at the White House Correspondents' [Association] dinner? ... He had a little video of, I don't know, like the dog looking for weapons of mass destruction under the White House furniture. It was a silly little video and you would think someone died. Well, here in this case under Obama, four people did die [in Benghazi], and this [lack of communication with Obama and Hillary Clinton] is coming out five months after it happened, four months after the election? What is with our media? ...This is a major story. Americans were dying. I mean, on a few news outlets you would hear about this before the election, that there was time to get helicopters there, to get fighter planes there, to have saved some of these Americans, and we get the cock-and-bull story about some American made video ramping up a spontaneous demonstration, and now we find out that [Obama] and the secretary of state were AWOL." [42396]

Reuters reports, "A Florida judge has approved the adoption of a 22-month-old baby girl that will list three people as parents on her birth certificate—a married lesbian couple and a gay man. The decision ends a two-year paternity fight between the couple and a friend of the women who donated his sperm to father the child but later sought a larger role in the girl's life. The ruling means the child's birth certificate will include a biological father and both women as parents in an unusual arrangement approved recently by a Miami-Dade Circuit Court judge." (Obama has no comment.) [42388]

WND.com reports that Obama "is close to choosing Chicago businesswoman Penny Pritzker, the finance chair of his 2008 presidential campaign, as his next commerce secretary, according to multiple news media accounts. WND first exposed that Pritzker is a primary funder of the radical Media Matters for America activist group. Other questions may be raised about Pritzker's financial history, primarily her family's ownership of a bank that was seized and shut down by the feds in 2001 after it was accused of unsound financial activities and predatory lending practices. Pritzker herself served as chairman of the failed bank, Superior Bank, from 1991–1994. ...In 1993, with Pritzker as the chairman, the bank became a top lender in the subprime home mortgages market." (In a May 2001 letter to her bank employees Pritzker wrote, "Our commitment to subprime lending has never been stronger." Within weeks the bank failed, yet Obama considered selecting Pritzker for the Commerce position in 2009. Obama's frequent golf buddy Martin Nesbitt is vice-president of the Pritzker Realty Group, chairman of the Chicago Housing Authority, and a friend of Obama advisor and former Chicago slumlord Valerie Jarrett. Nesbitt's wife, Anita Blanchard, was Michelle Obama's obstetrician. Pritzker money also helped Obama win his 2004 U.S. Senate race, and is in charge of raising cash for Obama's eventual presidential library and museum. According to WashingtonTimes.com, Obama helped the Pritzker family get a discount for the early

payoff of a \$460 million deal it agreed to when the bank failed. But “while the wealthy Pritzker family got a multimillion-dollar break, 1,400 former depositors were not so lucky— they are still owed more than \$10 million in savings they lost when the bank’s doors were shuttered, and there is little chance they will ever get those funds back. ...The [original] settlement agreement with the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC) allowed the Pritzker family to spread their payments over 15 years without having to pay interest. But after paying \$316 million, the family quietly struck a deal with the FDIC in May 2011 to discount the \$144 million balance in return for paying off the debt early.” [353, 356, 360, 519, 534, 664, 825, 831, 1185, 1282, 1544, 1594, 2467, 2505, 11632, 11638, 11639, 11646, 11693, 33671, 36364, 36431, 36432, 39361, 42390, 42414]

On February 8 TheHill.com reports, “Senate Democrats are struggling to come up with a replacement for the \$85 billion sequester set to begin on March 1. Key Democrats huddled Thursday in Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid’s (D-NV) office to discuss options for preventing the looming spending cuts after returning from a retreat in Annapolis where they discussed strategy with ...Obama. ‘It’s a work in progress,’ said Sen. Barbara Mikulski (D-MD), the chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. Other senators said the party so far has not agreed on the balance of tax hikes and spending cuts in a package, on how big the package would be or on how much of the sequester it would replace.” Ed Morrissey writes at HotAir.com, “Remember, too, that the sequester was proposed by the White House, passed by both chambers of Congress, and signed by ...Obama eighteen months ago. At that time, no one expected it to actually activate; practically everyone expressed opposition to the sequester. However, only the House actually took action to replace it—twice, in fact, passing bills that replaced the sequester cuts with other more rational spending reductions. Neither the Senate nor the White House acted on those House bills, and neither entity proposed even a single specific idea for its replacement. ...Unbelievable. After 18 months, the Democrats had no Plan B for the sequester, assuming that Republicans would be desperate to stop it themselves and would willingly go back into fiscal-cliff mode to deal with Obama and Harry Reid directly. Instead, the decision to insist on normal order and require Democrats to produce a bill has exposed them as entirely unready to govern in both the Senate and the White House.” [42397, 42398, 42455]

Obama’s approval/disapproval rating falls to 46/45 percent in a national Quinnipiac poll of registered voters. (The ratings were 53/40 in December.) In the same poll, Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) has a net favorability rating of +12; Obama’s is +5. (Obama’s favorability rating is slightly higher than his job approval rating.) [42408, 42418]

On his radio program Glenn Beck discusses the testimony of Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Martin Dempsey before the Senate Armed Services Committee. “[T]hey send out pictures to show that [Obama is] engaged, having meetings: This is where [Obama] was on September 11th. Remember the pictures that came out, make him look very presidential? He’s meeting with the generals and Panetta and everything else. Okay. To make us feel like he was engaged and watching everything. Now Panetta comes out and says, ‘Oh, well, that’s just from a meeting. We

met with him for just a few minutes and we told him and he said, well, you guys handle it.' ...He didn't even ask what assets we have. Nothing. 'You guys do it.' And then they left him alone from 5:30 for the rest of the night. And he doesn't check in. Why would they now make [Obama] look like he wasn't engaged at all, that he wasn't a part of this? Remember [that Obama] wants to be viewed as a guy who killed Osama Bin Laden. So why would you do that? Why would you make it look like he doesn't—had nothing to do with it? Okay. Here's why: Because as bad as that is, we'll play some audio for you here in a minute from Rand Paul. Rand Paul is the first guy that I have heard in the public eye that has said, yes, they were running drugs or guns. I told you that Week One when this happened: They're running guns. Those guns that had just suddenly disappeared and all those weapons of mass destruction, they suddenly disappeared, we were running guns. Later the New York Times reports that, yes, and they found a captain of a ship that was running those guns, and we were part of it." [42420]

“So here's what happened,” offers Beck. “This is why this testimony came out yesterday. What is on the horizon about what that ambassador was doing and what our response was is so much worse than [Obama] being involved. So they know that [Obama] is going to get heat and people are going to say, ‘You weren't involved at all’ So when the real story comes out, he can say, ‘Oh, my gosh. I should have been involved. That's why they kept me at arm's length. That's why they told me that they could take care of it and they wanted me out of it. I had nothing to do with this at all.’ This is to protect [Obama] from some—from another shoe that's going to fall, and that shoe is going to be bad. And hear me now: [Obama] was involved. He knew. And they are protecting him right now. Do not believe the cover. Because that's all Panetta's [testimony] was yesterday was a cover-up, to distance [Obama] from what is going to be exposed in the future.” [42420]

Former FBI agent John Guandolo, author of the first Muslim Brotherhood training manual for the agency, tells radio talk show host Tom Trento that John Brennan, Obama's pick to head the CIA, is “wholly unfit for government service in any national security capacity, and that would specifically make him unfit to be the Director of Central Intelligence for the United States. ...[Brennan] has interwoven his life, professionally and personally, with individuals that we know are terrorists, and he has given them access to not only senior leaders inside the government but has given them access to the National Security Council, the national security staff; he has brought known Hamas and Muslim Brotherhood operatives into those positions of government; he has overseen and approved and encouraged others to bring known leaders of Hamas and the Muslim Brotherhood into the government to advise the U.S. government on characters and strategy as well as the overall quote unquote ‘war on terror.’ ...[Brennan] has proven through his own comments publicly that he is clueless and grossly ignorant of al-Qaeda's strategy. ...Brennan did convert to Islam when he served in an official capacity on behalf of the United States in Saudi Arabia. ...What makes him unfit for duty was his conversion to Islam [which] was the culmination of a counterintelligence operation against him to recruit him, and the fact that foreign intelligence service operatives recruited Mr. Brennan, and he was in a very sensitive and senior U.S. government position in a foreign country means that he is either a traitor, which I'm not saying but that's one of the options and he did this all willingly and knowingly, or he did it

unwillingly... and unwittingly, which means he is naive and does not understand, he has the inability to discern to understand how to walk in those kind of environments , which makes him completely unfit to be the Director of Central Intelligence.” [42433]

On *Hannity*, Dr. Benjamin Carson tells host Sean Hannity, “The fabric of our nation is being destroyed. We’re going from a can-do nation to a what-can-you-do-for-me nation., and I don’t think that’s what most people want, but it’s presented to them as the thing to do.” But the people “know so little that the news media is able to tell them whatever they want them to think. ...I would be willing to debate anyone on [Obama’s] team on healthcare and how it should be administered and how it could be done for less money.” Hannity tells Carson if he ran for president, “I would vote for you.” Carson replies, “If the Lord grabbed me by the collar and made me do it, I would. If I got a nickel from everyone who sent me an email asking me to run, I would be able to finance my campaign.” (The leftist media will certainly respond to Carson’s rising popularity by going after him with a vengeance, targeting him in articles that call him a “sell out to his race” and an “Uncle Tom.”) [42429, 42491, 42810]

On MSNBC, Congressman Elijah Cummings (D-MD), calls the proposed elimination of Saturday mail delivery racist: “You’re talking about just this reduction, from six days to five days will cut anywhere from 25,000 to 30,000 employees. And with regard to Asian, African-Americans, and Hispanics, they comprise about 40 percent of the Postal Service employees. So it’s logical to believe if they were to lose that [sic] 30,000 jobs, easily 40 percent of them would be African-Americans, Hispanics, and Asian-Americans. ...So you have a lot of women, many of whom are single women, head of household, and they depend upon that decent wage, decent working conditions and benefits to take care of their families. So, yes, it would have a devastating effect in an economy that is already very, very fragile.” [42435, 42436]

On February 9 Obama uses his Saturday radio/Internet address to call for a short-term deal to delay the March 1 sequestration cuts required by the 2011 debt limit negotiations. (Obama has warned that 600,000 women and children will lose food stamp benefits if the sequestration cuts are not prevented, 100,000 would lose their federal housing, and job safety inspectors would have to be laid off, leaving “workers unprotected” and leading “to an increase in worker fatality and injury rates.” Obama is apparently incapable of finding any waste or fraud in the government, and when faced with the need to reduce spending he immediately singles out programs that Americans would least like to see trimmed. The tactic is obvious: frighten and anger voters into calling the Senators and Congressmen to demand that no cuts be made anywhere.) It is worth noting that the number of Americans receiving food stamp benefits exceeds 47 million—more than the entire population of Spain. Even if 600,000 were to lose benefits, that would represent only 1.128 percent. [42424, 42455, 42514]

According to a Rutgers University survey, 29 percent of those polled believe one of the causes of high unemployment is people “not wanting to work.” A lack of necessary workplace skills is cited by 41 percent; 70 percent blame competition from other

countries; 23 percent blame George W. Bush; 30 percent blame Obama; 40 percent blame illegal immigrants; 25 percent blame the cost of the war on terrorism; and 35 percent blame “Wall Street bankers.” [42427, 42428]

The FBI thwarts a plot by a would-be terrorist to blow up an Oakland, California bank. In an effort to start a civil war, San Jose resident Matthew Aaron Llaneza had hoped the bombing would be blamed on right-wing extremists. [42449]

In Chicago, Michelle Obama, Valerie Jarrett, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan, and Mayor Rahm Emanuel—and numerous Secret Service agents—attend the funeral of Hadiya Pendleton, a 15-year-old girl who was shot on January 29 in a gang-related incident. (The Obama entourage prevents many friends of Pendleton from paying their last respects. Tammie Spaggins says, “I can’t see her. I wanna see her and the people in there don’t even know her and it’s like what is your purpose for being here? We know her, we went to school with her and we can’t even see her.” Jalani Bunn says, “I’m not really gonna get mad ’cause I want her to rest in peace but it’s just sad that we really didn’t get our chance to say our last goodbye to her and I think Michelle pushed that ’cause a lot of spectators came that didn’t even know her.” *Chicago Sun-Times* columnist Carol Marin writes, “While the first lady’s visit will bring great comfort to the sorrow this city feels, we need her husband, too. We need [him] to come home. As confronter-in-chief.” (That is, Marin wants Obama to push anti-gun legislation even more forcefully.) It is worth noting that the thug who shot Pendleton had been arrested multiple time and was repeatedly released. According to ChicagoTribune.com, the killer “was on the street even though he had been arrested three times in connection with break-ins and trespassing while on probation for a weapons conviction in recent months... In two of those arrests, including one just 2 1/2 months ago, Cook County probation officials failed to notify prosecutors or the judge that Michael Ward had been arrested on the new misdemeanor charges and allegedly violated his probation.” Confiscating guns from law-abiding citizens would not have saved Pendleton’s life—but keeping Ward in jail would have. [42432, 42446, 42447, 42454, 42840]

At CanadaFreePree.com, General Paul E. Vallely (Retired), chairman of Stand Up America USA, excoriates the Obama administration over its failure to act to save American lives in Benghazi and the subsequent cover-up of what happened. Vallely writes, “After the testimonies of Secretary Panetta, General Dempsey, and Hillary Clinton on the Benghazi tragedy, it appears the Commander-in-Chief, Barack Obama was off duty and not available to make a hard decision to press the military Chain of Command to rescue Americans under attack. The cover up appears to be a White House order to ‘Stand Down’ and not issue a rescue mission operational order. For over seven hours [Obama] did nothing; no communications with his National Security team, and then he flew to Las Vegas for a campaign stop. ‘Weakness and dithering and flying to Las Vegas the next day for celebrity fund-raising parties are somehow better.’ ... What we have had is myriad conflicting and/or changing stories and moving people and parts from all manner of sources, players, and decisions makers. We have internet rumors, official statements, hearings, in camera probes, an ARB [Accountability Review Board]

report, talking heads ad nauseam political spin and a very clear ‘circling of the wagons’ where blame encompasses all involved within the Obama circle of influence. We have witnessed hearings that were more congratulatory than probative, and a steady parade of the changing of the guard. Facts cannot be disputed, yet access to facts has been impossible. The objective has been to obscure actions to prevent the ability to sift through the events, conjecture, political rhetoric, and the steady attempt to move beyond the elections and to the cabinet changes; especially by those of us without high clearance in ‘fly-over’ country.” [42434]

“The cumulative effect of all these facets is that one must suspend all manner of logic and reason to swallow the miasmatic trail. This is precisely the point—there has been an obvious attempt to muddy the waters, ‘chill the mark’, and deflect focus. It expected the onlooker to be so confused they have to just look away, feel bad for the losses, and swallow that this is all a learning experience and rest assured that they will all try harder, now under newer administration. ...[W]here was [Obama]? Was he ‘absent?’ Absent, really? No, he just did not want to make himself available and have to make a difficult decision or have his actions traced with any paper trail. He seems to hide or not be available when the going gets tough... Secretary Panetta and General Dempsey clearly both revealed that the meeting with Barack Obama on 9-11 was thirty minutes long and only 20 of the thirty minutes centered on Benghazi. Just how deep was the commitment of Obama to re-election versus Foreign Service officers in Libya and beyond as more than 20 locations had demonstrations or attacks against the United States during the week of 9-11? ...While General [Carter] Ham was in Washington, DC. on 9-11-12, who gave orders for any and all actions or lack of actions in Benghazi including the dispatch and re-dispatch of surveillance drones and in favor of what? ...The members of the Accountability Review Board (ARB) were chosen by Hillary Clinton and with the classified and non-classified publication of the ARB, the matter of the terror attack has been insufficiently addressed. Congress gave Hillary Clinton many questions, both within and without the scope of her testimony. Where are her written responses and those members of the ARB that she promised after her testimony?” [42434]

“The weak link also appears to be the representations made by Hillary Clinton and others about the communications protocols in the event of a most critical incident (referred to as ‘critics’ in the community) in one of the ‘hottest’ spots on Earth. It is a matter of procedure that communications between selected embassies, if not all embassies, have an Imminent Danger Alert System that is directly ‘on-hook’ with at least four destinations which include: the White House Situation Room (WHSR), the State Department Operations Center, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the Pentagon. ‘Critics’ are graded with an urgency status, and in the matter of Benghazi, the ladder of escalation included the top urgency status, calling for an immediate and urgent response. Why haven’t we seen or heard the Situation Reports (SitReps) from the witnesses from Benghazi including all those located or functioning out of either or both the compound and annex? How many non-American people were there or co-located there? Due to the nature of the attack(s), how many people in total have died or been injured and for those that died, were autopsies performed? Why haven’t the estimated 32 survivors been interviewed; where and who are they? ...Given the ‘on-hook’ destinations of

communications coming from Benghazi pleading for assistance, there were an estimated 300 to 400 personnel in national security positions that were receiving the emails, the encrypted mobile texts, or simply desperate phone calls via secured systems. After the dismissal of the national security officials, all actions were handed off to the NSC and the military command center—‘nothing else to see here folks back to business as usual.’” [42434]

“Dianne Feinstein, a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee said lawmakers viewed the video of the mission showing the post before the attack, the full set of incidents, and the exodus. These videos were a combination of surveillance cameras at the compound and the drone feed. The video(s) included the Ambassador’s body being dragged out of a building. This speaks to and proves that an ‘anti-Muslim’ YouTube video was clearly not the reason for the attack as fabricated by Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, and Susan Rice. David Petraeus did provide an immediate assessment that the attack was performed by a radical Islamists group known as Ansar al Sharia. **They knew immediately, and there never was any question despite what many surrogates have said, even during Thursday’s hearings.** ...The U.S. government under the Obama administration did in fact provide lethal weaponry to Libyan rebels for the eventual overthrow of Qaddafi and the same is true in Syria. So a high grade weapons pipeline was established, chased, smuggled, and transferred. This now begs additional questions that include who did the State Department and the Department of Defense hire for all parts of all missions in the Middle East? Could it be that the four dead Americans were actually killed with weapons provided by the United States that eventually went to the wrong hands?” [42434]

“The most shocking point spoken by Hillary Clinton was ‘what difference at this point does it make?’ She went on to say, ‘to be clear, it is from my perspective, less important today looking backwards as to why these militants decided they did it than to find them and bring them to justice.’ These two statements are key as they speak to timing, both of which point to pre-election conditions of Barack Obama and post-election conditions as the administration maintains power to ensure the facts on Benghazi remain opaque and oblique. ...Both Secretary Panetta and Martin Dempsey testified that after the one single meeting for thirty minutes at the White House, there were no further conversations with [Obama] regarding Benghazi and that includes not only Barack Obama, but Hillary Clinton and David Petraeus. The matter for all involved was closed and an Executive Privilege was attached to 9-11-12 Presidential Daily Briefings (PDBs) associated to Libya for public or investigative purposes. ...Panetta admitted in his testimony that the terrorists are emboldened, regardless of capture or response possibilities now, which in summary, is the most disturbing revelation of all. The threat to American safety and assets across the globe remain at high risk, yet there is no ordered readiness condition to save our brothers and sisters or sovereign locations worldwide. **Where was [Obama]?** Our sources tell us, that though he was ‘absent,’ he indeed gave the ‘stand-down’ orders. Prior to that, it was his naive approach, inept preparation and response to obvious needs that set the scene in place—the most obvious day for retaliatory action on the part of al Qaeda. What are we being asked to believe?” [42434]

At LastResistance.com John DeMayo wonder whether Obama is “mentally fit to serve as president” and notes, “American history proves that, in the past, many of our leaders have suffered from mental illness. For me, I tend to believe that quite a few of our Presidents had mental health issues of one kind or another. After all what person desiring any peace in their lives would want the job of U.S. President under the best of conditions. However, it appears that there are an abnormal number of eccentricities residing in ...Obama and I genuinely wonder if he is mentally fit to run our Republic. In layman’s terms: Obama is egocentric, always late to work, never gets his work done one time, takes a lot of time off to recreate and party, loves to be the center of attention, hates to be questioned, holds a grudge, associates with reckless ideologues, deludes himself into believing his own lies, avoids responsibility, never admits he made a mistake, thinks stealing is perfectly reasonable, has empathy issues, spends recklessly, has a messiah complex, takes credit for things he never did, can’t argue honestly, is thin skinned, can’t be trusted to keep his word, is uncomfortable in public (unless at a distance), exhibits signs of paranoia and doesn’t have a problem with risky sexual behavior. Just to name a few of the things causing me to wonder about his mental fitness. And this is the man America has elected to—among many other important issues—walk with a nuclear football and decide if I or any one of us are an imminent threat to national security? Personally I don’t think Obama could pass a drug test, much less a psych exam.” [42439]

At a gathering of members of the Wyoming Republican Party, former Vice President Dick Cheney remarks, “The performance now of Barack Obama as he staffs up the national security team for the second term is dismal. ...Frankly, what he has appointed are second-rate people.” Cheney notes that the Middle East “is as dangerous now as it has ever been.” [42448, 42477]

Newsweek editor Tina Brown tells HBO’s Bill Maher that Obama would “be impeached by now for drones, if he was George W. Bush. ...I think if this was a Republican president, the outcry about drones would be far greater.” [42471]

On February 10 hundreds of thousands of Iranians, chanting “Death to Israel”, and “Death to America,” demonstrate in celebration of the 34th anniversary of their Islamic revolution. [42464, 42480]

Newsmax.com reports that various studies of “gun ownership around the world clearly refute the assertion that the abundance of guns in the United States leads to a high rate of firearm homicides. Americans are the biggest gun owners by far, with an estimated 270 million civilian firearms, in addition to those used by law enforcement and the military. That’s according to the Small Arms Survey of 178 nations conducted by the Switzerland-based Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. ...The United States also leads in gun ownership rate, with about 88 firearms per 100 people, according to the most recent Small Arms Survey compiled in 2007. ...But when it comes to the firearm homicide rate, the United States doesn’t even make the top 25. According to figures collected by the United Nations’ Office on Drugs and Crime through its annual crime survey, 9,146 Americans were victims of a firearm homicide in the most recent year. That translates to a rate of 2.97 firearm homicides per 100,000 population, only the 27th

highest rate in the world. The highest rate by far can be found in Honduras, 68 homicides per 100,000, followed by El Salvador (40), Jamaica (39), Venezuela (38.9), Guatemala (34), and Colombia (27). For America's neighbors, the rate in Mexico is 9.9 per 100,000, and in Canada, 0.5 per 100,000." [42441]

On *Fox News Sunday* House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) repeats Obama's call for still more tax revenue: "What we do need is more revenue and new cuts. ... We need a big, balanced, bold proposal." Pelosi laughably claims that Democrats have agreed to \$1.6 trillion in cuts over the last two years, and adds, "It is almost a false argument to say we have a spending problem." She also states, "We're talking about no further sales of assault weapons. What is the justification for an assault weapon? No further sales of those, no further sales of the increased capacity, 30 rounds in a gun. We're talking about background checks which is [sic] very popular, even among gun owners, and, hunters. We avow the First Amendment [sic]. We stand with that and say that people have a right to have a gun to protect themselves in their homes and their jobs, wherever, and that they—and their workplace—and that they, for recreation for hunting and the rest. So we're not questioning their right to do that." Pelosi also says Japan has "the most violent [video] games and the rest and the lowest mortality from guns" because they "might have good gun laws." [42445, 42453, 42455, 42474]

On ABC's *This Week* Congressman Tom Cole (R-OK) says House Republicans will "absolutely not" agree to additional tax increases and states, "I think [reduced spending from the sequester] is inevitable, quite frankly." [42445]

On *Face the Nation*, Senator Lindsay Graham (R-SC) says he will place a "hold" on the nominations of Chuck Hagel and John Brennan and that there will be "no confirmation without information" on the Benghazi incident that left four Americans dead. "I don't think we should allow Brennan to go forward for the CIA directorship, Hagel to be confirmed for secretary of defense until the White House gives us an accounting. ... Did [Obama] ever pick up the phone and call anyone in the Libyan government to help these folks? What did [Obama] do? ... I'm going to get to the bottom of it." (Graham will likely be unsuccessful. Hagel will end up being confirmed, and Obama will keep the truth about Benghazi hidden.) [42456, 42459, 42472, 42481, 42490]

On *State of the Union* Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) says, "Tea Party people are saying the sequester is a pittance. One trillion dollars [in cuts over 10 years], and we're increasing spending \$9 trillion. So really, even with the sequester, spending goes up \$7 trillion or \$8 trillion over the next 10 years. We're not getting close to scratching the surface of the problem. ... I think the debt is the number one [problem]. I think the debt is costing us a million jobs a year. The economy slowed in the last quarter. I really that think we have to do something about how enormous government is. And the way tea party folks see this is, we see it like our family budget. I have to balance my budget at home, why shouldn't government?" (If House Republicans hold firm and are willing to allow the sequestration cuts to go into effect they can force Obama and his fellow Democrats to propose and accept alternative cuts of \$1.2 trillion. If the GOP caves in they will get virtually no spending cuts and face the wrath of the Tea Party members in 2014.) [42479]

On *Meet the Press* Senator Dick “Eddie Haskell” Durbin says, “[S]equestration was designed as a budget threat, not as a budget strategy.” (In other words, “Obama and the rest of us Democrats had no intention of legislating responsibly and were merely playing partisan games.) “And I think all of us understand that if it goes forward in less than three weeks, it’s going to have a dramatic negative impact on many agencies, equally important on the economy. So we need to come together. What [Obama’s] proposing for the rest of this year at least is that we deal with the sequester the same way we have the first two months: Evenly split between revenue and cuts.” (That is, of course, a blatant lie. The earlier deal was certainly not a 50/50 split between tax increases and spending cuts. Republicans agreed to \$620 billion in tax increases, while Obama and the Democrats would accept only \$15 billion in spending cuts—a 41-to-1 ratio.) [41139, 41143, 41724, 41727, 41752, 41822, 42486]

On *America’s News HQ* Senator James Inhofe (R-OK) says, “I would threaten to cause a 60-vote margin, yes I would,” to block Chuck Hagel from becoming Secretary of Defense. “If it took a filibuster, I’d do it that way.” [42470, 42490]

The *Daily Mail* reports that *Benghazi: The Definitive Report*, a new book by former Navy SEAL Brandon Webb and former Green Beret Jack Murphy, reveals “that the September 11 Benghazi terrorist attack that killed four Americans, including Ambassador Chris Stevens, was retaliation by Islamist militants who had been targeted by covert U.S. military operations. The book claims that neither Stevens nor even [CIA Director David] Petraeus knew about the raids by American special operations troops, which had ‘kicked a hornet’s nest’ among the heavily-armed fighters after the overthrow of Libyan dictator Muammar Gaddafi. John Brennan, ...Obama’s Deputy National Security Adviser, had been authorizing ‘unilateral operations in North Africa outside of the traditional command structure,’ according to the e-book. Brennan is Obama’s pick to replace Petraeus as head of the CIA.” [42450, 42451]

“...Perhaps the most startling accusation in the book is that Petraeus’ affair with his biographer Paula Broadwell was leaked by the members of his personal protection detail. The authors say that senior intelligence officers working on the 7th floor of Central Intelligence headquarters in Langley, Virginia, used their political clout to ensure that the FBI investigated the former Army general’s personal life. They then told Petraeus that they would publicly humiliate him if he didn’t admit the affair and resign. ‘It was well known to Petraeus’s Personal Security Detachment (bodyguards) that he and Broadwell were having an affair. He wasn’t the only high-ranking Agency head or general engaged in extramarital relations, but when the 7th floor wanted Petraeus out, they cashed in their chips,’ Webb and Murphy write. ...Webb and Murphy said the CIA bureaucracy wanted Petraeus out of the CIA. Senior officials were furious over the way he had been running the agency since he was appointed in September 2011. He was turning the agency’s focus from intelligence gathering and analysis to paramilitary operations, including drone strikes. Additionally, he ran the CIA like a four-star general, instead of treating it like a political institution, the authors say. His management style made countless powerful enemies within the CIA.” [42450, 42451]

CNSNews.com reports, “The Internal Revenue Service warned employers in a new regulatory proposal not to come up with clever schemes to avoid Obamacare’s employer health insurance mandate. The IRS said it would soon issue ‘anti-abuse rules’ to discourage employers from taking advantage of any regulatory loopholes. ...[I]f an employer hires someone part-time, then uses an employment agency to bring the same person on for a second part-time shift, the IRS will still hold the employer liable under the ObamaCare mandate. Similarly, IRS said that if an employer hires the same person for two part-time stints by using two different employment agencies, it will hold either the employer or one of the employment agencies liable for the mandate’s penalties.” [42452]

In the *New York Post*, Michael Goodwin writes, “Even before the bodies of the four Americans came home [from Benghazi], the White House was eager to tell any story except the real one. Aides twisted and turned to create the false narrative that a protest over an anti-Muslim video was spontaneously hijacked by radicals. But two problems quickly emerged: There was no video protest in Benghazi, and the attack, which used heavy weaponry, was well planned. So, why did the White House spin the web of deceit? Don’t they know the cover-up is worse than the crime? Finally, we have the answer, thanks to Defense Secretary Leon Panetta. In his reluctant Senate testimony, he provided the missing piece of the puzzle: The commander in chief was MIA. The cover-up was created to protect his absence. According to Panetta, ...Obama checked in with his military team early on during the attack, then checked out for the rest of the night. The next day, we already knew, he blamed the video maker and flew to Las Vegas for a campaign event. ...What did Obama do through the long, bloody night? Whom did he talk to? When did he learn that Stevens was dead? There is still much we don’t know, but Panetta, under persistent Senate probing, revealed that Obama simply wasn’t involved. Did he just go to sleep? ...You would think a ...conscience would keep him awake and engaged until he knew what had happened in Benghazi. You would be wrong. Instead, the two officials said they had only one, 30-minute conversation with Obama. It began at around 5 p.m. Washington time, 90 minutes after the first attack started, and they never spoke to him again that night. ...[Obama’s] only instructions, Panetta said, were, ‘Do whatever you need to do,’ though he left the details ‘up to us.’ [Obama] never asked what military assets could be used, where they were and when they would get to Benghazi. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton never spoke to them at all, Panetta said. ...It would be nice to know what Obama did during the nearly 11 hours from the start of the first attack until that plane left Libya, but in truth, we know enough to understand the meaning. His detachment during a terrorist attack was a shameful dereliction of duty. Had he been a military officer, he would face charges. If he were George Bush, he would face ridicule and condemnation, at the least. But this is Barack Obama, ...who went missing during a terrorist attack against America and escapes without a scratch.” [42457]

At TheDailyBeast.com former Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton writes, “The Obama administration’s national security leadership vacuum was on full display during the February 7 Senate hearing with Defense Secretary Leon Panetta and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs Martin Dempsey. Called at last to explain why America failed to

guard effectively against the September 11 assault on our Benghazi consulate, and what happened during the attack itself, Panetta's and Dempsey's inadequate answers augur even graver dangers ahead. Coupled with former secretary of State Hillary Clinton's artful dodging during her January 23 Benghazi testimony, the Panetta-Dempsey sequel exposed what can only be called dereliction of duty, primarily by ...Obama himself but also by his subordinates. ...Words cannot adequately describe the implications of Obama's lack of interest [on the evening of September 11, 2012]. Importantly, at the attack's outset, it was obviously impossible to know whether Benghazi was a one-shot incident or the start of a wider onslaught throughout the region. The issue, therefore, was not merely what to do in Libya but other potential scenarios that needed presidential consideration and decision, none of which Obama apparently troubled himself with. It is insufficient that his subordinates remained in touch with Defense thereafter. The buck doesn't stop on their desks." [42487]

Bolton continues, "Equally stunning, neither Panetta nor Dempsey spoke even once to Clinton on September 11. State Department personnel were in mortal danger, one of its posts was under attack, with the risk of conflict spreading, and Clinton never called Panetta? I have served under six different secretaries of State (Haig, Shultz, Baker, Eagleburger, Powell, and Rice), and it is inconceivable that they would not have called their Pentagon counterparts not once but repeatedly until Americans at risk were secure and the situation resolved. Inconceivable. Clinton previously testified she was unaware of Ambassador Christopher Stevens's numerous requests for enhanced security in Libya. Her defenders argue she could not be expected to read all cables coming from U.S. posts around the world, but no one has ever suggested she should have. Clearly, however, Clinton floated so far above the State Department that she failed to convey to her staff adequate interest in security issues, even regarding rising dangers in a country the administration touted as a major foreign policy success. ...How chilling it was to hear General Dempsey testify he was fully aware of al Qaeda's threat in Libya while Clinton, the official responsible for official Americans in-country, knew nothing. And equally chilling, neither Clinton nor anyone at State ever requested more assistance from Defense. ...Did not Defense's top officials think it appropriate to raise this issue with Clinton? Didn't these people talk to each other? Thursday's hearing barely touched on the administration's post-Benghazi yarn that it was not a terrorist attack but a demonstration against the now-famous Mohammed video that spiraled out of control. Testimony by State officials days after the attack confirmed they knew (although it apparently never reached Clinton) that terrorists were responsible because security personnel under fire during the attack were so reporting by cell phone. Panetta and Dempsey were both clear that they knew on September 11 that Benghazi was the work of terrorists. Once again, therefore, we have no explanation for the administration's repeated reference to the video." [42487]

"Sen. Lindsey Graham asked the day's most telling question: Who was in charge as the attack progressed? Incredibly, Panetta first responded, 'What do you mean, 'in charge'?' Then, perhaps even more incredibly, he said, 'It's not that simple,' pointing to Ambassador Stevens, 'the people on the ground,' as being in charge. Pressed further, Panetta said, 'We all were [in charge].' Notwithstanding Panetta's confusion, the answer

is obvious: [Obama] was in charge. Or should have been. It is precisely this failure of leadership by the Obama administration, before, during, and after the Benghazi attack, that should concern us. Benghazi was an unnecessary tragedy, compounded by White House incompetence and indifference, but there are far broader risks and threats that are even more gravely concerning. The failures surrounding our second September 11 were only amplified in the following months as al Qaeda assumed control over an area in Mali larger than Texas, and terrorists attacked a large natural-gas facility in Algeria, killing more than 40 foreign hostages. Benghazi is thus potentially one of those points in history, like the first attack on the World Trade Center, the bombings of our Kenya and Tanzania embassies, or the attack on the USS Cole, that should have given us warning before September 11, 2001. We can only hope that, contrary to all the evidence to date, Obama and his administration wake up before an even greater disaster befalls us.” [42487]

On February 11 85-year-old Pope Benedict XVI announces he will step down from his position because of his frail health and inability to perform necessary duties. (It is unclear whether Obama is seeking a successor from the Muslim Brotherhood, to be named during the next Senate recess.) [42466, 42473, 42478]

In a White House ceremony, former Army staff sergeant Clint Romesha is awarded the Medal of Honor. (Romesha declines an invitation from Michelle Obama to sit with her at the State of the Union address.) [42520, 42521, 42586]

Possibly with the eager assistance of the far-left Center for American Progress, Obama puts the finishing touches on his State of the Union address, to be delivered February 12. *The Wall Street Journal* reports that Obama “is expected to detail an ambitious domestic agenda... including measures on immigration [that is, amnesty for illegal immigrants], gun control [gun confiscation], climate change [“carbon taxes” and more taxpayer-subsidized “green” jobs] and education [more federal spending]. The speech will open a limited window for ...Obama to accomplish his objectives before the politics of the 2014 and 2016 contests overtake his term. Complicating matters, the address comes as the threat of spending cuts known as the sequester dominate the discussion in Washington. Usually, a president delivers the speech in tandem with releasing his budget proposal, giving detail to his policies. This year, ...Obama isn’t expected to send Congress his budget until mid-March.” Obama is also expected to propose slashing the size of the nation’s nuclear arsenal. (Whether that is what Obama meant when he told Russia he would be “more flexible” after the election is not certain.) HotAir.com remarks, “This doesn’t mean [the speech] won’t be overlong, enervating, and instantly disposable like the last four were, just more peevish than usual. It’ll also be an occasion for O to ‘pivot to jobs’ for the seventh or eighth time... which I take it means 15–20 minutes about the middle class and the latest iteration of the Buffett Rule before he gets back to the stuff that really drives him, like banning assault weapons and creating an earned amnesty for illegals.” After the speech (which *The Obama Timeline* expects will be angry, spiteful, and divisive), Obama will spend three days campaigning for support of his agenda. On February 15 he will visit Chicago and push gun control legislation. [42465, 42467, 42469, 42475]

Obama's focus on amnesty for illegal immigrants will not win him many new friends in the black community. According to McClatchyDC.com, "African-American-oriented talk radio shows [have recently] heated up with callers blasting the plans. ...[Amnesty is] A political payback to Hispanic voters that does little or nothing for African-Americans, reasoned Sam from Milwaukee on Wisconsin's 1290 WMCS AM's 'Earl Ingram Show.' 'Our issues are not being highlighted and pushed, and things like gay marriage and (immigration) are being pushed to the forefront. Hispanics are effectively organized. For us not to be organized and for us not to hold our leadership accountable is disheartening.' ...Bernard Anderson, an Obama supporter and a former assistant labor secretary during Bill Clinton's presidency, recently told an African-American economic summit at Washington's Howard University that African-Americans should no longer give Obama 'a pass' on dealing with issues that directly impact their community. 'He is not going to run again for anything. He does not deserve a pass anymore,' Anderson said. 'Let him not only find his voice but summon his courage and use his political capital to address racial inequality. He owes that to the African-American.' Some members of the Congressional Black Caucus are quietly seething because Obama hasn't met with the 42-member group since May 13, 2011. Rep. Alcee Hastings (D-FL) vented to the National Newspaper Publishers Association last month. He said the black caucus sent the White House the names of 61 potential candidates for positions in a second-term administration that already is coming under fire for being heavy on white males. 'Not one of that 61 was selected—not one.' ...The African-American unemployment rate is at 13.8 percent, according to recently released government figures, nearly twice the 7 percent jobless rate for whites. The nation's overall unemployment rate is 7.9 percent. For Hispanics, the rate is 9.7 percent." (With the election safely behind him, of course, Obama does not need to do anything to please black voters—who consistently vote for Democrats. Obama's goal is to pass amnesty legislation and create millions more reliable Democrat Hispanic voters.) [42493]

According to CNSNews.com, "Secretary of State John Kerry took a larger detail of security agents on a trip to Arlington, Va., last week, when he went to visit—of all places—the headquarters of the department's security bureau, than the State Department deployed to its compound in Benghazi, Libya, in the days leading up to the Sept. 11, 2012 terrorist attacks." [42515]

The Give Us Liberty blog posts a video of Michelle Obama delivering an address on February 28, 2011 in which she clearly could use the services of a handkerchief but does not. The author writes, "I don't get it. If M.O. had a cold that day, why didn't she use a tissue or hankie to blow her nose? Then again, we are told that 'According to the US Department of Health & Human Services, following marijuana, cocaine is the most popular and widely used illicit drug in the US, which warrants knowing the signs of cocaine addiction becoming a priority. Nearly 15% of people that are over 12 years of age have used this drug no less than one time during their life... [A] sign of cocaine addiction is when a person has the sniffles and a runny nose but no other signs of a cold.' A former cocaine addict writes: 'The signs of cocaine use can sometimes be obvious. Cocaine, if snorted, wreaks havoc on membranes in the nose. As a result of a heavy dose of cocaine abuse, a user may have the 'sniffles' for several days afterward. ...When I

used cocaine heavily I would need a box of Kleenex by my side for days. I struggled with a mucus drip coming out of my nostrils and found myself sniffing frequently, about once a minute or more, to keep this mucus from running down my face.” [42485]

DailyCaller.com reports, “Marco Rubio isn’t officially running for president—yet—but the Democratic National Committee is already attacking the Republican senator from Florida as he steps into the role as de-facto leader of the GOP this week. The lawmaker, whom Time magazine last week called ‘The Republican Savior,’ has been tapped to give the official GOP response to ...Obama’s State of the Union address. Ahead of Rubio’s speech, the DNC on Monday is trotting out top surrogates to hold a conference call with reporters to discuss ‘the truth about the policies Senator Marco Rubio and the Republican Party are likely to offer as a response to ...Obama’s State of the Union address on Tuesday.’ DNC chairman Debbie Wasserman Schultz and Maryland Rep. Chris Van Hollen will participate in the call.” (In other words, the Democrats will tell the reporters what to report—and most will probably follow orders.) The conference call includes comments from Annette Capella, who says, “I’m a senior citizen living in St. John’s County, Florida.” DailyCaller.com later reports, “But it turns out that the DNC was hiding pertinent information about Capella’s background: She is not just your average senior citizen in Florida. She is a former leader of the St. Johns Democratic Party and a state Democratic committeewoman.” [42488, 42502]

CNSNews.com reports,” There have been 65,376,373 background checks completed for Americans purchasing firearms since February of 2009... According to data compiled by the FBI, the number of Americans purchasing guns has skyrocketed since Obama was elected.” [42511]

On *Special Report* Charles Krauthammer states, “[I]f the inaugural address was this sort of extraordinarily ideological address, I think the State of the Union is going to be extremely aggressive and partisan. Obama is still campaigning. He hasn’t stopped. Part one was to re-win the presidency, which he did. But now he is continuing it. His idea—the objective, the political objective—now is to reduce, to fracture, to marginalize the Republicans in the House who were the ones that stopped the agenda in years three and four of his presidency, and who he has to marginalize if he wants to enact his agenda in the second term. ...He is going to really hammer the Republicans on the sequester—that is, the automatic spending cuts, which Republicans in the House have announced they’re going to allow to be enacted unless Obama offers alternate cuts. Obama wants a hike in taxes. He is going to be, I predict, tomorrow night, extremely aggressive against the Republicans on this. And he will then go through the litany of all the horrible stuff that is going to happen, if the sequester happens. You know, all the food stamps out of the mouth of babes because the Republicans are protecting the oil companies, corporate jet owners and the rich, et cetera, the usual suspects. I bet you it’s going to be the heart of the speech, and it’s all to be able to beat back the Republicans so he can control Washington.” (One of Obama’s “in-your-face” moves will be to have various illegal immigrants sitting in the House chamber during his speech—despite the fact that they do not have Social Security numbers which security rules require must be provided for background checks for all visitors. Other Obama guests will include victims of gun

violence—to give him an opportunity to point to them and charge that Republicans support the wanton killing of innocent people. Congressman Steve Stockman (R-TX) will offer a “rebuttal” by inviting outspoken conservative and gun enthusiast Ted Nugent. Stockman will also “live Tweet” the speech—#YouLie—to point out any Obama lies.) [42503, 42504, 42505, 42506, 42507, 42520, 42522, 42523, 42547, 42549, 42587]

On February 12 North Korea conducts a successful nuclear weapons test. Obama calls the test a “highly provocative act,” promises to “continue to take steps necessary to defend ourselves and our allies,” and urges “swift and credible action by the international community.” At Breitbart.com Joel B. Pollak reminds readers that in 2008 Obama promised that he would engage in “tough diplomacy” and “end the threat of North Korea.” In 2010 Obama bragged that his “diplomatic efforts have also strengthened our hand in dealing with those nations that insist on violating international agreements in pursuit of nuclear weapons. That’s why North Korea now faces increased isolation, and stronger sanctions—sanctions that are being vigorously enforced.” In 2011 Obama said, “And on the Korean Peninsula, we stand with our ally South Korea, and insist that North Korea keeps its commitment to abandon nuclear weapons.” Obama’s U.N. ambassador, Susan Rice, remarks, “We’ll do the usual drill.” (That is, the United States and the United Nations will condemn the nuclear test and nothing else will be done.) She adds, “North Korea does not and will not benefit from violating international law.” (Rice is incorrect. North Korea will probably negotiate a deal in which it agrees to cease nuclear testing in exchange for food to feed its starving population.) [42501, 42510, 42513, 42518, 42524, 42635]

Congressional Budget Office Director Doug Elmendorf testifies before the Senate Budget Committee. Elmendorf says, “We have not seen a specific proposal [from Obama], so I don’t know” what his “balanced approach” solution calls for. [42497]

According to a February 7–10 Gallup poll, Obama’s approval rating is above 50 percent only on the issue of national defense (53/44 approval/disapproval). He is below 50 percent on all other issues: foreign affairs (46/48), immigration (46/48), energy policy (44/46), gun policy (42/54), taxes (41/57), the economy (39/60), the Middle East (36/55), and the federal budget deficit (31/65). [42496, 42512]

Townhall.com comments on the recent claim by PBS that when Obama delivered his scathing attack on the Republican budget proposal during his April 2011 speech at George Washington University he was not aware that its primary author, Congressman Paul Ryan (R-WI), was present: “Allahpundit [at HotAir.com] is ‘extremely skeptical’ that the White House staff made such a ‘crucial error’ and didn’t realize Ryan would accept the invitation, even though they invited him. And so am I. The way I see it, though, there are at least three possible explanations for what happened. (1) [Obama] never expected Ryan to show up, let alone sit in the front row, and his advisors couldn’t get to him in time before he took the stage. (2) [Obama] did realize Ryan was in attendance, but by the time he found out it was simply too late to change the teleprompter—and he wasn’t willing to speak extemporaneously. (3) [Obama] knew Ryan came and just didn’t care. Doorway number three sounds most probable. But feel

free to draw your own conclusions...” (Even if Obama did not know Ryan would attend the event that is hardly a defense—unless one believes it is acceptable to deliver a fact-challenged, partisan speech that unjustifiably excoriates one’s opponent and provides criticisms but no solutions.) [19643, 19650, 19689, 19745, 42498, 42499]

DailyCaller.com reports, “California, the state that first attempted to implement ...Obama’s health care overhaul, has realized there aren’t enough doctors to care for the large influx of newly insured patients. The Los Angeles Times reports that only 16 of the state’s 58 counties meet the federal government’s recommended standard of primary care physicians, and almost 30 percent of California’s doctors are close to the retirement age—the highest percentage nationwide. ‘We’re going to be mandating that every single person in this state have insurance,’ Democratic state Sen. Ed Hernandez told the Los Angeles Times. ‘What good is it if they are going to have a health insurance card, but no access to doctors?’” [42500]

The Senate Armed Services Committee approves Chuck Hagel’s nomination to be secretary of Defense on a party-line vote, 14–11. The nomination now goes to the full Senate for a final confirmation vote. AtlasShrugs.com reminds readers of Hagel’s record: “In August 2006, Hagel was one of only 12 Senators who refused to write the EU [European Union] asking them to declare Hezbollah a terrorist organization. In October 2000, Hagel was one of only 4 Senators who refused to sign a Senate letter in support of Israel. In November 2001, Hagel was one of only 11 Senators who refused to sign a letter urging President Bush not to meet with the late Yassir Arafat until his forces ended the violence against Israel. In December 2005, Hagel was one of only 27 who refused to sign a letter to President Bush to pressure the Palestinian Authority to ban terrorist groups from participating in Palestinian legislative elections. In June 2004, Hagel refused to sign a letter urging President Bush to highlight Iran’s nuclear program at the G-8 summit.” Pamela Geller notes, “It bodes ill for Jews just how comfortable and at ease Obama obviously is with proud anti-Semites and Israel haters. Obama has appointed all these people, but has concealed their true natures.” [42528]

CNSNews.com reports, “The average price of a gallon of gas has increased 96 percent since ...Obama first took office in 2009, according to figures from the Energy Information Agency (EIA). According to EIA data, the average price of a gallon of regular unleaded gasoline in the United States was \$1.838 on Jan. 19, 2009—the day before Obama took office. As of Monday, Feb. 11, 2013, the per-gallon price had risen to an average of \$3.611—an increase of 96 percent.” [42565]

Despite Obama’s warnings that the automatic spending cuts will be a disaster the nation must avoid, his closest advisor, Valerie Jarrett, admits to NBC’s Savannah Guthrie that he has not bothered to meet with Republicans to discuss the issue. [42509]

On ABC’s *World News Tonight*, wounded survivor of the 2009 Fort Hood terrorist attack Kimberly Munley—who was invited to sit beside Michelle Obama at the 2010 State of the Union address—says “Betrayed is a good word” for how Obama has treated her and her co-workers, after he promised they would be taken care of. “Not to the least little bit

have the victims been taken care of,” states Munley. “In fact they’ve been neglected.” Reed Rubinstein, an attorney for the survivors, says, “There’s a substantial number of very serious, crippling cases of post-traumatic stress disorder exacerbated, frankly, by what the Army and the Defense Department did in this case. We have a couple of cases in which the soldiers’ command accused the soldiers of malingering, and would say things to them that Fort Hood really wasn’t so bad, it wasn’t combat.” Particularly galling to Munley—and to millions of Americans—is the fact that the Obama administration has classified the incident as “workplace violence,” rather than a terrorist attack. Meanwhile, various news outlets have reported that the former navy SEAL who shot Osama bin Laden is unemployed and without health insurance—yet Major Nidal Malik Hasan, the Fort Hood terrorist, is still collecting his U.S. Army salary and receiving health care. [42516, 42527, 42530, 42531]

At CanadaFreePress.com Judi McLeod writes, “A real feeling of Hope & Change will pervade at tonight’s State of the Union Address. The first overriding feeling of Hope & Change that cannot be masked by the hypocrisy of the preening Obamas, by the hype of the Mainstream Media or the stridency of Nancy Pelosi. The roughly 50 percent of Americans who stand firmly against the Fundamental Transformation of America have waited four long years for someone to tell ...Obama he has no right to destroy an America built by its Founding Fathers. That ‘someone’ emerged Thursday at the National Prayer Breakfast in the person of Dr. Ben Carson. Americans thrilled to the carefully chosen patriotic words of the celebrated neurosurgeon, who not only put out the call to save America, but did it with Obama seated just a few feet away. Obama’s peeved facial expressions and unsuppressed body language gave patriots their first soaring adrenaline boost since Election Day, 2008. There was the antithesis of Obama standing right before Obama—and the nation.” [42517]

“...In an Obama society, Christians can’t speak, Constitutionlists can’t speak, Tea Party members can’t speak, returning veterans can’t speak, 1st and 2nd amendment advocates can’t speak, and now surgeons aren’t supposed to speak. While none of the above can speak, the political elite can harangue incessantly. ...Dr. Carson is here to remind us that the support for ...Obama’s health care law is low within the medical community. And Americans would be the first tell you that in an aging population the morale of the medical community matters. The difference between Barack Obama and Ben Carson couldn’t be more stark. Obama feeds class warfare and rails about growing up in America in a single parent home, without ever bothering to thank an America that bestowed him a life of privilege. Carson was goaded on to success by a mother whose motto is: ‘Do your best and God will do the rest.’ In his poverty-challenged youth, with a mother who steadfastly refused victim status, Carson was reading books, not writing them. Even with all odds stacked against him, Ben Carson went on to turn poverty into celebrated success. Meanwhile, there’s a pall cast over tonight’s State of the Union address. It’s the Hope & Change Americans see in Mrs. Sonya Carson’s little boy, Benjamin Carson.” [42517]

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) tells reporters, “To do the kind of heavy lifting that needs to be done [to cut spending], I don’t think [Obama] got the guts to go do it. ...He doesn’t have the courage to take on the liberal side of his own party. I’m sorry but it’s

just clear as a bell to me.” Obama’s goal, says Boehner, will not be passing reasonable legislation but excoriating Republicans in order to help the Democrats win control of the House in the 2014 elections: “I think he’d love to have Nancy Pelosi as speaker and Harry Reid as majority leader for his last two years in office. Go back to the inaugural address. He knows that all of that liberal agenda he laid out, he knows none of that is going to happen as long as we have a majority in the House. ...These bipartisan efforts in the House and Senate are the best shot we have at dealing with a big problem. The thing I’m most concerned about is [Obama] getting in the way. Sometimes I think he’d rather have an issue than have a solution. ...I’ve tried repeatedly to come to agreement with [Obama]. Every time I’ve gotten burned. ...I’ve tried over the last two years non stop working with [Obama]... [but] never got there.” (Obama has no intention of solving any problems. He has no interest in governing or being a leader. His only interest is in having his way, all the while having others do the heavy lifting. When they fail, he disavows involvement. Should they succeed, he takes credit. Obama has no interest in compromising with Boehner or anyone else in the GOP. His only goal is to get the voters to hate Republicans enough to enable the Democrats to win the House and keep the Senate in November 2014. He will spend the next 20 months campaigning, always avoiding responsibility and never governing or leading—as demonstrated by his having others make the decisions during the Benghazi attack.) [42559]

Author and talk show host Mark Levin responds to House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi’s (D-CA) claim that the government does not have a spending problem: “You should view these politicians with the deepest contempt you can possibly imagine. What they are doing to this country, what they are doing to our finances—there is not a criminal in any federal prison, state prison, city or county jail, with respect to financial crimes of any sort who collectively could have done the kind of damage that Barack Obama and Harry Reid and Nancy Pelosi and YES, willing, timid, gutless Republicans have done to this country! To your future, to your children and your grandchildren! What they are doing is with malice and with forethought. ...What the hell does the Democrat party stand for today? The destruction of America? And what the hell does the Republican party stand for today? To sit there with their thumbs in their mouths while it’s going on? Any politician with an ounce of common sense should be getting on any soap box imaginable and screaming from the top of their lungs that these policies are destroying America!” [42525]

Obama delivers the annual State of the Union address—which some call his “State of Illusion” address and Rush Limbaugh calls a “Misstatement of the Union.” Among the biggest lies in his speech: “Already, the Affordable Care Act [ObamaCare] is helping to slow the growth of health care costs,” and “Nothing I’m proposing tonight should increase our deficit by a single dime.” Predictably, Obama calls for higher taxes and still more federal spending—masquerading as “investment.” (In fact, everything in the speech is predictable and uninspiring—and has a huge price tag for the taxpayers.) Laughably, Obama claims he has already reduced federal spending by \$2.5 trillion over 10 years. That is hogwash. Federal spending will continue to increase every year. Joe Pounder, research chief at the Republican National Committee, quickly responds to Obama’s claim: “FYI, Obama is right, he hasn’t added a single dime to the debt, he’s added 58.6

trillion dimes.” (The RNC also releases a “58 trillion dimes” video mocking Obama’s spending reduction promises.) [42519, 42535, 42536, 42539, 42540, 42541, 42542, 42556, 42568, 42631]

Obama begins by claiming, “Tonight, thanks to the grit and determination of the American people, there is much progress to report. After a decade of grinding war, our brave men and women in uniform are coming home. [In fact, there are about 500,000 fewer Americans working than when Obama took office in 2009—133.8 million versus 134.3 million.] After years of grueling recession, our businesses have created over six million new jobs. We buy more American cars than we have in five years, and less foreign oil than we have in 20. Our housing market is healing, our stock market is rebounding, and consumers, patients and homeowners enjoy stronger protections than ever before. Together, we have cleared away the rubble of crisis, and can say with renewed confidence that the state of our union is stronger. ...Most Americans—Democrats, Republicans and independents—understand that we can’t just cut our way to prosperity. They know that broad-based economic growth requires a balanced approach to deficit reduction, with spending cuts and revenue, and with everybody doing their fair share.” [42191, 42204, 42212, 42508, 42519, 42535, 42556]

Obama claims, “we have doubled the distance our cars will go on a gallon of gas”—which is total nonsense. According to the University of Michigan’s Transportation Research Institute, the average estimated mileage of new vehicles sold has gone from about 21.0 mpg to 24.5 mpg. (Obama’s lie is based on a federal mandate for vehicles to average 54.5 mpg by 2025. But one can hardly take credit for something that has not yet—and might not—happen.) [42556]

“...To hit the rest of our deficit reduction target, we should do what leaders in both parties have already suggested, and save hundreds of billions of dollars by getting rid of tax loopholes and deductions for the well-off and well-connected. ...Now is our best chance for bipartisan, comprehensive tax reform that encourages job creation and helps bring down the deficit. ...Nothing I’m proposing tonight should increase our deficit by a single dime. It’s not a bigger government we need, but a smarter government that sets priorities and invests in broad-based growth. ...The greatest nation on Earth cannot keep conducting its business by drifting from one manufactured crisis to the next.” [42535]

“For the sake of our children and our future, we must do more to combat climate change. Yes, it’s true that no single event makes a trend. But the fact is, the 12 hottest years on record have all come in the last 15. [Average global temperatures have been close to flat for the last 15 years.] Heat waves, droughts, wildfires and floods—all are now more frequent and intense. [That is total nonsense.] We can choose to believe that Superstorm Sandy, and the most severe drought in decades, and the worst wildfires some states have ever seen were all just a freak coincidence. [Superstorm Sandy was not even hurricane status; droughts are not uncommon and the 1930s saw far worse drought; wildfires would be fewer if the government did not block proper forestation practices.] Or we can choose to believe in the overwhelming judgment of science—and act before it’s too late. ...But if Congress won’t act soon to protect future generations, I will. [No Executive Order from

Obama will not be followed by Brazil, Russia, India, or China.] I will direct my Cabinet to come up with executive actions we can take, now and in the future, to reduce pollution, prepare our communities for the consequences of climate change, and speed the transition to more sustainable sources of energy.” [42535, 42650]

“...I’m also issuing a new goal for America: Let’s cut in half the energy wasted by our homes and businesses over the next 20 years. The states with the best ideas to create jobs and lower energy bills by constructing more efficient buildings will receive federal support to help make it happen. ...Real reform means establishing a responsible pathway to earned citizenship—a path that includes passing a background check, paying taxes and a meaningful penalty, learning English, and going to the back of the line behind the folks trying to come here legally. And real reform means fixing the legal immigration system to cut waiting periods, reduce bureaucracy, and attract the highly-skilled entrepreneurs and engineers that will help create jobs and grow our economy. ...As we speak, bipartisan groups in both chambers are working diligently to draft a bill, and I applaud their efforts. Now let’s get this done. Send me a comprehensive immigration reform bill in the next few months, and I will sign it right away.” [42535]

“A full-time worker making the minimum wage earns \$14,500 a year. Even with the tax relief we’ve put in place, a family with two kids that earns the minimum wage still lives below the poverty line. That’s wrong. Tonight let’s declare that in the wealthiest nation on Earth, no one who works full-time should have to live in poverty and raise the federal minimum wage to \$9.00 an hour. ...In fact, working folks shouldn’t have to wait year after year for the minimum wage to go up while CEO pay has never been higher. So here’s an idea that Governor Romney and I actually agreed on last year: Let’s tie the minimum wage to the cost of living, so that it finally becomes a wage you can live on.” (Obama is mistaken. The minimum wage was never meant to support a family of four. It was simply meant to be a floor from which a worker would move up after he learned greater skills and proved his worth to the employer. Fewer than one percent of full-time American workers earn the minimum wage, and many who do are teen-agers—who are in families that collectively earn several times more than the federal poverty level. Additionally, most minimum wage workers receive wage increases within their first year of employment. Raising the minimum wage will not “help the poor.” It will cause the loss of tens of thousands of jobs and prevent poor people from getting jobs. Arguably, Obama knows that his proposal is bad policy—but polls well. Its sole purpose is to force Republicans in the House to vote against it—which then allows Democrats to campaign in 2014 on a “Republicans are cruel” theme.) [42535, 42617, 42793, 42850]

“We will need to help countries like Yemen, Libya and Somalia provide for their own security, and help allies who take the fight to terrorists, as we have in Mali. And, where necessary, through a range of capabilities, we will continue to take direct action against those terrorists who pose the gravest threat to Americans. ...[A] coalition stands united in demanding that they [Iran] meet their obligations, and we will do what is necessary to prevent them from getting a nuclear weapon. At the same time, we will engage Russia to seek further reductions in our nuclear arsenals, and continue leading the global effort to

secure nuclear materials that could fall into the wrong hands—because our ability to influence others depends on our willingness to lead.” [42535]

“...Each of these [gun control] proposals deserves a vote in Congress. If you want to vote ‘no,’ that’s your choice. But these proposals deserve a vote. Because in the two months since Newtown, more than a thousand birthdays, graduations and anniversaries have been stolen from our lives by a bullet from a gun.” [42535]

“We may do different jobs, and wear different uniforms, and hold different views than the person beside us. But as Americans, we all share the same proud title: We are citizens. It’s a word that doesn’t just describe our nationality or legal status. It describes the way we’re made. It describes what we believe. It captures the enduring idea that this country only works when we accept certain obligations to one another and to future generations; that our rights are wrapped up in the rights of others; and that well into our third century as a nation, it remains the task of us all, as citizens of these United States, to be the authors of the next great chapter in our American story. Thank you, God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.”

[42535]

Obama does not mention the fact that North Korea successfully tested another nuclear weapon. (In Obama’s mind the “State of the Union” would apparently not be affected by an atmospheric nuclear explosion over the United States—an EMP attack that would knock out all unshielded electronic equipment within hundreds, if not thousands, of miles.)

Syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer comments, “One of the things that these red-state Democrats who are going to go up for re-election in the next year are scared to death about is precisely having to vote [on controversial issues Obama addressed]. And here was Obama saying over and over again, ‘You deserve a vote. You want to be on the record.’ Well, there are a lot Democrats who don’t want to be on the record on all of these issues, and I think he will endanger them. But I think he’s looking for his legacy; he’s not looking for a Senator here or there in the Congress. He wants to be remembered for a man who changed America—that’s what he said. He started with ObamaCare, and now this litany of programs. You know, he says, ‘You can’t cut your way to prosperity.’ This speech is about spending [and borrowing] your way to prosperity.” [42543]

One critic Tweets, “Instead of calling this the State of the Union (SOTU), we should call it the Condition of My Agenda (COMA).” [42558]

CNSNews.com estimates that Obama’s “Fat Tuesday” *Laissez les bons temps rouler!* speech includes 29 new spending programs or proposals that will increase costs for the government and the private economy. They include: three high-tech “manufacturing hubs; addressing global warming; funding an “Energy Security Trust” fund; supporting state energy efficient programs; bridge repairs; a “Partnership to Rebuild America” to upgrade ports and schools; additional mortgage bailouts; more pre-school funding; funding for high-tech schools; immigration reform; raising the minimum wage; tax

credits and incentives for employers to hire the unemployed; rebuilding vacant homes; additional training and equipment for Afghanistan's armed forces; eradicating global poverty. Obama promises that none of those proposals will add "one dime" to the deficit, but his pre-school program alone may cost as much as \$10 billion per year. The Family Research Council remarks, "If ...Obama gets away with it, next thing you know, government officials will be swinging by the hospital nursery to pick up our newborns!" Cecilia Munoz, director of the White House's domestic policy council, says, "The metrics show that this is the kind of thing you can't afford not to do." (Apparently the nation cannot afford to do without forcing childless couples to pay higher taxes to fund daycare for families with children.) [42561, 42562, 42621, 42814]

On CNN, reporter Jessica Yellin says that the White House refuses to "put a price tag" on his proposals.

Socialist Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) says, "FDR is back. [Obama] had specific programs, a vision. He spoke to the needs of the city I represent, New York. Increased gun safety, immigration reform—jobs, jobs, jobs. It was a great speech." [42563]

Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) delivers the Republican response to Obama's address, in both English and in Spanish. Rubio states, "This opportunity—to make it to the middle class or beyond no matter where you start out in life—it isn't bestowed on us from Washington. It comes from a vibrant free economy where people can risk their own money to open a business. And when they succeed, they hire more people, who in turn invest or spend the money they make, helping others start a business and create jobs. Presidents in both parties—from John F. Kennedy to Ronald Reagan—have known that our free enterprise economy is the source of our middle class prosperity. But ...Obama? He believes it's the cause of our problems. ...Raising taxes won't create private sector jobs. And there's no realistic tax increase that could lower our deficits by almost \$4 trillion. That's why I hope [Obama] will abandon his obsession with raising taxes and instead work with us to achieve real growth in our economy. ...The real cause of our debt is that our government has been spending \$1 trillion more than it takes in every year. That's why we need a balanced budget amendment. The biggest obstacles to balancing the budget are programs where spending is already locked in. One of these programs, Medicare, is especially important to me. It provided my father the care he needed to battle cancer and ultimately die with dignity. And it pays for the care my mother receives now. I would never support any changes to Medicare that would hurt seniors like my mother. But anyone who is in favor of leaving Medicare exactly the way it is right now, is in favor of bankrupting it. ...[Obama's] solution for virtually every problem is for Washington to tax more, spend more... More government isn't going to help you get ahead. It's going to hold you back. More government isn't going to create more opportunities. It's going to limit them. And more government isn't going to inspire new ideas, new businesses and new private sector jobs. It's going to create uncertainty." (Rubio mentions "middle class" twice as often as did Obama.) [42534, 42544, 42557]

During his speech, a dry-mouthed Rubio stops to take a sip of water. (The mainstream leftist media, desperate to find something to stop Rubio's rise in popularity and reduce his chances of running for president in 2016, focuses on that single sip as somehow keeping him from being taken seriously. Video clips of Rubio drinking water are played more than 200 times within a few days. On MSNBC, Rachel Maddow runs the clip in a loop in the background *for 13 minutes* while she critiques his speech. CNN runs the clip with a graphic that reads, "Career-ended?"—and later claims it was only "joking.") [42579, 42584, 42585, 42593, 42599, 42600, 42601]

Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) delivers a Tea Party response. Rand says, "Washington acts in a way that your family never could—they spend money they do not have, they borrow from future generations, and then they blame each other for never fixing the problem. If Congress refuses to obey its own rules—the Democrat-led Senate hasn't produced a budget in years, in violation of the law; if Congress refuses to pass a budget; if Congress refuses to read the bills; then I say: Sweep the place clean. limit their terms and send them home! ... The path we are on is not sustainable, but few in Congress or in this administration seem to recognize that their actions are endangering the prosperity of this great nation. ... Big government debt keeps the poor poor and saps savings of elderly. [Obama] offers you free stuff but his policies keep you poor." (Rand' speech is available only via the Internet. The mainstream media refuses to broadcast his response to Obama's address.) [42534, 42545, 42554, 42555]

Far more succinct than Obama, Rubio, and Paul, former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin "Tweets" state of the union comments throughout Obama's speech: "Obama: 'There is much progress to report.' Oh really? Let's see what the facts show..." "22.7 million Americans are unemployed, underemployed, or have given up looking for work. " "Our GDP shrank by 0.1% in the 4th quarter." "Obama added \$518 billion in new regulatory costs to America's job creators since taking office." "We have a \$16.5 trillion national debt & we're on day 1,385 without a budget." "\$5.9 million was added to the national debt since Obama took office." "We have \$46 trillion in fed spending from Obama's FY13 Budget through 2022. That's not 'responsible' or 'balanced.'" "Keep in mind that the sequester was Obama's baby. He signed it into law. Now he thinks it's economic Armageddon." "'Balanced approach' means 'I'm going to increase your taxes to pay for my crony capitalism.'" "Obama: 'We must keep the promises we've already made.' Like not raising taxes?" "'Can't cut our way to prosperity.' If endlessly borrowing & spending money we don't have leads to prosperity, bankruptcy is the way forward!" "Voted for Obama? Check your paycheck withholding—it's less." "Stagnant economy, Greek-style debt, inflation, no jobs, high gas prices. What say you, Obama voters?" "Let's 'invest' in more 'clean energy' because Obama has a lot of campaign bundlers to thank." "FACT: New offshore leases for oil and natural gas drilling have declined 61% under Obama." "Gee, with all of these things he wants to 'invest' in, how will he keep his promise not to 'increase our deficit by a single dime?" "The average price per gallon of gas has increased 96% since Obama took office." "The average cost of family health care premiums has risen 24% under Obama." "Just 14% of America's seniors believe they can retire comfortably." "The annual cost per household from federal regulations is over \$15,000." "Real median household income has declined \$4,520 since Obama took

office.” “By the way, women working at the White House make less than men. Clean your own house first, [Obama].” “Now we’re going to eradicate poverty around the world. But remember this won’t ‘increase our deficit by a single dime.’” [42526]

Not only did Obama insist on putting the automatic sequester cuts into the debt ceiling agreement, on November 21, 2011 he said, “Already, some in Congress are trying to undo these automatic spending cuts. My message to them is simple: No. I will veto any effort to get rid of those automatic spending cuts to domestic and defense spending. There will be no easy off ramps on this one.” (Obama demanded a \$2.4 trillion increase in the debt ceiling in 2011, to be partially offset by \$1.2 trillion in cuts identified by a “super committee.” Obama insisted on the across-the-board sequester cuts in the event that the committee did not succeed. Obama spent the \$2.4 trillion and the committee failed to reach an agreement. Facing the sequester cuts, Obama now demands tax hikes instead of the cuts.) [42726, 42779]

Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) says of Obama’s spending proposals, “I know it’s not possible, and I think the American people understand that. ...I don’t know what [Obama] meant by that [his proposals would not add one dime to the deficit], but what we’ve got to understand is that [he] and his team have not restricted themselves to perfect accuracy. This is consistent time and time again. They exaggerate ideas in ways that can’t be accomplished, but they do it because it sounds good as a speech.” Sessions also states that Obama “has already, in my opinion, pushed the envelope beyond the breaking point on executive orders, unilateral actions, actions that Congress has specifically, openly rejected. He then puts his bureaucrats to work to figure out every way possible through their regulations, through their enforcement policies, to place the country under the direction he wants it to go under his rule. That’s not consistent with American history.” [42564, 42565]

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) says Obama “had an opportunity to offer a solution tonight, and he let it slip by. We are only weeks away from the devastating consequences of [Obama’s] sequester, and he failed to offer the cuts needed to replace it. In the last election, voters chose divided government which offers a mandate only to work together to find common ground. [Obama], instead, appears to have chosen a go-it-alone approach to pursue his liberal agenda.” [42567]

Senate Majority Leader Harry Ried (D-NV) says Obama outlined “an agenda in which fairness is not just a principle for which to strive, but a powerful engine of growth and prosperity for all Americans. So far, Republicans have shown that they would rather cut Medicare, education, and cancer research than close a single tax loophole, or ask millionaires to contribute.” [42567]

Senator Patty Murray (D-WA) says, “Families in Washington state and across the nation are hungry for bold solutions to the challenges they see their families and neighbors confront each day. Tonight [Obama] spoke directly to them and reassured them that their daily struggles will continue to drive his agenda.” [42567]

Congressman Steve Scalise (R-LA) comments, “It’s fitting that ...Obama gave his State of the Union on Mardi Gras Day, since he’s spent the last four years throwing record levels of taxpayer money at failed federal programs like cheap beads at a parade. For more than four years, the American people have been subjected to ...Obama’s empty rhetoric, and tonight’s State of the Union was no different as he chose to retread the same failed agenda that has divided our country and handcuffed our economy throughout his entire presidency.” [42567]

Senator Jim Risch (R-ID) says, “[Obama] looks to enforce a far-left philosophy on all matters rather than focus on individual rights and responsibilities and recognizing, as our founding fathers did, the preeminent role the states have through their sovereign status.” [42567]

Congressman Matt Salmon (R-AZ) says, “Fourteen years ago, I sat in this chamber when President Clinton declared during his State of the Union address that the ‘era of big government is over.’ After listening tonight to ...Obama’s State of the Union, I can sum his speech up in two words: ‘it’s back.’” [42567]

Commenting on Obama’s speech, Congressman Trent Franks (R-AZ) tells CNS News, “[Obama] never mentions the Muslim Brotherhood. It’s astonishing. If there’s anything that has been a trend in this administration related to terrorism, it’s their unwillingness to call it for what it is. ...And the Muslim Brotherhood has gained control of the reins of government in Egypt. It’s that fundamentally simple. And it represents not only a threat to Israel and other nations in the region—it represents a destabilizing factor and force in the whole world.” [42591]

Rock legend Ted Nugent, who attended the address, Tweets, “It deeply pains me to report that [Obama] is a master scam artist—[I] didn’t believe a word.” Nugent (who calls the Democrats “ruthless” and says the GOP “lost their scrotum”) tells CBS the speech was, “predictable, flowery [and] feel-good. Whatever he says, he just doesn’t do it, or he does just the opposite. ...None of his gun-control proposals has ever reduced crime, has ever halted or deterred criminal behavior, and has never saved an innocent life. When someone threatens innocent lives, and acts absolutely dangerously crazy—get those people off the streets. We need to take care of the mentally ill, and keep them away from the public.” [42570, 42571, 42587]

On February 13 WND.com reports on Obama’s State of the Union address, noting, “Americans watching online weren’t receptive to Obama’s message. A Bing live poll showed increasingly negative numbers throughout the address.” (Throughout the speech, viewers could react by clicking on their changing opinion: very negative, negative, neutral, positive, or very positive, as well as identifying their political affiliation and gender.) Men were more negative than women. At the point Obama addressed gun control, the Bing poll shifted even more negative—with 11.3 million poll participants. [42535, 42551, 42582]

Obama travels to a manufacturing plant in Asheville, North Carolina to campaign for his spending and tax proposals. [42536]

LATimes.com reports, “Duke Energy has already written off a \$10-million line of credit the company guaranteed to help produce September’s Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., boosting the role of corporate funds in putting on the event. The loan is not due until the end of the month, but Duke wrote it off as a loss in the third quarter and reported it again Wednesday when it released its year-end earnings, noting that it took a \$6-million loss and \$4-million tax benefit for ‘DNC Host Committee Support.’” (Not only can the Democrats not produce a budget as required by law, they cannot pay back loans for their convention.) [42658, 42659]

At Townhall.com political editor Guy Benson reviews some of Obama’s State of the Union statements. Obama: “We are more than halfway towards the goal of \$4 trillion in deficit reduction that economists say we need to stabilize our finances. Now we need to finish the job. And the question is: How? In 2011, Congress passed a law saying that if both parties couldn’t agree on a plan to reach our deficit goal, about a trillion dollars’ worth of budget cuts would automatically go into effect this year. These sudden, harsh, arbitrary cuts would jeopardize our military readiness, they’d devastate priorities like education and energy and medical research. They would certainly slow our recovery and cost us hundreds of thousands of jobs. And that’s why Democrats, Republicans, business leaders, and economists have already said that these cuts—known here in Washington as ‘the sequester’—are a really bad idea.” Benson: “Though he tries to drop the sequester into Congress’ lap, it is simply a fact that this package of automatic spending cuts was conceptualized and proposed by the White House. ...Obama signed it into law as part of 2011’s debt deal—and yet the spending reductions are still lingering, unrealized. [Obama] has been all over the map on this issue, threatening to veto any attempt to replace the cuts, then averring that the cuts ‘will not happen.’ Obama now insists that some of the already agreed-to cuts be replaced with additional tax increases, which is unacceptable. He has not offered his own specific plan about how to undo the sequester.” [42537]

Obama: “Tonight I’ll lay out additional proposals that are fully paid for and fully consistent with the budget framework both parties agreed to just 18 months ago. Let me repeat: Nothing I’m proposing tonight should increase our deficit by a single dime. It is not a bigger government we need, but a smarter government that sets priorities and invests in broad-based growth.” Benson: “This turn of phrase is a major red flag. After all, [Obama] pledged to halve the deficit by the end of his first term and failed spectacularly. He also employed nearly this precise formulation while pitching Obamacare, all the way down to the ‘dime’ verbiage. With that program’s cost estimate continually rising, and with some of the phony pay-for gimmicks being stripped away, the massive program will fuel deficits and debt for years to come. [Obama] has no credibility on this issue, which the American people understand. Also note the weasel-word, ‘should,’ in the excerpt above.” [42537]

Obama: “I urge this Congress to get together, pursue a bipartisan, market-based solution to climate change, like the one John McCain and Joe Lieberman worked on together a few years ago. But if Congress won't act soon to protect future generations, I will.”

Benson: “This is an echo of 2009’s cap and trade misadventure, the liberal dream that couldn’t even pass Congress when Democrats controlled both houses.

[PowerLineBlog.com’s] Steven Hayward has done excellent work on this issue, explicating why even if the United States adopted these crippling ‘green’ standards and taxes, it wouldn't do a thing to help the planet. Ludicrously unrealistic goals, oppressive new energy taxes on all households, chasing jobs off our shores... all for an undetectable environmental benefit. This is a lose-lose. Obama recognizes that there’s no chance this sort of legislation will pass even the Democrat-held Senate, so he’s setting the table to (once again) bypass the people’s branch through executive orders and regulations.” [42537, 42538]

Obama: “Ask any CEO where they’d rather locate and hire, a country with deteriorating roads and bridges or one with high-speed rail and Internet, high-tech schools, self-healing power grids... Tonight, I propose a ‘Fix-It-First’ program to put people to work as soon as possible on our most urgent repairs, like the nearly 70,000 structurally deficient bridges across the country.” Benson: “Are CEOs worried about investing and building businesses in America because of our roads and bridges, or because of our Byzantine tax code, our crushing debt problem, and anti-corporate scapegoating from people like Barack Obama? Also, shouldn’t the first tranche of ‘stimulus’ money [in 2009] have been applied to fix our ‘most urgent repairs?’ Was that \$825 billion in borrowed money insufficient to get the job done? Oh well, stay tuned for more lectures about ‘crumbling roads and bridges’ as if the original ‘fix-it-first’ boondoggle never happened.” [42537]

Obama: “Since the last time this Congress raised the minimum wage, 19 states have chosen to bump theirs even higher. Tonight, let’s declare that, in the wealthiest nation on Earth, no one who works full time should have to live in poverty—and raise the federal minimum wage to \$9 an hour.” Benson: “This proposal sounds compassionate and pro-worker, but hikes in the minimum wage—government price controls—kill jobs. It’s economics 101...” (Raising the minimum wage to \$9 per hour, of course, means that those workers whose unskilled labor is worth less than \$9 per hour lose their jobs or cannot find one. The late economist Milton Friedman once properly noted, “Minimum wage law is most properly described as a law saying, ‘employees *must* discriminate against people who have low skills.’” Ironically, Obama’s proposal to increase the minimum wage will hurt black Americans more than any other group, particularly young blacks—who already have an unemployment rate much higher than the national average. Obama is essentially proposing that they remain forever unemployed. Additionally, raising the minimum wage places upward pressure on prices because employers must pass the increased cost of labor to their customers.) [42537, 42548]

CNSnews.com points out that the automatic sequester cuts Obama calls “sudden, harsh, [and] arbitrary” total \$44 billion and represent “only 1.2 percent of 2013 spending, which is enough to keep the government running for about 4.5 days.” [42589]

DailyCaller.com reports that the Obama administration has admitted that the Department of Homeland Security does nothing to track whether immigrants become “public charges” who rely on welfare programs and become a burden to U.S. taxpayers—even though that can be grounds for deportation. [42546]

Political consultant Kirsten Powers, a Democrat, Tweets, “It is supremely depressing that there are people who think that was a ‘great’ speech.” At USAToday.com Powers writes, “If the State of the Union address Tuesday night is any indication, it appears...Obama’s chief speechwriter has been replaced by a cliché-generator circa 1960. His erstwhile oratory was a melee of cringe-inducing lines ripped straight from a sit-in. ...[Obama] has only a few opportunities to speak to the nation, and he blew this one. It was so hackish, so devoid of any theme or purpose, that it makes one wonder whether part of Obama just wants to see how bad he can be before his cultists in the news media can see it. Every speech is exactly what they wish it to be, regardless of reality. ...Banalities and tropes are not a governing philosophy or a plan. The immigration piece was good, but hardly a profile in courage. After all, even the GOP wants immigration reform now. There is also the small fact that Obama promised to deal with immigration in his first term. The edict on climate change was despotic, not liberal. I believe climate change is a problem and humans contribute to it. However, ‘either do what I say or I will just start issuing executive orders’ that make green energy companies rich is not the kind of governing we should be lauding, regardless of party or ideological bent. His plea on gun control was manipulative and empty. It worked thematically, but failed on substance. The only point was to make Republicans look bad, while simultaneously lecturing about compromise and the importance of working together. Finally, he said the word ‘deficit,’ but don’t hold your breath for anything there. He spoke of it as if it had just magically appeared yesterday when, in fact, he has been ignoring it for four years while running it up. ...That this underwhelming State of the Union—substantively and stylistically—will be treated as a serious effort reveals the bad shape our country is really in.” [42550, 42553]

Illegal immigrant Jose Antonio Vargas testifies before the Senate Judiciary Committee and complains about being called an illegal immigrant: “When you inaccurately call me illegal, you not only dehumanize me, you’re offending them. No human being is illegal.” Vargas prefers being called an “undocumented immigrant.” (Vargas is, of course, incorrect. He is an illegal immigrant. Immigrant is a noun; illegal is an adjective that properly describes that noun. Janet Napolitano, Obama’s head of the Department of Homeland Security, has instructed employees to not only not use the terms “illegal aliens” or “illegal immigrants,” even the term “undocumented workers” is now out of fashion. Illegal immigrants are now to be called “newly-arrived asylum seekers.”) [5340, 5341, 5342, 5343, 42569]

FoxNews.com reports, “Treasury secretary nominee Jack Lew was challenged Wednesday over a nearly \$1 million bonus he accepted from Citigroup just as the company was getting bailed out by the government, at an at-times tense confirmation hearing on the Hill. ...Lew was pressed on everything from his investments to his budget approach to his time at Citigroup. Republican lawmakers pointedly asked him how he

could accept a \$940,000 bonus from Citigroup in early 2009. At the time, Citigroup had received a \$45 billion bailout and was about to get an even bigger federal guarantee. ...Before the bonus, Lew said his base salary was \$350,000. ...Lawmakers also questioned Lew on a \$56,000 investment Lew used to have in a fund registered in the Cayman Islands.” Lew says, “At the time I invested I was aware it was an international fund investing in emerging markets... I actually didn’t know at the time what the address of the... partnership was.” (Lew shrewdly claims only that he did not know the *address* of the investment firm; he does not claim he did not know it was in the Cayman Islands.) [42572, 42576, 42583, 42666]

Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) asks Lew, “You said in your testimony that we can’t let sequestration take effect. In Bob Woodard’s book, *The Price of Politics*, Woodard credits you with originating the plan for sequestration. Was he right or wrong?” Lew responds, “It’s a little more complicated than that, and even in his account, it was a little more complicated than that. ...What I did was I said that with all other options closed, we needed to look for an option where we could agree on how to resolve our differences, and we went back to the 1984 plan that Senator Graham and Senator Rudman worked on and said that would be a basis for having a consequence that would be so unacceptable to everyone that we’d be able to get action.” Burr: “So is it unfair that [Obama] says the blame is on House Republicans—that they originated it? It’s what he said.” Lew: “Senator, the demand for an enforcement mechanism was not something that the administration was pushing at that moment. Our preferred outcome would have been to have there be something on taxes and something on spending. It was unacceptable for the other parties for taxes to be part of it, and the only spending, only alternative that anyone could think of that could be agreed to was sequestration, precisely because it’s so objectionable that nobody could imagine it.” (The sequestration cuts were not meant to encourage compromise; they were meant to force the Republicans to give Obama everything he wanted. Obama and the very-partisan Lew placed a huge bet—and may have lost.) [42590]

Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) issues a statement: “I have asked [CIA Director nominee] John] Brennan if he believed that [Obama] has the power to authorize lethal force, such as a drone strike, against a U.S. citizen on U.S. soil, and my question remains unanswered. I will not allow a vote on this nomination until Mr. Brennan openly responds to the questions and concerns my colleagues and I share. These issues must be discussed openly so that the American people can understand what constraints exist on the government's power to use lethal force against its citizens. Before confirming Mr. Brennan as the head of the CIA, it must be apparent that he understands and will honor the protections provided to every American by the Constitution.” [42573]

Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) indicates she will vote against the confirmation of Chuck Hagel as Obama’s Secretary of Defense. [42574, 42597, 42602]

Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano tells the Senate Judiciary Committee there is no need to require improved border security as a precondition to amnesty for

illegal immigrants because “Immigration enforcement now is light-years away from what it was in 1986. ... Too often the ‘border security first’ refrain simply serves as an excuse for failing to address the underlying problems.” Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) later responds, “If we are going to pass bipartisan immigration reform this year, the administration must accept the principle that security triggers must be met before anyone who is currently undocumented is allowed to apply for a green card. By continuing to oppose a key security principle with bipartisan backing, Secretary Napolitano and this administration appear to be laying the groundwork to scuttle the bipartisan effort in the Senate.” [42575]

According to television ratings services, Obama’s State of the Union address was the least watched in 20 years. Obama’s speech had four million fewer viewers than George W. Bush’s least-watched State of the Union address, and fewer than seven of eight Bill Clinton speeches. [42581, 42648]

ABC reports, “[T]he chair of the House Homeland Security Committee has sent a letter to his fellow members of Congress demanding that the Obama administration classify the attack as a terrorist act and provide full benefits to the victims and their families.” Congressman Michael McCaul (R-TX) states, “It is time for the administration to recognize the Fort Hood shooting for what it is—an act of terrorism. To date, the Department of Defense and the Army classify this attack ‘workplace violence,’ despite mountains of evidence [that] clearly proves the Ft. Hood shooting was an act of terror. ... [T]he result of this inexcusable classification ... is that victims and their families have not received the same recognition or medical and financial benefits as those wounded or killed in war.” [42608]

In his Internet podcast, author and comedian Adam Corolla comments on Obama’s call for an increase in the minimum wage to \$9.00 per hour: “[T]his is another part of good parenting—the best parenting of all is not shitting out the kids when you can’t afford the kids. Again, all these speeches that all these politicians make, right and left—they discuss the problem. Basically, what they’re discussing is how to take a ship that’s capsized and drain it and get it back up. But they never discuss what capsizes the ship, which is the only fucking discussion they should be having—is ballast-oriented: How did it get capsized? Not how do we un-capsize it. ... Alright, you’re not supposed to have two kids. Minimum-wage jobs are the ones you’re supposed to have in high school and you’re supposed to pass through them. The idea is—I worked at McDonald’s when I was 16. The whole idea isn’t let’s make Adam Carolla comfortable working at McDonald’s. I was like, ‘I’m getting \$2.43 a hour. This place sucks ass. I want out of here as fast as I can possibly do it.’ ... I didn’t have anything—I just knew this job at McDonald’s sucked. ... So your jobs where you’re paid just a little bit are jobs you’re supposed to have in high school and you’re supposed to move through. And you certainly aren’t supposed to have two fucking kids when you’re making Minimum Wage. It’s not responsible; it’s not responsible to the kids you’re trying to raise; and it’s not responsible to the community they live in because you’re not—you’re not paying your fair share. ... You’re not paying your fair share when you make minimum wage and you have these two kids and they’re

enrolled in the schools and they're using the system and all that kind of stuff. You are definitely not paying your fair share. You're not going to cover those kids' medical costs and beyond. So you want to talk about fair share? Stop shitting out kids when you can't afford kids." [42622]

According to CNSNews.com, the Obama administration has approved an additional \$1.55 billion to build a 20-mile railroad on the Hawaiian Island of Oahu. The total federal/state cost is projected to be at least \$5.1 billion—or \$48,289 per foot, or \$5,350 for each of the island's 953,207 inhabitants. [42588]

Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA) joins Obama and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) in claiming that the government does not have a spending problem: "First of all, I want to disagree with those who say we have a spending problem. Everyone keeps saying we have a spending problem. And when they talk about that, it's like there's an assumption that somehow we as a nation are broke. We can't afford these things any longer. We're too broke to invest in education and housing and things like that. Well, look at it this way, we're the richest nation in the history of the world. We are now the richest nation in the world. We have the highest per capita income of any major nation. That kind of begs the question, doesn't it? If we're so rich, why are we so broke? Is it a spending problem? No." Speaking as a true Marxist, Harkin adds, "It's because we have a misallocation of capital, a misallocation of wealth." (In other words, "The problem is that individual Americans have the wealth and they don't want to turn it all over to the government to spend.") A Fox News poll shows that Americans do not agree with Obama, Pelosi, and Harkin: 83 percent believe that there is a spending problem. That includes 97 percent of Republicans, 87 percent of independents, and even 69 percent of Democrats. Senator John Thune (R-SD) points out that "Between 2007 and 2012, annual federal spending went up from \$2.7 trillion to \$3.5 trillion, an increase of nearly 30 percent. Inflation over that period was 10.8 percent, meaning government grew at almost three times the rate of inflation. Federal spending as a percentage of GDP increased from the 40-year average of about 20 percent to more than 24 percent. And that's before you factor in [Obama's] new health care law." [42637, 42641, 42644, 42654]

According to the *Daily Mail*, "Sacramento developer Angelo Tsakopoulos was reported to have said Bill Clinton has confirmed that the former Secretary of State will make a bid for the White House again. The millionaire is said to have told the Greek Reporter that Clinton's husband revealed his wife's political ambition, as the power couple gear up for a 2016 race. 'Hillary will be our next President and she will be a great one,' Mr. Tsakopoulos told the Greek Reporter at a private gala event in California over the weekend. 'I talk to her husband, and he confirmed it. She will run.' he added." [42603]

Olympic Arms, Inc., announces it will no longer do business with the state of New York as a result of its recently passed and unconstitutional gun ban. The company is located in Olympia, Washington and sells weapons to law enforcement and government agencies around the world, including every branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. Olympic Arms is later joined by gun manufacturers LaRue Tactical, Extreme Firepower Inc. LLC, Templar

Custom, and York Arms. GunsSaveLife.com “is joining with Grass Roots North Carolina in calling for all American gun owners to pressure Sig Sauer, Smith and Wesson and Glock to shut off sales to government agencies in New York State. ...Here’s a suggested message... ‘We don’t live in a police state: If it can’t be sold to citizens, it won’t be sold to State and local government.’” Beretta also considers moving its operations—and more than 300 jobs—out of Maryland. (ThePoliceLoophole.com lists all gun manufacturers that do not sell their products to states or municipalities that severely restrict Second Amendment rights. Texas and Mississippi quickly offer their states as “safe havens” for any gun manufacturers wishing to flee antagonistic legislators in Washington, New York, or elsewhere.) [42606, 42607, 42624, 42722, 42769, 42806, 42812, 42841, 42875]

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) broadcasts radio ads featuring Secretary Tom Vilsack encouraging female and Hispanic farmers to apply for a portion of \$1.33 billion in federal cash if they believe they were victims of discrimination. (The Obama “redistribution of wealth” scheme is similar to the \$1.5 payoff resulting from the *Pigford v. Vilsack* lawsuit that charged USDA discrimination against black farmers. Although there were no more than 30,000 black farmers in the nation, eventually there were more 86,000 claims filed—meaning that ineligible farmers and even non-farmers filed claims to cash in on the class-action settlements, just as pedestrians sometimes quickly hop onto a bus after it has been involved in a traffic accident in order to claim injuries.) [13059, 13060, 13084, 13193, 13194, 13227, 13228, 13377, 42663, 42664]

Judicial Watch releases video footage it obtained via a Freedom of Information Act request that shows the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s “Cultural Sensitivity Training” program telling employees they should refer to the Pilgrims as “illegal aliens” and minorities as “emerging majorities.” “Diversity instructor” Samuel Betances—who might more accurately be labeled a “race hustler”—forces the students to say that “every federal agency has discriminated against African-Americans, Hispanics, Native American Indians and other groups.” Betances tells the USDA employees, “I want you to say, ‘The Pilgrims were illegal aliens.’ Say, ‘The Pilgrims never gave their passports to the Indians.’” According to DailyCaller.com, the taxpayers have paid Betances more than \$200,000 to conduct his “classes.” Judicial Watch president Tom Fitton states, “This USDA diversity training video depicts out-of-control political correctness. Can someone please explain how any of this helps USDA employees to better serve the American taxpayer? This video further confirms that politically correct diversity-training programs are both offensive and a waste of taxpayer money. No wonder it took over half a year to obtain this video from the Obama administration.” (The next day Obama claims, “This is the most transparent administration in history. I can document that this is the case.”) [42620, 42636, 42660, 42662, 42787, 42883]

On Hugh Hewitt’s radio program author Mark Steyn comments, “There are lots of things to get upset with the guy [Obama] over. The issue here is the gulf between what the president preaches and how he lives. ...One Christmas vacation costs more than flying the royal family around the world for a whole year. ...He doesn’t live like [the] one percent, he lives like the 0.00000001 percent. He costs more money than every European

royal family put together. There's a disconnect here." Obama escapes criticism because "Essentially, Obama has achieved the same relationship with the press and the media and public information that the Soviet Communist Party had to jam radio transmissions and smash printing presses to achieve. Essentially these guys are volunteering to do for him what they had to be coerced into doing [in] most self-respecting countries, and I think that's the real issue here." [42788]

On *Special Report*, Charles Krauthammer comments, "I think if the inaugural address was a philosophical ode to hyperactive leftist government, the State of the Union [address] was a programmatic expression of exactly that. I mean, is there a human or social problem that the State of the Union did not say could be cured with a program run out of Washington? ...I think it was a throwback to mid-twentieth century liberalism. This was a pre-Clintonian, tax-and-spend—we have a program for every human ill—and the reason it won't increase the deficit is 'cause we will tax accordingly. ...It used to be called tax-and-spend liberalism. But after losing time and time again in the 80s and early 90s, to Republicans, Democrats have decided to change the language. You don't tax anymore, it's all 'revenues;' and you never spend, you only 'invest.' And this is the Obama message... We have had the [spending] spigots open, the Federal Reserve, and the Treasury; [we're] still stuck in the worst recovery, and now he's shifting into more spending." [42580]

On February 14 CBS reports that Senate Democrats will propose replacing the automatic sequester cuts—with \$60 billion in *post-2015* alternative cuts and \$60 billion in *immediate* tax increases. "Most of the revenue would come from implementing what's known as the Buffett Rule, named after investor Warren Buffett. The rule would cap deductions and loopholes for millionaires so they pay at least 30 percent of their salary in taxes. Senate Democrats tried and failed to pass the Buffett Rule last year. The spending cuts would come from eliminating agriculture subsidies and from trimming the defense budget, though not as drastically as the sequester would." (House Republicans are not likely to accept another \$60 billion in job-killing tax increases.) [42577, 42578, 42598]

In a Google-sponsored "fireside hangout," Obama responds to questions from Americans via the Internet. One person asks why he does not ban handguns. Obama responds, "Well, I actually don't think we should ban handguns. Keep in mind that what we're trying to do is come up with a package that protects Second Amendment rights but also makes a meaningful difference in reducing violence. We're not going to eliminate it completely. The package we will put forward will have an impact on handguns by instituting a universal background check system to make sure that people who shouldn't have any kind of gun aren't able to purchase them..." (Obama, of course, does want to ban handguns and has stated so in the past.) Obama also states that he does not want to confiscate guns—which is also a lie, as a ban on "assault rifles" is meaningless if owners are not expected to turn them in. Obama defends his proposal to raise the minimum wage, claiming, "Corporate profits are at record highs" but a wage increase will "have some modest impact on their profits." He pretends raising the minimum will have no effect on prices: "What we want to do is make sure that, if you work hard in this society, you've

got a living wage. Nobody's going to be getting rich on \$9 an hour. They're still going to be struggling. My suspicion is you'll still be able to get your Starbucks as a consequence." (That cup of coffee will most certainly cost more as wage increases percolate through the economy. If Obama forces employers to pay \$9.00 per hour to those employees who had been earning \$7.25, those employees who had been earning \$10 per hour will demand \$11.75. eventually most people will see wage increases—almost all of which will be offset by higher prices and higher taxes.) [42660, 42677]

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) Tells reporters, "Trying to find a funding source to repair the nation's infrastructure is still a big goal of mine. And [Obama] talked about infrastructure, but he didn't talk about how to pay for it. It's easy to go out there and be Santa Claus and talk about all these things you want to give away, but at some point, somebody's got to pay the bill. ...I'll tell you the same thing I told my Republican colleagues at our retreat: The sequester will be in effect until there are cuts and reforms that put us on a path to balance the budget over the next 10 years. Period. This sequester was [Obama's]. His party needs to follow through on their plans to replace it. I've made it very clear. The sequester—I don't like it. Nobody should like it, but the sequester is there, because [Obama] insisted it be there. Where's [Obama's] plan to replace the sequester that he insisted upon?" [42638, 42645]

Boehner also comments on Obama's "global warming" threat: "I don't know what actions [Obama] thinks he can take. I don't think he has the ability to impose a national energy tax on Americans without the authority of Congress. He may attempt to do this, but I'm not sure how much he can really do. [Obama] likes to attack Congress but if he's serious about enacting his agenda, I think it must start with the part of this Congress that his party controls—the United States Senate. What can he get passed in the United States Senate? [Obama] wants to impose a national cap-and-trade energy tax. I would hope that Senate Democrats would take it up." (Meanwhile, during the 2012–2013 winter, Arctic ice increased by more than 10 million square kilometers—for only the third time in decades.) [42646, 42688]

Obama's Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Shaun Donovan, warns the Senate Appropriations Committee that the sequester cuts "would result in more than 3,000 of the most vulnerable children not being protected from lead poisoning or other hazards in their homes." (Lead has been banned from household paints since 1978. The likelihood of 3,000 children being harmed by chewing on windowsills that have not been re-painted in more than 30 years is minuscule.) Secretary of Education Arne Duncan warns that the automatic spending cuts could cause 70,000 children to be removed from the Head Start program. (There are more than 900,000 children in the program, at a cost to the taxpayers of more than \$8 billion per year; Americans without children are paying for daycare services for those who have children.) The Donovan and Duncan testimony is part of Obama's attempt to block the automatic sequester cuts on March 1—which he demanded as part of the 2011 debt ceiling agreement. [42700, 42701, 42702, 42711, 42712]

Of course, the Obama administration does *not* have to cut lead paint programs or Head Start; it can make equivalent cuts elsewhere to accommodate the sequester. But cutting waste and fraud and inefficiencies does not encourage voters to complain. The “Washington Monument” strategy is predictable: faced with the need to reduce spending, the political party in power threatens to slash the programs that are most visible and popular with the public. (Closing the Washington Monument gets the public’s attention; laying off unnecessary clerks does not.) In an effort to frighten voters, Obama claims, “Emergency responders ...their ability to help communities respond to and recover from disasters will be degraded. Border Patrol agents will see their hours reduced. FBI agents will be furloughed. Federal prosecutors will have to close cases and let criminals go. Air traffic controllers and airport security will see cutbacks, which means more delays in airports across the country. Thousands of teachers and educators will be laid off. Tens of thousands of parents will have to scramble to find child care for their kids. Hundreds of thousands of Americans will lose access to primary care and preventive care like flu vaccinations and cancer screenings. This is not an abstraction. People will lose their jobs. The unemployment rate might tick up again.” [42700, 42701, 42702, 42711, 42712]

Talk radio host Dana Loesch reports that Democrats in the Missouri state legislature have introduced a bill requiring the vast majority of handguns and rifles to be turned in to the government within 90 days. Loesch writes, “Thankfully Republicans hold a super majority in Missouri legislature. The bill has only been introduced and read twice; it’s a go-nowhere bill but designed, I think, to test the waters as we’ve seen numerous bills of similar sort introduced in other states.” (The proposal also proves that Democrats are lying when they claim they have not plans to confiscate guns.) [42594, 42595, 42596, 42681]

Breitbart.com reports, “New evidence has emerged that a 2008 address to the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) by former Sen. Chuck Hagel (R-NE), ...Obama’s nominee for Secretary of Defense, was in fact a formal speech, contrary to the claims of the Obama administration. Steven Emerson of the Investigative Project on Terrorism (IPT) provided Breitbart News with a still image of what the IPT says is Hagel addressing the ADC conference behind a podium with the group’s logo. Hagel was described as the event’s keynote speaker. Video or text of the speech is thought to exist but has yet to be found or provided. A reporter from the Washington Free Beacon was told by the ADC that the speech is in an archive, but that it was unavailable. The ADC reportedly responded to further requests for information about the speech by accusing the Free Beacon of racism and indicating that it had reported the Free Beacon to ‘authorities.’ The ADC also failed to turn over IRS 990 forms, according to the Free Beacon, which are meant to be publicly available upon request. ...Hagel was the keynote speaker at the June 13, 2008 fundraiser for the ADC’s political action committee, the NAAA-ADC PAC (which appears to be defunct). The event was restricted to ADC members.” (It can almost certainly be assumed that Hagel’s speech included anti-Israel statements—which is why the ADC wants any video of the event kept under lock and key and why it wants Hagel to be Secretary of Defense.) [42602]

Senate Republicans temporarily block Chuck Hagel's nomination to be secretary of Defense, with Democrats failing to get the 60 votes needed for cloture to end debate on the issue. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) will likely attempt another vote in the near future. (Had Hagel's past negative comments about Israel and Jews instead been directed at blacks or Hispanics, the media would have pummeled him with criticism and destroyed his nomination. But Jew-bashing is not politically incorrect. Hagel, writes AtlasShrugs.com's Pamela Geller, "is not fit for office, let alone Secretary of Defense. Obama is laughing at us all." In a 2007 speech Hagel, who has been endorsed by the Communist Party USA, charged, "The State Department has become adjunct to the Israeli Foreign Minister's office..." The American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) refuses to release the video and text of a 2008 Hagel speech recorded at one of its events. Hagel was a virtual unknown when he ran for the Senate in 1996, yet managed to defeat his opponent, then-Governor Ben Nelson, by 15 points. Whether Hagel was aided by the fact that he owned millions of dollars of stock in the company whose computerized voting machines is not known.) It is worth noting that while Obama whines about Republicans blocking Hagel, Obama (along with Hillary Clinton and Joe Biden) voted "no" on a cloture vote for John Bolton, who was nominated for U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations by George W. Bush—and Bolton was eminently more qualified than Hagel. [42604, 42609, 42610, 42611, 42612, 42614, 42618, 42633, 42639, 42642, 42651, 42668, 42719, 42768]

Two "well-connected Democrats" tell TheDailyBeast.com that Obama's former chief of staff, Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel, may consider running for president in 2016 if Hillary Clinton does not. (The "well-connected Democrats" may not have noticed that Emanuel's approval rating has plummeted. According to a Crain's/Ipsos poll, "Just 2 percent of Chicagoans surveyed said they strongly approve of the mayor's job performance, with 12 percent somewhat approving and 5 percent leaning that way. At the opposite end, 13 percent strongly disapprove, 9 percent somewhat disapprove and 13 percent lean toward disapproval. ...[T]hat gives Mr. Emanuel a net minus 16 rating, down from the plus 4 he had in September, when 37 percent approved and 33 percent disapproved.") [42605, 42776, 42777, 42778]

Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ) announces he will not run for reelection in 2014. (Lautenberg is 89 years old.) Among those who may run for his seat: Newark Mayor Cory Booker (a Democrat), Congressman Frank Pallone (D-NJ), and Fox reporter Geraldo Rivera, who claims to be a Republican. (Some speculate that Governor Chris Christie will run, rather than seek a second term as governor, although most consider that unlikely.) [42640]

Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and Bernie Sanders (Socialist-VT) announce that they will introduce "global warming" legislation that will include strict regulations and a \$20 per ton "carbon tax." (According to a Heritage Foundation study, a \$25 per ton carbon tax would cost a family of four about \$2,000 per year in higher prices, gasoline costs, and utility bills.) Sanders states, "We have the opportunity right now, with [Obama's] commitment in the State of the Union to make major progress." Boxer states, "[Obama]

is right—we must do more to combat climate change, and Superstorm Sandy was a wake-up call. I strongly support [Obama’s] efforts to move forward with executive actions to address this serious threat.” According to FreeBeacon.com, “The Congressional Budget Office estimates the taxes would raise \$1.2 trillion in revenue over the next decade.” (In essence, consumer prices would go up \$120 billion per year as energy users necessarily pass on the added taxes to their customers. The odds of such legislation passing in the Senate are minimal, and close to zero in the House of Representatives. But proposing the job-killing legislation and forcing Republicans to vote against it gives leftist politicians a campaign issue in 2014.) [42653, 42665, 42678]

Legendary investor Jim Rogers, author of *Street Smarts: Adventures on the Road and in the Markets*, tells Newsmax TV, “The central bank has been printing staggering amounts of money, and the government has been spending a lot of money because they wanted ...Obama to get re-elected. That’s still spilling over into the economy. ...We should all be terrified of what has happened, because governments around the world are printing huge amounts of money and spending huge amounts of money. The debts are going up like a rocket. This is going to end very badly. ... Fed[eral Reserve] Chairman Ben Bernanke has said he’s going to keep doing this [expanding the money supply] until 2014 or 2015. The man doesn’t know anything about economics. He doesn’t understand finance or currencies. All he understands is printing money. ...But even if things are better [and Rogers does not believe they are], it’s only because the debt has much more than doubled in the last four years since he got there and because they printed a lot of money. ...No country in world history has improved itself by raising taxes. If you cut taxes and if you cut spending, then people will do a better job.” [42689]

The election campaign behind them, Obama and his wife have dinner at Minibar, the most expensive restaurant in Washington, D.C. (WhiteHouseDossier.com estimates the cost of dinner for two to be about \$900.) [42628, 42629]

On the *Tavis Smiley Show*, black activist Cornel West says, “We’ve been talking about this for a good while, the immorality of drones, dropping bombs on innocent people. It’s been over 200 children so far. These are war crimes. Let us not be deceived—Nixon, Bush, Obama, they’re war criminals. ...They have killed innocent people in the name of the struggle for freedom, but they’re suspending the law, very much like Wall Street criminals. The law is suspended for them, but the law applies for the rest of us.” [42744]

On February 15 Obama visits Chicago’s Hyde Park Career Academy to promote his agenda, and then heads to West Palm Beach, Florida for a golf weekend at The Floridian Golf Club—while his wife vacations in Aspen, Colorado. (The separate vacations mean the taxpayers must shell out more for travel costs and security details. Their last vacation was in Hawaii in January) While in Florida, Obama will receive golf lessons from Butch Harmon—whose hourly rate is \$1,000. (Obama is reportedly not a very good golfer. Whether the lessons will help him remains to be seen.) [42616, 42625, 42626, 42627, 42632, 42657]

Sitting on the stage behind Obama audience is 14-year-old Destini Warren. Hours after his speech, her 18-year-old sister, Janay McFarlane, mother of a three-month-old baby boy, is killed in a shooting in North Chicago. According to Fox News, “Family members reportedly believe the gunman was targeting the friend McFarlane was with when she was shot.” [42691]

DailyCaller.com reports, “Even though federal law largely bars illegal immigrants from obtaining Medicaid coverage, the program annually pays out more than \$2 billion in free emergency coverage that mostly goes to illegal immigrants, according to Kaiser Health News. The vast majority of the total emergency care reimbursements cover delivering babies, Kaiser reports. Based on a Kaiser data analysis of the states believed to have the greatest populations of illegal immigrants—including California, New York, Texas, North Carolina, Arizona, Illinois and Florida—more than 100,000 people annually receive emergency care that is reimbursed by Medicaid. California, Kaiser’s analysis showed, receives approximately half of the annual \$2 billion Medicaid expenditure category.” In Boynton Beach, Florida, “Nearly one-third of Bethesda Hospital East’s annual 2,900 births are paid for by emergency Medicaid funding.” [42619]

The Asahi Shimbun reports, “Senior U.S. administration officials held secret talks in North Korea on at least three occasions in 2011 and 2012... Although the visits had potential implications for Japan, Washington did not inform its security partner at the time and only informally confirmed one of them when the Japanese side pressed, government and other sources in Japan, South Korea and the United States said. The U.S. State Department even warned the Foreign Ministry against making further inquiries, saying they would harm bilateral relations, the sources said. U.S. military planes flew from an air base in Guam to Pyongyang and back on April 7, 2012, and again on a longer visit lasting from Aug. 18-20, the sources said. It is believed that those aboard included Sydney Seiler, director for Korea at the U.S. National Security Council, and Joseph DeTrani, who headed the North Korea desk at the U.S. Office of the Director of National Intelligence. DeTrani left the post in May. They met with North Korean officials and discussed policies following the death of leader Kim Jong Il in December 2011.” [42738]

The nine U.S. Supreme Court Justices confer to decide whether to hear the case *Edward Noonan, et al v. Deborah Bowen, California Secretary of State*. The lawsuit, filed by attorney Orly Taitz, charges that Obama is not legally eligible to serve as president, has produced false identification via a forged birth certificate, and has used stolen Social Security number (SSN). Accordingly, Obama should not have been allowed on the ballot in California in 2008. (The case will be heard only if four of the nine Justices agree to do so.) PersonalLiberty.com notes, “Meantime, on Feb. 4, Kathleen O’Leary, presiding judge of the 4th District Court of Appeal, reinstated the appeal of *Taitz v. Obama et al* filed by Taitz when she ran for Senate. That case involves evidence of 1.5 million invalid voter registrations in the State of California. The appeal also involves Obama’s lack of legitimacy to hold the office of President based on his forged IDs, stolen Connecticut Social Security number, the fact the last name he’s using is not legally his and his fraudulent claim to be a U.S. citizen. ...On another legal front, Obama defaulted in the

case of *Grinols et al v. Obama et al* on Jan. 30 when he failed to file a response within 21 days of being served notice of the suit. This case also involves Obama's phony SSN." (The most recent of several SSNs used by Obama is 042-68-4425, which was issued in Connecticut in 1977 to a man born in 1890, who appears in some database records as belonging to a man named Harrison J. Bounel—who also shows up in records as residing at Obama's mansion in Chicago. The 1940 census reflects a Russian immigrant Harry J. Bounel born in 1890. Some suspect that Bounel was assigned an SSN in his later years for Medicare purposes. After his death Obama then stole that SSN.) Since investigator Al Hendershot discovered the links between Obama and Bounel, "Obots" have been working to remove that information from databases. (Some believe the name Bounel is related to the revocation of Michelle Obama's law license—the reason for which she has so far successfully kept hidden from the public.) [42623, 42630, 42698]

The likelihood is that the Supreme Court will refuse to hear *Noonan v. Bowen*, but attorney Orly Taitz has fought valiantly to get it that far. (Her application to hear the case was previously denied by Justice Kennedy, although four court clerks—all of whom happened to be black—refused to allow her to see his signature on the relevant documents. That refusal suggests to some that Kennedy never saw the item and the clerks interfered on behalf of Obama. Taitz then resubmitted the case to Chief Justice Roberts and it was scheduled for conference.) [42674, 42675]

The day after Senate Democrats offer a proposal to prevent the sequestration cuts—a proposal they knew would never be accepted by House Republicans—Congress adjourns until February 25. (The odds of avoiding the March 1 cuts are minimal because legislators will have only three days to come to an agreement and draft a bill.) Meanwhile, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) whines that the sequestration would slash Congressional salaries: "I don't think we should do it; I think we should respect the work we do. I think it's necessary for us to have the dignity of the job that we have rewarded [sic]." (HotAir.com's Ed Morrissey comments, "*Ahem*. Is this the same body that hasn't produced a single normal-order budget since 2009, despite being required by law to do so? What exactly have they done with 'dignity' on Capitol Hill during that time? They shouldn't get paid at all if they can't even bother to budget, one of their core responsibilities. There may be many things wrong with the sequester as it is currently constituted, but the insult to Congressional dignity is pretty far down the priority list.") [42634]

Proving that stupidity knows no bounds, Congresswoman Donna Edwards (D-MD), a member of the "Safe Climate Caucus," follows up on Obama's pledge to combat global warming with her own warning: "If we do nothing about what is happening, it will destroy our economy, it will destroy our state, and it will have a broad impact not just here in this country but around the world." Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) warns that in Vermont "there will no longer be skiing and even the maple trees will be threatened." Edwards insists, "The fact is that those of us who are here are not alarmists, we are not eco-hystericals, we're not socialists. We care about our climate and we want to do something about it." In addition to higher energy taxes, Congressman Henry Waxman

(D-CA) calls on the administration to further regulate oil refineries, power plants, and household appliances. [42643, 42647]

At WesternJournalism.com Kris Zane wonders if John Brennan is blackmailing Obama. Zane notes that the 2008 breach of Obama's passport file was perpetrated by "a low-level employee at Analysis Corporation, a State Department contracted company that processed and stored passport records..." and which was run by Brennan. "What if in fact Brennan, as head of Analysis Corporation and obviously with access to Obama's passport records, breached Obama's passport file not to cover for him, but to blackmail him? What if what Brennan found in Obama's passport records was what most of America already knows—that Obama became an Indonesian citizen when his mother married Lolo Soetoro, as evidenced by Obama's school records, indicating also that he was a Muslim with the legal name of Barry Soetoro. What if Brennan is holding this over Barack Obama's head in order to obtain what many deem—as CIA chief—to be the most powerful position in the U.S. government—possibly the world? He would have access to a mammoth database on every American, access to virtually every single electronic communication sent: phone, email, text, video—everything. Combine this with Brennan's new authority as revealed by an uncovered secret memo whereby the Obama administration—that is, Brennan, as head of the drone assassination program—has the authority to kill any U.S. citizen at any time and anywhere, without oversight and without having to provide any evidence to anyone. Whether John Brennan breached Barack Obama's passport record in order to cover for him or blackmail him matters little. America should be very afraid of this Administration. But let fear bring us to action. To remove Barack Obama from power. To remove John Brennan from power. Soon. Before we pass the point of no return." (It is worth noting that if Brennan knows details of Obama's past that he does not want made public, so probably do many others. There may be a multitude of people "pulling Obama's strings." In fact, he may have been chosen for his position for that reason: "We'll get you nominated and elected, provided you do our bidding.") [42649, 42803]

Newsmax.com reports, "The Obama administration's Equal Employment Opportunity Commission says it should be a federal crime to refuse to hire ex-convicts—and threatens to sue businesses that don't employ criminals. ... The impetus for this [policy] is that black men are nearly seven times more likely than white men to serve time in prison, and therefore refusals to hire convicts disproportionately [sic; disproportionately] impact blacks, according to a Wall Street Journal opinion piece by James Bovard... Most businesses perform background checks on potential employees, but the EEOC frowns on these checks and 'creates legal tripwires that could spark federal lawsuits,' Bovard observes. An EEOC commissioner who opposed the new policy, Constance Baker, said in April that the new guidelines will scare businesses from conducting background checks. Reason: If a check does disclose a criminal offense, the EEOC expects a firm to do an 'individual assessment' that will have to prove that the company has a 'business necessity' not to hire the ex-convict. If the firm does not do the intricate assessment, it could be found guilty of 'race discrimination' if it hires a law-abiding applicant over one with convictions. Bovard points out that the 'biggest bombshell' in the new guidelines is that businesses complying with state or local laws requiring background checks can still

be sued by the EEOC. That came to light when the EEOC took action against G4S Secure Solutions, which provides guards for nuclear power plants and other sensitive sites, for refusing to hire a twice-convicted thief as a security guard—even though Pennsylvania state law forbids hiring people with felony convictions as security officers.” (Thus, if an employer interviews a black job applicant, learns he is an ex-convict, and does not hire him, he may be found guilty of racial discrimination unless he can prove that the criminal record would interfere with the business.) [42655]

Bloomberg.com reports, “Wal-Mart Stores Inc. had the worst sales start to a month in seven years as payroll-tax increases hit shoppers already battling a slow economy, according to internal e-mails obtained by Bloomberg News. ‘In case you haven’t seen a sales report these days, February MTD sales are a total disaster,’ Jerry Murray, Wal-Mart’s vice president of finance and logistics, said in a Feb. 12 e-mail to other executives, referring to month-to-date sales. ‘The worst start to a month I have seen in my 7 years with the company.’ ...Murray’s comments about February sales follow disappointing results from January, a month that Cameron Geiger, senior vice president of Wal-Mart U.S. Replenishment, said he was relieved to see end, according to a separate internal e-mail obtained by Bloomberg News.” [42656]

On February 16 the Associated Press reports, “Citing financial concerns, the Obama administration has begun quietly winding down one of the earliest programs created by [ObamaCare], a plan that helps people with medical problems who can’t get private insurance. In an afternoon teleconference with state counterparts, administration officials said Friday the Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan will stop taking new applications. People already in the plan will not lose coverage. Designed as a stopgap solution until the law’s full consumer protections are in effect next year, PCIP has served more than 135,000 people, a lifeline for patients with serious medical problems such as cancer and heart failure.” (Obama argued that his health plan was necessary because of the *millions* of people with pre-existing conditions who could not otherwise get coverage—and a mere 135,000 people applied for the program. The entire population will suffer from the ill effects of ObamaCare for decades and only 135,000 were helped.) “But Congress allocated a limited amount of money, and the administration’s technical experts want to make sure it doesn’t run out. ...The plan covers people who have had problems getting private insurance because of a medical condition and have been uninsured for at least six months. Premiums are keyed to average rates charged in each state, which means they’re not necessarily cheap, often amounting to several hundred dollars a month for middle-aged individuals. ...Starting next January 1, insurance companies will no longer be able to turn anyone away because of poor health. At the same time, the federal government will begin subsidizing coverage for millions of individuals who have no access to employer plans.” (In essence, that means insurance premiums will increase dramatically in 2014 to cover the added cost of those customers, and the federal deficit will increase by the amount of the subsidies.) [42661, 42667]

Obama plays golf with Tiger Woods’ instructor, Butch Harmon. (Although Obama makes it sound as though the March 1 sequester cuts would be devastating for the nation,

they are apparently not significant enough to keep him from a long weekend on a golf course. The sequester “cuts,” of course, are not really cuts. They are merely reductions in the rate of growth in federal spending. Spending will still increase—but not as much as the legislators and bureaucrats would like. The “cuts” amount to about two percent of spending, or \$85 billion out of \$3.6 trillion in annual spending.) [42670, 42755]

Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) issues a statement: “It’s a mistake for the White House to draft immigration legislation without seeking input from Republican members of Congress. ...Obama’s leaked immigration proposal is disappointing to those of us working on a serious solution. [Obama’s] bill repeats the failures of past legislation. It fails to follow through on previously broken promises to secure our borders, creates a special pathway that puts those who broke our immigration laws at an advantage over those who chose to do things the right way and come here legally, and does nothing to address guest workers or future flow, which serious immigration experts agree is critical to preventing future influxes of illegal immigrants. ...Much like [Obama’s] self-described ‘stop gap’ Deferred Action measure last year, this legislation is half-baked and seriously flawed. It would actually make our immigration problems worse, and would further undermine the American people’s confidence in Washington’s ability to enforce our immigration laws and reform our broken immigration system. If actually proposed, [Obama’s] bill would be dead on arrival in Congress, leaving us with unsecured borders and a broken legal immigration system for years to come.” [42672, 42683]

On February 17 Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) appears on *Fox News Sunday* and criticizes the Obama administration’s proposed immigration reform legislation, saying Obama “is torpedoing his own plan. It shows me he is really not serious. ...The bill won’t pass.” The legislation would make all illegal immigrants legal U.S. residents within eight years and would then be allowed to apply for citizenship. According to FoxNews.com, “Immigrants who served more than a year in prison for a criminal conviction or were convicted of three or more crimes... would not be eligible.” (Obama apparently has no problem allowing illegal immigrant felons who served “only” 364 days in jail to remain in the United States.) [42669, 42683]

Paul states that voters “...don’t want somebody [running for president in 2016] who wants to round people up, put them in camps and send them back to Mexico.” (The Associated Press and other media outlets omit the word “don’t” from his statement. The AP later retracts its story.) [42684, 42685, 42694]

Senator Lindsey Graham (R-NC) says, “When Secretary [of State Hillary] Clinton said she had a clear-eyed view of the threats we faced in Libya ...she was not clear-eyed, she was blind and deaf.” On Obama’s choice of Chuck Hagel for Secretary of Defense, graham says, “I think we’re doing our job to scrutinize one of the most unqualified, radical choices for secretary of defense in a long time.” [42695]

Washington Post reporter Bob Woodward also appears on *Fox News Sunday*, and comments on Obama’s controversial Secretary of Defense nomination: “I think there is

another dimension here and that is, what are Democratic senators really thinking about the [Chuck] Hagel nomination? I understand some of them have actually called the White House and said, ‘Is Hagel going to withdraw? Would he consider withdrawing?’ The answer is an emphatic no. But remember John Ehrlichman, Nixon’s aide, used to talk about twisting slowly in the wind. And the factor here is time, and there is this twisting in the wind aura to all of this. And I wonder whether the Democrats are kind of looking and asking what really is the fundamental question here: Is he the best person to be secretary of defense?” [42687]

On *Meet the Press* Senator John McCain (R-AZ) asks a series of questions about the incidents in Benghazi and the Obama administration’s cover-up, while host David Gregory does his best to defend Obama by suggesting the issue belongs in the past and there has been no cover-up. McCain confronts Gregory with the question, “I’m asking you, do you care... I’m asking you, do you care whether four Americans died? ...And shouldn’t people be held accountable for the fact that four Americans died?” [42673, 42682, 42686]

While his wife vacations in Aspen, Colorado, Obama plays golf with Tiger Woods in Florida. (Reporters complain they are getting no access to Obama during his Florida trip. They are willing to give him a pass on four dead Americans in Benghazi, turning Egypt and Libya over to Islamist radicals, and his destruction of the economy—but not giving them access on the golf course so they can get Tiger Woods’ autograph gets their tempers flaring.) [42670, 42680, 42703, 42713, 42716]

WND.com reports, “There is immediate information that the Iranian-backed Islamic Jihad terrorist organization may attempt to disrupt ...Obama’s visit here [Tel Aviv, Israel] next month with attacks aimed at derailing Israeli-Palestinian talks, according to informed Middle Eastern security officials. The officials stressed there is no known threat against Obama himself or any U.S. targets. The officials fear Iran is trying to disrupt planned Israeli-Palestinian dialogue aimed at creating a Palestinian Authority-led state. Obama’s visit is ostensibly aimed, among other things, at restarting these long stalled negotiations. Since Hamas itself does not oppose the talks, Iran must reach out to Islamic Jihad, largely funded by Tehran, to carry out any attacks, said the officials.” [42676]

Attorney Orly Taitz claims that “clerks of the Supreme Court never forwarded to 5 out of 9 Justices one single page of pleadings [in the Obama eligibility lawsuit *Edward Noonan, et al v. Deborah Bowen, California Secretary of State.*], they also did not forward to any of the Justices the Supplemental Brief.” Taitz calls for an “immediate investigation” by the Senate Judiciary Committee, and charges that she has “evidence of employees of the Supreme Court of the United States hiding from Justices... pleadings and documents submitted by plaintiffs and attorneys, removing cases from the electronic docket, evidence of bogus conferences of Justices being reported to the public when no such conferences took place, and the Justices being clueless about the very existence of the case, evidence of criminal complicity of the employees of the Supreme Court and treason in the most serious case dealing with national security.” (This should be the story of the

decade—tampering with documents at the Supreme Court to shield Obama—but it is ignored by the mainstream media.) [42675, 42696, 42697]

On February 18 DailyCaller.com reports, “A pro-Hezbollah, pro-Hamas candidate for the Iranian presidency, a man linked to Iranian-controlled front groups, brought former Republican Nebraska Senator Chuck Hagel to speak at Rutgers University in 2007, according to another professor on campus. Hooshang Amirahmadi, who led Rutgers’ Center for Middle Eastern Studies when Hagel came to campus, is the founder and president of the American-Iranian Council. He arranged for Hagel’s speech on March 2, 2007, the faculty source told The Daily Caller. Iran’s Guardian Council cleared Amirahmadi to run for the presidency in 2013. Approval of the regime is required before candidates’ names can appear on the ballot. To be approved, candidates must be Shia, male, and committed to the Islamic revolution. ...According to a contemporaneous online report written by a Hagel supporter, the former senator said during his 2007 presentation at Rutgers that the U.S. State Department ‘has become adjunct to the Israeli Foreign Minister’s office.’” [42679]

FoxNews.com reports that Obama’s advisors “tried to put the genie back in the bottle after a leaked White House immigration plan drew outrage from Republicans who accused the president of endangering the reform push.” Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL), “a key figure in immigration reform talks, was among those who slammed [Obama] for the plan. After what was described as a draft White House proposal was first leaked in USA Today, Rubio said over the weekend it would be ‘dead on arrival in Congress.’ By Monday, Obama insiders were walking the plan back and suggesting the leak was not intentional. One White House official told Fox News they were ‘surprised’ that the ‘draft’ language was given to the press and thought the publication was ‘unfortunate.’ ‘This was not the administration floating anything,’ the official said, adding that the White House reached out to Senate offices Saturday evening to stress their support for ongoing congressional talks.” (Rush Limbaugh correctly points out that the “fight over amnesty with Republicans is worth more to Obama than amnesty. ...It is my contention that the purpose of this plan being leaked is precisely to gum up the works. See, the next event on the political horizon that really matters is not the sequester. It’s not the next debt limit. It’s not the next this or that. It’s the 2014 House elections. The 2014 House elections are the next ball game. ...It is my theorem—it is my fervent, heartfelt belief—that even if full-fledged amnesty were passed tomorrow, it would not get the Democrats as many votes in an off-year election as fighting the Republicans over amnesty will get them. I think the Democrats know this. I think it’s part of their calculus. I think the Democrats think they get more support, they will get more votes by fighting the Republicans on amnesty rather than passing a bill that grants it. I think it’s all wrapped up in that. ...I mean, why mess around with some form of compromise now, when, in his view, he’ll get the full enchilada if he just waits a couple years, wins the House in 2014, and then goes for broke on everything that he wants? That’s just me. It’s just what I think.) [42690, 42692, 42693]

CNSNews.com reports, “[T]he federal government paid an average of \$4,000 in means-

tested benefits and refundable tax credits to Americans living in households with an average income of \$35,500.” (The information comes from a Congressional Budget Office study for which the most recent data was from 2006. The situation has certainly grown worse since then.) “In a refundable tax credit, the government pays the full credit to the individual even if the person has not paid an amount in taxes that is equal to the tax credit itself. Inflation-adjusted spending on these programs, CBO discovered, has grown more than ten-fold since 1972, rising from \$55 billion in that year to \$588 billion in 2012. CBO said this increase occurred both because of ‘increases in the number of people participating in these programs and increases in spending per participant.’” [42699]

After more than five years Politico finally figures out—or is willing to publicly admit—that Obama and his handlers are good at manipulating the mainstream media. Jim Vandehei and Mike Allen write that “Obama is a master at limiting, shaping and manipulating media coverage of himself and his White House. Not for the reason that conservatives suspect: namely, that a liberal press willingly and eagerly allows itself to get manipulated. Instead, the mastery mostly flows from a White House that has taken old tricks for shaping coverage (staged leaks, friendly interviews) and put them on steroids using new ones (social media, content creation, precision targeting). And it’s an equal opportunity strategy: Media across the ideological spectrum are left scrambling for access.” (Vandehei and Allen claim that conservatives are wrong to blame the liberal media for allowing its members to be manipulated, and in the very next sentence provide examples that prove those conservatives to be correct: “staged leaks and friendly interviews.” It is, of course, liberals in the media who fall for those staged leaks and conduct those friendly interviews. The truth is that the media wields tremendous power, and if it wants to destroy Obama it can—simply by reporting the truth. If Obama is a puppet master it is only because the journalists are willing to be his puppets. *The Obama Timeline* has certainly never been granted an interview with Obama or any close White House advisors—but that does not prevent the truth from being reported here.) [42708, 42714, 42715, 42723, 42725, 42757, 42802, 42809]

At NewsBusters.org Tom Blumer comments on the Politico story and its “insufferable dreck.” Blumer writes, “Their disingenuous complaint: The Obama administration supposedly has insurmountable technological and resource edges over the establishment press attempting to cover it. Because of those advantages, VandeHei and Allen claim, in essence (my words, except for the internal quote), ‘It’s not our fault that ... Obama is ‘a master at limiting, shaping and manipulating media coverage of himself and his White House.’ So if you dumb skeptics and conservatives think the problem is media bias, you’re wrong. We’re powerless against the puppet master.’ ... Obama doesn’t just have the establishment press on his side; he has them in his pocket. The real puppets in this story aren’t the recipients of Team Obama’s flood of emails and social media efforts. No, they’re people like VandeHei and Allen who feel it’s more productive to whine than it to get off their butts and do something about it. But, in my view, they don’t really want to do anything about it, so whining about the great and powerful Obama provides them the needed excuse for their negligence. ... The press’s willingness to become Obama and Democratic Party lapdogs has grown in nearly direct proportion to the growth of Fox News, center-right blogs and forums, and the Tea Party movement. The tools the

establishment press could be using to investigate goings-on in the Obama administration are far more powerful, and their ability to break news instantly has increased. Even absent the tools, nobody is forcing the lapdog press to tell us that the economy is acceptable and getting better when it isn't. Nobody forced the press to turn PolitiFact into a de facto propaganda arm of the administration and the left and then franchise the fraud to multiple outlets around the country. Nobody is forcing the press to concentrate on trivialities like Marco Rubio's water bottle at the expense of investigating Benghazi. No, they're doing this to themselves, for the most part gladly and willingly. Memo to VandeHei and Allen: Can the whine, guys. And for heaven's sake, get to work." At Breitbart.com John Nolte translates Vandehei and Allen: "*It's not our fault we [in the media] suck, Conservatives. It's just that we're powerless before Obama's awesomeness!*" [42715, 42802, 42809]

On *Special Report*, Charles Krauthammer comments on the Obama administration's refusal to approve the final leg of the Keystone XL pipeline: "Look, you know, [Obama] is in his second term. Normally, you then can put aside political or partisan considerations, you're not going to be re-elected and you would act in the national interest. The Keystone issue is the most open and shut case I have ever seen. Not only will it reduce our dependence on Hugo Chavez, in the Middle East, we would get it from Canada, and not only would it be an insult if we sort of slam the door on Canada, our closest ally, but refusing the pipeline, or not building it would have zero effect on the environment. The Canadians stumbled on the largest reserve of shale oil around; they are the Saudi Arabia of shale. They are not going to keep it in the ground if we don't input it. It's going to go to China, they have said so. So, it has zero effect on the climate, global warming, whatever you want. The fact that Obama is still mulling over this—I can understand last year, he wanted to hold his left-wing base, he wanted re-election. But now? After he has won re-election? It shows how—if he refuses it, which I think is still possible, it will really show how partisan considerations way outweigh the national interest. I think it would be shocking." At HotAir.com Erika Johnsen speculates, "I'm thinking that the most likely explanation [for the delay], however, is that they are looking for something major with which to couple the pipeline's approval—for instance, I doubt we've heard the last about that 'Energy Security Trust' initiative Obama mentioned in his State of the Union that would tax oil-and-gas companies (i.e., consumers) on behalf of funding anti-fossil fuel, renewable energy research... but good luck getting Congress to sign on for voluntarily jacking up people's energy prices (which amounts to a wildly regressive tax, by the way!)." (That is, Obama is holding the pipeline approval hostage and will approve it only if the Republicans agree to higher taxes on oil companies.) [42735, 42736]

On February 19 Politico reports, "The Supreme Court will hear a challenge to campaign finance laws limiting how much an individual can give to political campaigns, the Associated Press reported on Tuesday. The justices agreed to hear an appeal from an Alabama resident and the Republican National Committee who are arguing that it's unconstitutional to stop a donor from giving more than \$46,200 to political candidates and \$70,800 to political committees and PACs."

Obama returns to the White House after his golf weekend in Florida which, according to the *Daily Mail*, cost \$989,207. According to WeeklyStandard.com, Obama was accompanied on the flight (and throughout the weekend) by former companion and White House “body man” Reggie Love—one Obama’s purported gay lovers. [42704, 42705, 42709, 42716]

Congressman Jim Jordan (R-OH) writes board chairman Ben Bernanke to ask when the Federal Reserve expects to stop buying Treasury debt. Jordan writes, “...As the Federal Reserve System continues its bond-buying program into 2013, I am troubled by the corresponding effect that the Federal Reserve’s expanding portfolio could have on current and future growth. ...I am especially concerned that the historically low interest rates brought on by the Federal Reserve’s monetary policy have hampered economic growth by distorting traditional financial incentives. Younger Americans who have been working to save their income have faced meager returns in bank accounts slowing their overall accumulation of wealth. Likewise, older Americans living off interest-bearing accounts have been forced to move to riskier investments to maintain their standards of living. Most strikingly, by maintaining low interest rates, the Federal reserve has distorted the real cost of the national debt, effectively incentivizing the U.S. government to borrow and overspend.” (Bernanke has been buying U.S. debt—by expanding the money supply—to keep interest rates artificially low in an effort to make it easier for the government to engage in continued deficit spending. Although that means the government’s interest costs are kept lower than they should be, it also causes irreparable harm to 300+ million Americans—who find that the interest they earn on their savings cannot even keep up with inflation. Bernanke is essentially punishing Americans for acting responsibly.) [42781, 42782, 42783]

Obama announces that General John Allen, the former top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, will retire. Obama cites “health issues within his family” in Allen’s decision. (Allen is, in fact, being forced out because Obama found him too outspoken. Obama had previously ousted three generals heading the U.S. operations in Afghanistan: General David McKiernan, General Stanley McChrystal, and General David Petraeus.) [42739]

THonline.com reports the closure of the Star Restaurant and Ultra Lounge in Dubuque, Iowa. (The closing marks yet another business whose luck ran out after a visit from Obama. Others include Solyndra and Ray’s Hell Burger.) [42707, 42708]

The U.S. Supreme Court refuses to hear the Obama eligibility case *Edward Noonan, et al v. Deborah Bowen, California Secretary of State*. (A case is heard if four or more of the nine Justices agree to do so. The decision means that the Court has six or more Justices who do not care that Obama produced a forged birth certificate, used stolen Social Security numbers, and lied his way into the White House by defrauding the American people.) [42717, 42754, 42761]

During a “Facebook chat” Vice President Joe Biden answers a question from a woman

named Kate Ernest who expresses concern about her ability to protect herself if certain weapons are outlawed. Biden says, “If you wanna protect yourself get a double-barrel[ed] shotgun, have the shells, a 12-gauge shotgun, and I promise you, as I told my wife, we live in an area that’s wooded and somewhat secluded. I said, ‘Jill, if there’s ever a problem, just walk out on the balcony here, walk out, put that double barrel[ed] shot gun and fire two blasts outside the house. I promise you whosoever [sic] coming in is not gonna—you don’t need an AR-15. It’s harder to aim, it’s harder to use, and, in fact, you don’t need 30 rounds to protect yourself. Buy a shotgun! Buy a shotgun!” (Biden is a fool. Firing two shotgun shells into the ground or the air will not scare off a band of thugs with rifles and handguns and 30-round magazines who are intent on robbing a house and who know that they can take out the homeowner before he reloads a shotgun. Additionally, an AR-15 is not particularly hard to aim or use—which is why it is a popular weapon—and a shotgun has a powerful recoil while an AR-15 does not. Biden is not only a fool (firing warning shots when a shotgun holds only two shells to begin with is not the smartest move in the world) his advice would land his wife in jail because the use of deadly force to protect property is illegal in Maryland—where the Bidens live. In fact, it is illegal to fire a weapon within the city limits of Wilmington.) Ernest later tells Fox News, “It was poor advice [from Biden], and it comes off a little sexist.” Biden later tells a Connecticut audience, “No law-abiding citizen in the United States of America has any fear that their constitutional rights will be infringed in any way. None. Zero.” [42718, 42734, 42757, 42760, 42796, 42798, 42801, 42818, 42841]

Frank Fahrenkopf, co-chair of the Commission on Presidential Debates, states, “We made one mistake this time: Her name is Candy.” (That is, choosing CNN’s Candy Crowley to moderate one of the 2012 debates was a mistake because she injected her opinion into the debate—an opinion that was incorrect.) [42720, 42721, 42727, 42728]

WashingtonPost.com reports, “The average price of a gallon of regular gasoline has jumped 45 cents in the past 31 days, according to AAA, the fastest run-up since 2005. Retail gasoline prices have climbed for 33 days in a row. A month ago, a gallon of regular gasoline cost \$3.30; on Tuesday it stood at \$3.75 nationwide. ...’This is the most expensive we’ve seen gasoline in the dead of winter,’ which is usually a time of relatively low consumption, said John Townsend, a spokesman for AAA Mid-Atlantic.” [42729, 42730]

OrlandoSentinel.com reports, “Universal Orlando plans to stop offering medical insurance to part-time employees beginning next year, a move the resort says has been forced by the federal government’s health-care overhaul [ObamaCare]. The giant theme-park resort, which generates more than \$1 billion in annual revenue, began informing employees this month that it will offer health-insurance to part-timers ‘only until December 31, 2013.’” (Because of caps on certain benefits, the low-cost health insurance currently offered to part-time employees will be prohibited by ObamaCare as of January 1, 2014. ObamaCare essentially makes “Chevrolet” policies illegal and forces employers to provide “Cadillac” coverage. The predictable result will be that many employers will respond by canceling all coverage.) Meanwhile, Orlando-based Darden Restaurants (Olive Garden and Red Lobster) will eliminate limited-coverage plans at the end of 2013,

and Dunkin' Brands warns that ObamaCare's classification of part-time workers as full-time if they work at least 30 hours per week negatively affects the operations of Dunkin' Donuts. According to Newsmax.com, "Several restaurant chains—Wendy's, Taco Bell, and Denny's among them—have said they would respond to Obamacare by cutting worker hours [to fewer than 30 per week]." [42731, 42732, 42733, 42742]

CNSNews.com reports, "The Government Accountability Office (GAO) ranked Medicare on it's [sic] list of high financial risks facing government agencies, making an estimate of \$44 billion in improper payments made by the program in 2012. \$44 billion is roughly the same amount of cuts the sequester package is set to cut out of federal spending in 2013." (Obama travels around the country whining about the automatic sequester cuts he demanded when, in fact, he can offset those cuts simply by eliminating fraud and waste in the Medicare program—which he promised to do during the 2008 campaign.) The Obama administration has complained that the sequestration cuts would negatively impact the National Drug Intelligence Center—which is absurd considering that the center no longer exists. (It was eliminated in June 2012.) [42751, 42755, 42866, 43041]

On February 20 DailyCaller.com reports it has obtained documents that show "staffers for then-Sen. Chuck Hagel met repeatedly with a controversial pro-Iran lobby group [the National Iranian-American Council, an "Iranian front group], and some met with the organization's president." (Meanwhile, WeeklyStandard.com's Daniel Halper reports that the University of Nebraska-Omaha has denied access to Hagel's archives: about 1,700 boxes of documents and 1,000 audio and video recordings. Library dean Stephan R. Shorb says, "The archives are being organized so that they will be a resource for future researchers, and are not open to the public at this time." (Hagel could give the university permission to allow access to his files—but it is a safe bet that he will not.) [42724, 42737]

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) writes in *The Wall Street Journal*, "A week from now, a dramatic new federal policy is set to go into effect that threatens U.S. national security, thousands of jobs and more. In a bit of irony, ...Obama stood Tuesday with first responders who [Obama claims] could lose their jobs if the policy goes into effect. Most Americans are just hearing about this Washington creation for the first time: the sequester. What they might not realize from ...Obama's statements is that it is a product of [his] own failed leadership. The sequester is a wave of deep spending cuts scheduled to hit on March 1. Unless Congress acts, \$85 billion in across-the-board cuts will occur this year, with another \$1.1 trillion coming over the next decade. There is nothing wrong with cutting spending that much—we should be cutting even more—but the sequester is an ugly and dangerous way to do it. By law, the sequester focuses on the narrow portion of the budget that funds the operating accounts for federal agencies and departments, including the Department of Defense. Exempt is most entitlement spending—the large portion of the budget that is driving the nation's looming debt crisis." [42740, 42741]

"During the summer of 2011, as Washington worked toward a plan to reduce the deficit to allow for an increase in the federal debt limit, ...Obama and I very nearly came to a

historic agreement. Unfortunately our deal fell apart at the last minute when the president demanded an extra \$400 billion in new tax revenue—50% more than we had shaken hands on just days before. It was a disappointing decision by [Obama], but with just days until a breach of the debt limit, a solution was still required—and fast. I immediately got together with Senate leaders Harry Reid and Mitch McConnell to forge a bipartisan congressional plan. It would be called the Budget Control Act. The plan called for immediate caps on discretionary spending (to save \$917 billion) and the creation of a special House-Senate ‘super committee’ to find an additional \$1.2 trillion in savings. The deal also included a simple but powerful mechanism to ensure that the committee met its deficit-reduction target: if it didn’t, the debt limit would not be increased again in a few months. But ...Obama was determined not to face another debt-limit increase before his re-election campaign. Having just blown up one deal, [Obama] scuttled this bipartisan, bicameral agreement. His solution? A sequester.” [42740, 42741]

“...Having first proposed and demanded the sequester, it would make sense that [Obama] lead the effort to replace it. Unfortunately, he has put forth no detailed plan that can pass Congress, and the Senate—controlled by his Democratic allies—hasn’t even voted on a solution, let alone passed one. By contrast, House Republicans have twice passed plans to replace the sequester with common-sense cuts and reforms that protect national security. [Obama] has repeatedly called for even more tax revenue, but the American people don’t support trading spending cuts for higher taxes. They understand that the tax debate is now closed. [Obama] got his higher taxes—\$600 billion from higher earners, with no spending cuts—at the end of 2012. He also got higher taxes via ObamaCare. Meanwhile, no one should be talking about raising taxes when the government is still paying people to play videogames, giving folks free cellphones, and buying \$47,000 cigarette-smoking machines.” [42740, 42741]

“Washington must get serious about its spending problem. If it can’t reform America’s safety net and retirement-security programs, they will no longer be there for those who rely on them. Republicans’ willingness to do what is necessary to save these programs is well-known. But after four years, we haven’t seen the same type of courage from [Obama]. [His] sequester is the wrong way to reduce the deficit, but it is here to stay until Washington Democrats get serious about cutting spending. The government simply cannot keep delaying the inevitable and spending money it doesn’t have. So, as [Obama’s] outrage about the sequester grows in coming days, Republicans have a simple response: Mr. [Obama], we agree that your sequester is bad policy. What spending are you willing to cut to replace it?” [42740, 42741]

White House press secretary Jay Carney is asked about the thousands of workers in the private aviation industry who might lose their jobs if Obama is successful in eliminating the tax deduction for corporate jets. Carney responds, “I would say that making choices about budgets and deficit reduction always involves difficult choices. When it’s a choice between laying teachers off or affecting our national security or in the broader scheme, reforming our tax code in a way that eliminates these special interest tax breaks or subsidies, that is a better option. The question here is: What choices do we make? Do we choose to protect narrow special interest loopholes?” (Carney, and by extension Obama,

are essentially saying that the jobs of federal employees are more important than jobs in the private economy.) General Aviation Manufacturers Association CEO Pete Bunce responds, “These statements are totally outrageous and Mr. Carney should apologize. It’s completely offensive to refer to hardworking Americans as ‘difficult choices.’ This administration should stop the sound bites and political games and focus on fixing our economy.” (The “loophole” is nothing more than the tax code allowing general aviation aircraft to be depreciated over five years rather than the seven allowed for commercial planes.) [42807]

Rush Limbaugh comments on Boehner’s *Wall Street Journal* column: “I think that what is happening here is that Boehner wants to deal with Obama. I think Boehner writes this piece today because he does not want the sequester to happen. He does not want to stand fast. He does not want to hold the line. I think in writing this piece, Boehner is attempting to blame Obama for all of this. It is Obama's idea. The sequester is Obama's idea. So I think what Boehner’s trying to do is paint Obama with this. Now, I also know that the ruling class, the ruling elites in both parties in Washington, think that all this limited government stuff is caca. They don’t believe in it. They don’t think it's possible. They’re not serious about budget cuts. They’re certainly not serious about reducing the size of government. They’re not serious about limiting its scope.” (The more conservative Republicans would just as soon allow the sequester cuts to be implemented because they don’t think Obama, his fellow Democrats, or the Republican “establishment” will agree to any significant cuts. But Obama knows that Boehner is willing to deal, even if it means Obama will come out the winner, because Boehner understand that the media has the power to magnify the problems of any sequester cuts and portray the GOP as mean-spirited. The question is whether there are enough conservative Republicans in the House to prevent Boehner from negotiating a terrible deal.) [42750]

Former Congressman Jesse Jackson, Jr. pleads guilty to charges that he and his wife illegally spent \$750,000 in campaign funds on personal items. Jackson’s wife Sandra has been charged with filing false income tax returns for 2006–2011. (Both Jackson and his wife agreed to plead guilty in exchange for lighter sentences.) CNN displays a graphic: “Jesse Jackson Jr. Pleads Guilty, Sad Day for the Civil Rights Community.” (CNN does not explain what, if anything, Jackson ever did for the “civil rights community” or why anyone should be sad that a lawbreaker and shakedown artist is being held responsible for his crimes. In fact, members of the “civil rights community” who donated to Jackson’s campaigns should be outraged that he essentially stole their money—to buy a \$43,000 Rolex watch and another \$700,000+ in personal items.) [42743, 42752, 42759, 42770, 42792]

Evan Todd, a wounded survivor of the April 20, 1999 Columbine High School shootings, sends Obama a letter charging that his gun control proposals would be ineffective and a violation of the rights of U.S. citizens. Todd states, “First, a universal background check will have many devastating effects. It will arguably have the opposite impact of what you propose. If adopted, criminals will know that they can not pass a background check legally, so they will resort to other avenues. With the conditions being set by this initiative, it will create a large black market for weapons and will support more criminal

activity and funnel additional money into the hands of thugs, criminals, and people who will do harm to American citizens. Second, universal background checks will create a huge bureaucracy that will cost an enormous amount of tax payers dollars and will straddle us with more debt. We cannot afford it now, let alone create another function of government that will have a huge monthly bill attached to it. Third, is a universal background check system possible without universal gun registration? If so, please define it for us. Universal registration can easily be used for universal confiscation. ...It is not impossible to think that a tyrant, to the likes of Mao, Castro, Che, Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, and others, could possibly rise to power in America. It could be five, ten, twenty, or one hundred years from now—but future generations have the natural right to protect themselves from tyrannical government just as much as we currently do. It is safe to assume that this liberty that our forefathers secured has been a thorn in the side of would-be tyrants ever since the Second Amendment was adopted.” [42745, 42746, 42771]

“The evidence is very clear pertaining to the inadequacies of the assault weapons ban. It had little to no effect when it was in place from 1994 until 2004. It was during this time that I personally witnessed two fellow students murder twelve of my classmates and one teacher. The assault weapons ban did not deter these two murderers, nor did the other thirty-something laws that they broke. Gun ownership is at an all time high. And although tragedies like Columbine and Newtown are exploited by ideologues and special-interest lobbying groups, crime is at an all time low. The people have spoken. Gun store shelves have been emptied. Gun shows are breaking attendance records. Gun manufacturers are sold out and back ordered. Shortages on ammo and firearms are countrywide. The American people have spoken and are telling you that our Second Amendment shall not be infringed. Virginia Tech was the site of the deadliest school shooting in U.S. history. Seung-Hui Cho used two of the smallest caliber hand guns manufactured and a handful of ten round magazines. There are no substantial facts that prove that limited magazines would make any difference at all. Second, this is just another law that endangers law-abiding citizens. I’ve heard you ask, ‘why does someone need 30 bullets to kill a deer?’ Let me ask you this: Why would you prefer criminals to have the ability to out-gun law-abiding citizens? Under this policy, criminals will still have their 30-round magazines, but the average American will not. Whose side are you on? Lastly, when did the government get into the business of regulating ‘needs?’ This is yet another example of government overreaching and straying from its intended purpose.” [42745, 42746, 42771]

“Mr. [Obama], these are your words: ‘And finally, Congress needs to help, rather than hinder, law enforcement as it does its job. We should get tougher on people who buy guns with the express purpose of turning around and selling them to criminals. And we should severely punish anybody who helps them do this.’ Why don’t we start with [Attorney General] Eric Holder and thoroughly investigate the [Operation] Fast and Furious program? Furthermore, the vast majority of these mass murderers bought their weapons legally and jumped through all the hoops—because they were determined to murder. Adding more hoops and red tape will not stop these types of people. It doesn’t now—so what makes you think it will in the future? Criminals who cannot buy guns

legally just resort to the black market. Criminals and murderers will always find a way. ...[I]n theory, your initiatives and proposals sound warm and fuzzy—but in reality they are far from what we need. Your initiatives seem to punish law-abiding American citizens and enable the murderers, thugs, and other lowlifes who wish to do harm to others. Let me be clear: These ideas are the worst possible initiatives if you seriously care about saving lives and also upholding your oath of office. There is no dictate, law, or regulation that will stop bad things from happening—and you know that. Yet you continue to push the rhetoric. Why?” [42745, 42746, 42771]

“You said, ‘If we can save just one person it is worth it.’ Well here are a few ideas that will save more than one individual: First, forget all of your current initiatives and 23 purposed executive orders. They will do nothing more than impede law-abiding citizens and breach the intent of the Constitution. Each initiative steals freedom, grants more power to an already-overreaching government, and empowers and enables criminals to run amok. Second, press Congress to repeal the ‘Gun Free Zone Act.’ Don’t allow America’s teachers and students to be endangered one-day more. These parents and teachers have the natural right to defend themselves and not be looked at as criminals. There is no reason teachers must disarm themselves to perform their jobs. There is also no reason a parent or volunteer should be disarmed when they cross the school line. This is your chance to correct history and restore liberty. This simple act of restoring freedom will deter would-be murderers and for those who try, they will be met with resistance. Mr. [Obama], do the right thing, restore freedom, and save lives. Show the American people that you stand with them and not with thugs and criminals.” [42745, 42746, 42771]

DailyCaller.com reveals some of the detail of Obama’s proposed immigration “reform” legislation: It “would provide work permits and a ‘path to citizenship’ to illegal immigrants who have fled police and or who await deportation in jail. It would also provide a pathway for immigrants whose convictions are subsequently vacated, and for those who have been jailed for fewer than five years, according to the drafts’ supporters. The draft, which was leaked on Sunday, would also provide illegal immigrants with many new legal rights, and create a cornucopia of billing opportunities for immigration lawyers. For example, one section allows illegal immigrants who have committed crimes to stay in the country until their courtroom appeals are settled, perhaps years after their deportation was ordered. ‘Sec. 123 of the White House bill would allow immigrants to exhaust their [criminal] appeals before being removed on the basis of a criminal conviction,’ said a Feb. 19 tweet from Ben Winograd, an immigration lawyer in D.C. Winograd formerly worked at the American Immigration Council. Other sections of the draft bill would allow judges to provide illegals with taxpayer-funded lawyers and fine government immigration lawyers. ...Obama’s draft law would also wipe out all state and local rules that penalize illegal immigrants, sharply reducing the ability of voters in every state, county and city to protect their communities if federal authorities decline to enforce immigration law.” Steve Camarota, research director of the Center for Immigration Studies, says Obama’s proposal “has outsourced the formation of immigration policy to the American Immigration Lawyers Association.” [42747]

Florida Governor Rick Scott caves in and agrees to the Medicaid expansion called for in ObamaCare. Florida does not have a state income tax but it may soon need one to cover the additional burden of the Medicaid expansion—which may be at least \$20 billion over 10 years. The state already has 3.3 million Medicaid recipients, and another million may be added under the expansion. Under ObamaCare the states are expected to cover all uninsured individuals up to 133 percent of the poverty level—but many individuals will not be able to find a physician willing to treat them for the low reimbursement rates of Medicaid. (Sun-Sentinel.com reports that according to a Kaiser Health News study “only 59 percent of the state’s physicians are taking new Medicaid patients.”) [42748, 42749, 42775, 42813, 42815, 42832, 42864]

Examiner.com reports, “North Carolina’s Civitas Institute has revealed that the North Carolina State Board of Elections [SBE] and the Obama campaign conspired to register at least 11,000 people via the internet in violation of state law. This has been confirmed through records requests filed with all of North Carolina’s 100 counties. The counting is not yet complete. North Carolina does not allow online voting, but according to Civitas, SBE staff authorized an Obama campaign website, Gottaregister.com, to use a web-based registration program. The SBE’s chief lawyer responded to the charge with a plainly disingenuous 1984-newspeak answer: Wright repeatedly denied that the SBE allowed online voter registration, insisting that it was ‘web-based voter registration’ ...instead, as if there could be a ‘web-based’ process that wasn’t online. ...According to Civitas, the Obama campaign may have been paying Allpoint [Voter Services] per registration, in violation of federal law. They also raise the possibility that Obama’s campaign may have been prioritizing registrations, accepting some electronically and requiring others to print and turn in their registrations by mail. Finally, county election officials reported that many of Allpoint’s registration forms appeared to have very similar signatures. George Gilbert, Board of Elections Director for Guilford County, NC, said Allpoint registrations were ‘immediately suspect.’ While the Obama campaign couldn’t directly control party affiliation of registrants, 68 percent of the registrations were for Democratic voters and 21 percent were unaffiliated. Only 10 percent were Republican voters.” [42753]

On *The Tonight Show*, Jay Leno quips, “Hey, over the weekend ...Obama played golf with Tiger Woods and Tiger said [Obama] was a very good golfer for a guy who only plays five days a week... Actually, do you know what [Obama’s] handicap is? Does anybody know? [He] doesn’t understand economics. That’s the handicap.” [42763]

On February 21 the Department of Labor reports that there were 362,000 first-time claims for unemployment benefits in the week ending February 16—an increase of 20,000 over the prior week. The four-week moving average is 360,750. [42758, 42772]

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar signs a directive placing off limits 28 percent of the “estimated economically recoverable oil” in the National Petroleum Reserve in Alaska. [43141]

Newsmax.com reports, “More than a dozen lawmakers who oppose ...Obama’s plan to expand background checks to all gun-buyers are to be targeted in a series of online

advertising as part of a national day of action Friday. Organizing for Action [OFA], the successor group to Obama's campaign backers [formerly 'Obama for America' and then 'Organizing for America'], plans to spend up to \$100,000 on the campaign, and the national day of action marks the first test of the group's ability to mobilize [Obama's] 2.2 million campaign volunteers to push for legislative change. Organizers have not disclosed which lawmakers will be included in the ads. OFA plans to sponsor more than 100 events in 80 or more Congressional districts Friday to demand action on the issue. The group says it expects thousands of people to participate in the events, which will include vigils, letter-writing campaigns, and news conferences." (Jim Messina, Obama's 2012 campaign manager, now heads OFA.) [42762]

WesternJournalism.com reports, "State Farm, the nationally-known insurance chain headquartered in Bloomington, Illinois, has apparently had its fill of 'The Land of Lincoln's' confiscatory taxes. The 800 million dollar company is reported to have purchased 'substantial workspace' in the Dallas, Texas area. The giant insurance firm's workers are being kept in the dark reportedly to avoid 'alarming them;' but is it their workers or the State of Illinois they would like to keep in the dark about this move? If this doesn't signal State Farm's coming dash out of Illinois's clutches, what could it mean? A knowledgeable Dallas real estate insider has called this impending move 'a major business relocation' of record-breaking proportions. The numbers involved are approximately 2.5 million square feet of workspace and thousands of workers. No company in Dallas' history has made a move this large. Texas isn't the only state State Farm is running to. There has also been a report that it has leased office space in Atlanta. The combined amount of both new locations roughly equals the 3.5 million square feet it has in Bloomington." [42764]

At Townhall.com political editor Guy Benson writes, "General rule of thumb, guys: No matter what the facts may demonstrate, it's probably Republicans' fault. According to Pew Research, a plurality (49 percent) of Americans want Congress to delay the automatic spending cuts scheduled to kick in one week from tomorrow. Forty percent say the cuts should move forward as planned. If no deal is struck, almost half of those polled are prepared to pin the blame on Congressional Republicans, while less than a third would point the finger at [Obama]. ... This is a great gig, if you can get it. You conceive of a bad idea, demand that it be given the force of law, sign it into existence, and adamantly oppose efforts to alter or undo it—then when it no longer serves your fleeting political purposes, you drop the whole thing in the lap of your adversaries, and most people buy it. Let's face it: Average people don't know what sequestration is, what it would do, or why it even exists." [42795]

On Al "Tawana Brawley" Sharpton's radio program Obama says, "Well, my sense [of Republicans] is that their basic view is that nothing is important enough to raise taxes on wealthy individuals or corporations. And they would prefer to see these kinds of cuts that could slow down our recovery over closing tax loopholes. And that's the thing that binds their party together at this point. This is a major argument, obviously, we've been having for the last three years." (Obama is ignoring the fact that Republicans agreed to raise taxes in the wealthiest Americans by \$600 billion just weeks earlier—and he has yet to

agree to any significant budget cuts.) Brendan Buck, an aide to House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH), responds, “The American people expect more of [Obama] than petty cheap shots. We can have serious disagreements about how best to create jobs without asserting nefarious motives.” [42797, 42799, 42808]

CNSNews.com reports, “A State Department ‘worldwide caution’ updating U.S. citizens about potential terror threats has little to say about the fact that most of the terrorist groups targeting Americans profess themselves to be inspired by Islam. The 2,000-plus word memo released this week does not use the word ‘Muslim’ at all. ‘Islam’ is used only where it appears in the actual name of a militant group (such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan), and in reference to ‘anti-Islamic videos and cartoons,’ which the department says were linked to some anti-Western violence last September.” [42765, 42766]

Former Senator James DeMint, the new president of the Heritage Foundation, says Obama “has lost contact with reality. He doesn’t see the spending and the debt as a problem. We are approaching a real meltdown if we don’t get control of it. ...[Obama] has a difficult time with the truth. We have not cut any spending in Washington. We’ve doubled spending in the last 10 years. He keeps talking about ‘revenues,’ which is their new code word for more tax increases. We don’t have a revenue problem. If we would cut spending, you would see the private sector grow and even more revenues to the federal government. [Obama] talks about a fair and balanced approach. American businesses and individuals now have some of the highest rates in the world. It’s hard to compete internationally. He’s still talking about more tax increases.” [42767]

On Fox News Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) gives Obama some advice on where he can start cutting federal spending: “In the military they have \$5.2 million they spent on goldfish—studying goldfish to see how democratic they were and if we could learn about democracy from goldfish. I would give [Obama] the authority to go ahead and cut all \$5 million in goldfish studies. I would give him more authority if he’s willing to use it to cut off some of this nonsense, but I don’t really trust a lot of what’s going on when I see him putting local firemen and policemen behind them and saying, ‘Republicans are going to make them lose their job.’ ...The sequester was his idea—he signed it into law and he needs to take responsibility and he needs to act responsibly and we’ve given him a list of cuts he could do without laying off anybody.” (Meanwhile, Paul is returning \$600,000 in unspent office funds to the Treasury Department. He states, “I ran to stop the reckless spending, and I pledged to the people of Kentucky that I would work to keep their hard-earned money out of the hands of Washington bureaucrats whose irresponsible spending has threatened our country’s economic health.”) [42785, 42786]

On February 22 Jonah Goldberg reports at Townhall.com that “House leadership is reportedly working on legislation that would force Obama to choose where the \$85 billion in [sequestration] cuts should come from.” (Many House Republicans are willing to allow the sequester cuts to go into effect, but in response to Obama’s complaint that the cuts will be “across the board” they will give him the authority to choose which agencies and programs must trim their spending. That effectively prevents Obama from

blaming Republicans for “kicking children out of the Head Start program.” If Obama does not want to cut that program, for example, he should cut a different program instead. The Senate may reject such legislation or Obama may even veto it, but they then become responsible for the impact of the automatic cuts. Of course, Obama will still have the benefit of the mainstream media blaming the Republicans, but at some point the public may begin to recognize that it is the White House that is effectively blocking all spending cuts.) Goldberg writes, “It’s unlikely that Obama will take such a deal, since he and the Democratic-controlled Senate twice rejected legislation that replaced sequester cuts with more reasonable ones. Obama wants more tax hikes and thinks he can convince the country to accept them if the choice is between what he calls reasonable revenue increases and catastrophic cuts that will let people die in the streets, leave children to go hungry and illiterate, and allow poisoned food to sit rancid on supermarket shelves. And he’s not crazy for [thinking so]. This strategy has worked time and time again. If an agency has a billion-dollar budget and someone proposes cutting a dollar from its scheduled increase in funding, that dollar will be the one earmarked for the screw needed to keep a bridge from collapsing on a grade school’s Thanksgiving parade.” [42773, 42785, 42794]

Also at Townhall.com, David Limbaugh writes, “...Obama’s demagoguery and fear-mongering on his sequester cuts are breathtaking, even for him. Lest you think I am engaging in hyperbole, let me give you the dictionary definition of a demagogue. One definition is ‘a political leader who seeks support by appealing to popular desires and prejudices rather than by using rational argument.’” [42774]

WND.com reports, “In an apparent threat to Second Amendment rights, some American military veterans have received a letter from the Veterans Administration warning that their competency to handle their own affairs is under review, and if determined by government bureaucrats to be ‘incompetent,’ they would be barred from possessing weapons. The issue is being raised by the United States Justice Foundation, which defends civil and religious rights.” The form letter states, “The evidence indicates that you are not able to handle your VA benefit payments because of a physical or mental condition. We propose to rate you incompetent for VA purposes. This means we must decide if you are able to handle your VA benefit payments. We will base our decision on all the evidence we already have including any other evidence you sent to us. ...A determination of incompetency will prohibit you from purchasing, possessing, receiving, or transporting a firearm or ammunition. If you knowingly violate any of these prohibitions, you may be fined, imprisoned, or both.” The United States Justice Foundation is using the Freedom of Information Act to get the Department of Veterans Affairs to “disclose the criteria they are using to place veterans on the background check list that keeps them from exercising their Second Amendment rights.” [42780]

The United States Justice Foundation executive director Michael Connelly notes that the letter “provides no specifics on the reasons for the proposed finding of incompetency; just that is based on a determination by someone in the VA. In every state in the United States no one can be declared incompetent to administer their own affairs without due process of law and that usually requires a judicial hearing with evidence being offered to

prove to a judge that the person is indeed incompetent. This is a requirement of the Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that states that no person shall 'be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process of law.' Obviously, the Department of Veterans Affairs can't be bothered by such impediments as the Constitution, particularly since they are clearly pushing to fulfill one of Obama's main goals, the disarming of the American people. Janet Napolitano has already warned law enforcement that some of the most dangerous among us are America's heroes, our veterans, and now according to this letter from the VA they can be prohibited from buying or even possessing a firearm because of a physical or mental disability. ...[There] are no clear criteria for the VA to declare a veteran incompetent. It can be the loss of a limb in combat, a head injury, a diagnosis of PTSD, or even a soldier just telling someone at the VA that he or she is depressed over the loss of a buddy in combat. In none of these situations has the person been found to be a danger to themselves or others. If that was the case than all of the Americans who have suffered from PTSD following the loss of a loved one or from being in a car accident would also have to be disqualified from owning firearms. It would also mean that everyone who has ever been depressed for any reason should be disarmed. In fact, many of the veterans being deprived of their rights have no idea why it is happening. We have to ask who will be next. If you are receiving a Social Security check will you get one of these letters? Will the government declare that you are incompetent because of your age and therefore banned from firearm ownership. It certainly fits in with the philosophy and plans of the Obama administration." [42780]

MarketWatch.com reports that, because of the added costs of ObamaCare, increasing numbers of employers are considering dropping spouse coverage from their employee insurance plans: "By denying coverage to spouses, employers not only save the annual premiums, but also the new fees that went into effect as part of the Affordable Care Act. This year, companies have to pay [a new ObamaCare fee of] \$1 or \$2 'per life' covered on their plans, a sum that jumps to \$65 in 2014. And health law guidelines proposed recently mandate coverage of employees' dependent children (up to age 26), but husbands and wives are optional... While couples generally prefer to be on the same health plan, companies often find that spouses are more expensive to insure than their own employees. That's because, say benefits experts, covered spouses tend to be women, who as a group not only spend more on health care, but also have more free time to go to the doctor if they don't work." [42789]

HotAir.com reports that the Obama administration appears willing to provide Republicans with more information on Benghazi in exchange for not releasing additional information on its drone program. Some argue that the move is intended to help Obama gain approval of his CIA director nominee John Brennan. In fact, Obama needs to keep secret the drone memoranda which, if released, would make it clear to the citizens of Yemen and Pakistan, and other countries, that their governments have been complicit in the drone strikes. HotAir: "If a memo leaks and lays out in gory detail just how deeply involved the Pakistani government is in facilitating U.S. drone attacks, at a minimum you risk Islamabad pulling out of the arrangement in embarrassment and leaving the CIA's hands tied. Beyond that, the White House's absolute worst-case foreign-policy scenario is seeing Pakistan destabilized by jihadis and its frighteningly large nuclear stockpile

ending up in play. Could be that O and his advisors have concluded that, with anti-Americanism peaking there, it's simply too risky to further weaken the government with an unpopular revelation? ...Or maybe this is all a smokescreen and the real reason Obama doesn't want the memos released is because they're a bit more candid about the death toll—which could be much, much higher than Americans have been led to believe.” [42790]

Politico wonder if Obama isn't “overplaying his sequester hand. ...Obama's greatest adversary in the latest budget battle isn't the Republican leadership in Congress—it's his confidence in his own ability to force a win. He has been so certain of his campaign skills that he didn't open a line of communication with House Speaker John Boehner and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell until Thursday, a week before the spending ax hits. And when they did finally hear from Obama, the calls were perfunctory, with no request to step up negotiations or invitations to the White House. That's because Obama's all-in on an outside strategy, doing just about everything other than holding serious talks with Republicans. In the last two days alone, he's courted local TV anchors, called in a select group of White House correspondents to talk off-the-record, chatted up black broadcasters, and announced plans to stump next week at Virginia's Newport News Shipyard. Throughout, he's talked in tough terms that signal little interest in compromise—or suggestion of backing down. He's navigating a thin line. Obama is convinced he's got the upper hand on Republicans. Yet he can go only so long before he risks being perceived as a main actor in Washington's dysfunction, threatening a core element of his political brand—and the fragile economic recovery he's struggled to maintain.” (Although the media has sometimes referred to him as “no drama Obama,” he in fact excels at creating drama—and making it look as though someone else was the instigator.) [42791]

USNews.com reports that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is set to propose carbon dioxide standards—1,000 pounds of CO₂ per megawatt hour—that will effectively make it impossible to open any new coal-burning power plants in the United States. One expert says the industry is “kind of 50-50 split on whether” Obama will apply the same standards to existing power plants. “[M]y gut is that that would cause such a disaster, it would be Armageddon. I'd be stunned if they went down that road.” [42800]

FoxNews.com reports, “A four-year FBI investigation into the transfer of classified weapons technology to China and other countries from NASA's Ames Research Center is being stonewalled by government officials, sources tell FoxNews.com. Documents obtained by FoxNews.com, which summarize these and other allegations and were given to congressional sources last week by a whistle-blower, described how a ‘secret grand jury’ was to be convened in February 2011 to hear testimony from informants in the case, including a senior NASA engineer. But federal prosecutor Gary Fry was removed from the case, which was then transferred from one office in the Northern District of California to another where, according to the documents, ‘this case now appears to be stalled.’ ‘The information is staggering,’ the whistle-blower told FoxNews.com.” [42804]

Newsmax.com reports, “A group of 23 Republicans on the House Judiciary Committee Friday sent letters to ...Obama and Attorney General Eric Holder demanding existing gun laws be enforced before additional limitations are passed. The committee, which has held hearings in recent weeks on ways to prevent gun violence, again called into focus statistics that show a dramatic drop in federal weapons prosecutions over the past decade. The letters cite a Syracuse University study that show firearms prosecutions under President George W. Bush peaked at 11,015 in 2004 while the Obama administration has prosecuted about 7,774 firearms cases in 2012.” Congressman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) comments, “A prosecution rate this low is not indicative of a Department of Justice that takes the act of illegally attempting to acquire a firearm seriously.” The letter notes, “In a city like Chicago, which saw 506 murders last year, it is appalling that the U.S. attorney’s office in that jurisdiction only prosecuted 25 federal firearms cases during 2011.” [42811]

On February 23 WashingtonPost.com reports, “A bipartisan group of senators is on the verge of a deal that would expand background checks to all private firearms sales with limited exemptions, but significant disagreements remain on the issue of keeping records of private gun sales, according to aides familiar with the talks.” [42817]

TheBlaze.com reports on the mainstream media’s “McCarthyism” attacks on Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) for his daring to criticize leftist ideology in general and Obama in particular: “Cruz, the New Yorker [magazine] reported, said in a 2010 speech that ...Obama ‘would have made a perfect president of Harvard Law School’ because ‘there were fewer declared Republicans in the faculty when we were there than Communists! There was one Republican. But there were 12 who would say they were Marxists who believed in the Communists overthrowing the United States government.’ Cruz attended Harvard Law after Obama. ‘It’s curious that the New Yorker would dredge up a three-year-old speech and call it ‘news,’” Frazier said in a statement to TheBlaze late Friday. ‘Regardless, Senator Cruz’s substantive point was absolutely correct: in the mid-1990s, the Harvard Law School faculty included numerous self-described proponents of ‘critical legal studies’—a school of thought explicitly derived from Marxism—and they far outnumbered Republicans.’” [42821]

At IsraelNationalNews.com Mark Langfan writes that Defense Secretary nominee Chuck Hagel, “at Obama’s bidding, plans to send troops to Judea and Samaria (the ‘West Bank’) where they would soon be victims of Hamas terror. It’s in writing. An investigative report. There is only one reason that Chuck Hagel was picked by ...Obama to be US Defense Secretary, and why Obama will go nuclear to get him confirmed: Hagel is the only person alive now dumb enough to deploy US ‘peacekeeping’ troops to what is surely a ‘West Bank’ deathtrap. Don’t believe me??! Well, in early 2009, two years after Hamas violently took over Gaza, Hagel along with a ragged has-been crew of ‘Israel Lasters’ had some strong ‘recommendations’ for the incoming ...Obama. ...Obama’s determination in confirming Hagel is based on Obama’s belief that Hagel will cripple Israel at any price: including the deaths of thousands of US soldiers at the hands of Hamas suicide bombs in the Palestinian Authority.” (In April 2009 Hagel and others recommended to Obama that U.S. troops, under a United Nations mandate, should be sent to Israel to patrol a new Palestinian state. AtlasShrugs.com’s Pamela Geller

comments, “And American Jewish orgs are silent on this nomination? Obama’s choice tells you everything you need to know about his position on Israel, freedom, and our very way of life.”) [42828, 42829]

On February 24 Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) appears on *Fox News Sunday* and states, “There absolutely will not be record-keeping of legitimate gun owners” in any federal legislation. “That will kill this bill.” (Obama and many of his fellow Democrats want a national gun registry to make gun confiscation easier in the future.) On the upcoming sequester cuts, Coburn says, “There’s easy ways [sic] to cut this money that the American people will never feel. What you hear is an outrage because nobody wants to cut spending.It will be somewhat painful, but not cutting spending is going to be disastrous for our country.” [42816, 42830]

On *Face the Nation*, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan follows the Obama’s the-sky-is-falling strategy of saying the sequestration cuts will be disastrous. Duncan states, “There are literally teachers now who are getting pink slips, who are getting notices that they can’t come back this fall.” (*The Washington Post* later reports, “When he was pressed in a White House briefing Wednesday to come up with an example, Duncan named a single county in West Virginia and acknowledged, ‘whether it’s all sequester-related, I don’t know.’ And, as it turns out, it isn’t.” The school district states, “Those five or six jobs would already be gone regardless of sequestration.” “In addition,” notes the *Post*, “the county notified all of its Head Start teachers that they may be out of a job, not because of sequestration, but because the Obama administration had recently labeled the Kanawha County program ‘deficient,’ a designation that requires it to compete for funding instead of getting an automatic renewal.” At the February 27 briefing, Duncan also says, “Kids are gonna get hurt, kids are gonna get hurt. That’s just the reality.”) [42953, 42957, 42972]

The *Chicago Tribune* reports that National Security Council spokesman Tommy Vietor is leaving the Obama administration March 1. [42823, 42824]

On MSNBC former White House press secretary Robert Gibbs states that he was ordered not to admit to reporters that it had a secret drone warfare program: “When I went through the process of becoming press secretary, one of the things, one of the first things they told me was, ‘You’re not even to acknowledge the drone program. You’re not even to discuss that it exists.’” [42825, 42836, 42903]

Afghan President Hamid Karzai orders all U.S. troops to leave his country’s Wardak province within two weeks. According to the BBC, “The decision was being taken due to allegations of disappearances and torture by Afghans considered to be part of US special forces, said a spokesman for Hamid Karzai. The strategically significant, central province of Wardak has been the recent focus of counter-insurgency operations.” (At AtlasShrugs.com Pamela Geller calls the decision “Another egregious demonstration of America’s (lack of) standing in the world under the weak and feckless stooge in the White House. Obama said Afghanistan was the ‘good’ war, the war we should be

fighting. Just more of his mendacious campaign rhetoric. But this is awful—all that blood and treasure to get our asses kicked out of Talibanistan.”) [42826, 42827, 42842]

The Obama administration continues its fear-mongering strategy with the issue of the March 1 sequestration cuts, holding a conference call with reporters to describe how the world would end if \$0+ billion had to be trimmed from \$3.6 trillion in spending, and sending lackeys to the Sunday talk shows to do the same. On CNN’s *State of the Union* Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood warns that air traffic controllers will have to be laid off. (LaHood does not explain why the administration cannot find less critical workers to lay off instead. Federal spending is about 20 percent greater than it was in 2008. With the sequester “cuts” it will still be 18–19 percent higher—and no air traffic controllers were laid off in 2008 for lack of funds.) [42830, 42833, 42834, 42846, 42847, 42848, 42849]

On *Face the Nation* Secretary of Education Arne Duncan essentially admits that he is incompetent, saying, “We don’t have any ability with dumb cuts like this to figure out what the right thing to do is. It just means a lot more children will not get the kinds of services and opportunities they need and as many as 40,000 teachers could lose their jobs.” (Duncan is lying. Public teachers are paid from local income, sales, and property tax revenue—not by the federal government. They are not employed by the federal government.) Michael Steel, a spokesman for House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH), says, “The White House needs to spend less time explaining to the press how bad the sequester will be and more time actually working to stop it.” *WashingtonTimes.com* notes that “the GOP-controlled House twice last year passed bills to replace the sequester with spending cuts, only to have the measures die in the Democrat-controlled Senate.” Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) states, “What we still don’t know is whether [Obama] has a plan for smarter, more common-sense cuts to the waste and endless growth in Washington. Rather than issuing last-minute press releases on cuts to first responders or troop training or airport security, he should propose smarter ways to cut Washington spending.” (According to the Treasury Department and the Census Bureau, between 2008 and 2012 federal spending increased by \$2,437.64 per U.S. household.) [42830, 42833, 42834, 42846, 42857, 42848, 42849]

On *Meet the Press*, CNBC financial analyst Maria Bartiromo says the fuss about the sequestration cuts are exaggerated: “From an economic standpoint, \$85 billion is not really going to do much in terms of impact. I think Wall Street is seeing this as scare tactics, because if the market really believed the economy was going to be paralyzed on March 1, we would not be trading near-record highs. That’s exactly where we are right now. ...But from an economic standpoint, I think Wall Street, business has been anticipating this. This is not going to be a shocker, and it certainly is not going to have tremendous impact in terms of broad economic growth.” [42838]

DailyCaller.com reports, “A professional escort who travels the East Coast seeing clients in cities from Miami to Boston has identified a photo of Senator Bob Menendez as a man who paid her for sex. The woman, in her late 30s, told The Daily Caller prior to seeing Menendez’s photo that she had been paid to provide sexual favors to several U.S.

senators, including a New Jersey Democrat and other politicians who are no longer living. The escort, who earns money having sex with men in upscale hotel rooms, said during an in-person interview that many of her wealthy and powerful customers use pseudonyms when arranging for her services, and when meeting her in person.” Shown a photo of Menendez, the woman “identified him as a former client.” (Menendez has also been accused of using underage prostitutes while on trips to the Dominican Republic. The Obama administration and the media hid that information from the public until after Menendez won reelection in November 2012.) Lacking any substantive defense, Menendez accuses Republicans and DailyCaller.com of racism: “Now we face anonymous, faceless, nameless individuals from right-wing sources seeking to destroy a lifetime of work. And their smears are false. I have worked too hard and too long in the vineyards, too long with my hands, for the harvest to be soured. ...In the end, I believe that justice will overcome the forces of darkness.” [42835, 42837, 42863]

Newsmax.com reports, “The National Rifle Association is using a Justice Department memo it obtained to argue in ads that the Obama administration believes its gun control plans won’t work unless the government seizes firearms and requires national gun registration—ideas the White House has not proposed and does not support. The NRA’s assertion and its obtaining of the memo in the first place underscore the no-holds-barred battle under way as Washington’s fight over gun restrictions heats up. The memo, under the name of one of the Justice Department’s leading crime researchers, critiques the effectiveness of gun control proposals, including some of ...Obama’s. A Justice Department official called the memo an unfinished review of gun violence research and said it does not represent administration policy. The memo says requiring background checks for more gun purchases could help, but also could lead to more illicit weapons sales. It says banning assault weapons and high capacity ammunition magazines produced in the future but exempting those already owned by the public, as Obama has proposed, would have limited impact because people now own so many of those items. It also says that even total elimination of assault weapons would have little overall effect on gun killings because assault weapons account for a limited proportion of those crimes. The nine-page document says the success of universal background checks would depend in part on ‘requiring gun registration,’ and says gun buybacks would not be effective ‘unless massive and coupled with a ban.’” (In other words, the Obama administration has discussed full gun registration and possible gun confiscation—while denying that it would ever consider doing so.) [42854, 42855]

At the annual Academy Awards telecast, self-promoting Hollywood leftists watch self-promoting Michelle Obama appear via satellite video from the White House to present the Oscar for best motion picture of 2012. She covers the gay and black bases, saying that movies are inspirational “no matter who we are or what we look like or who we love.” Strangely, she adds that movies “are especially important for our young people.” (Perhaps Michelle Obama thinks that young people need to be brainwashed into believing Steven Spielberg’s nonsense about the 16th president or that Lincoln swore like a drunken sailor—even though he almost certainly did not. Probably to her and her husband’s chagrin, the Best Picture winner is not *Zero Dark Thirty*, the propaganda film about the killing of Osama bin Laden. Whether Nancy Pelosi or Harry Reid will be Oscar

presenters in 2014 is not known.) For some unknown reason, Michelle Obama makes the award announcement with several members of the U.S. military behind her like decorations, in their dress uniforms. (It is assumed they were not there of their own free will but were on duty and being paid by the taxpayers. The White House does not explain why taxpayers should fund such an appearance. DailyCaller.com later points out that military regulations prohibit ‘the wearing of a military uniform during or in connection with the furtherance of any political or commercial interests.’”) [42819, 42820, 42822, 42831, 42839, 42843, 42853, 42865, 42868, 42882, 42885, 42967]

On February 25 *The Telegraph* reports on John Kerry’s first gaffe as Obama’s new Secretary of State: inventing a country called Kyrzakhstan. “In an embarrassing slip of the tongue, Mr. Kerry last week praised US diplomats working to secure ‘democratic institutions’ in the Central Asian country, which does not exist. The newly minted diplomat was referring to Kyrgyzstan, a poor, landlocked nation of 5.5 million, which he appeared to confuse with its resource-rich neighbour to the north, Kazakhstan. ...Mr. Kerry’s flub was all the more awkward, because Kyrgyzstan is a key ally in the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan and a major recipient of US aid, which totaled \$41 million (£27 million) in 2011.” [42844, 42845, 42852]

Vulture.com reports that Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein, who raised more than \$2.3 million for the Obama campaign, “retained the counsel of Stephanie Cutter, a former top presidential aide and deputy campaign manager of Obama for America 2012” to help boost the chances of his film, *Silver Linings Playbook*, receiving Academy Award accolades. In addition to issuing Twitter messages praising the film to Obama fans, Cutter appeared on ABC’s *This Week* and said, “We’re in Oscar season so I’m gonna talk about my favorite film this year. My favorite is actually *Silver Linings Playbook*. That it’s so real and identifiable to everybody in life.” (Weinstein’s money was wasted. The Best Picture winner was *Argo*.) The film’s star Bradley Cooper, and director David O. Russell, even met with Vice President Joe Biden. (To her credit, co-star Jennifer Lawrence declined to attend the meeting.) [42851]

Vice President Joe Biden gives out more terrible gun advice, telling *Field & Stream* magazine, “I think most scholars would say—is that as long as you have a weapon sufficient to be able to provide your self-defense [sic]. I did one of these town-hall meetings on the Internet and one guy said, ‘Well, what happens when the end days come? What happens when there’s the earthquake? I live in California, and I have to protect myself.’ I said, ‘Well, you know, my shotgun will do better for you than your AR-15, because you want to keep someone away from your house, just fire the shotgun through the door.’ Most people can handle a shotgun a hell of a lot better than they can a semiautomatic weapon in terms of both their aim and in terms of their ability to deter people coming. We can argue whether that’s true or not, but it is no argument that, for example, a shotgun could do the same job of protecting you. Now, granted, you can come back and say, ‘Well, a machine gun could do a better job of protecting me.’ No one’s arguing we should make machine guns legal.” (HotAir.com’s Erika Johnsen comments, “Honesty, did no one bother to inform the vice president, after his first round of similarly awful advice, that just blasting away on the back porch will 1) reveal your position, 2)

leave you effectively disarmed, and 3) possibly get you into some legal trouble? ...I would never argue that a shotgun is a good option for home defense and deterrence (especially those singularly musical sounds of a ready-to-go pump-action) in the case that a single intruder is bearing down on you, since it doesn't take much precision at close range... but *you [had] better not miss*. Tradeoffs, people. And just firing the shotgun out the door when you think people might be looking to enter your home? ...So much for 'gun safety' advocacy.") [42958, 42983]

Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) notes that at the same time Obama is complaining about coming spending cuts his administration continues to seek additional employees with want ads for various non-critical positions. Coburn calls, at the very least, for a hiring freeze. (One want ad is for a staff assistant at the Department of Labor to answer phones—at a salary of \$81,204.) In a letter to Obama Coburn states, "Instituting such a hiring freeze and re-assigning any of the necessary duties associated with each to current employees will allow federal agencies to adapt to the current fiscal realities without laying off or furloughing civil servants who are performing truly critical or absolutely necessary functions." [42856]

Breitbart.com reports that although Obama's operatives reestablished its campaign organization "Organizing for America" as "Organizing for Action," "the tech wizards at OFA forgot one important rule in today's Internet world: Register all the iterations of your website address before someone else does. Now Obama's team is filing complaints against the folks smart enough to get the addresses before he did. As Obama's OFA made its debut, no one in his purportedly Internet-savvy campaign had obtained the corresponding .com, .net, .org or .us sites, nor did OFA register other names that are close to its official one, as is the sensible practice. In the case of the .net address, a fellow named Derek Bovard had already registered the .net address by the time Obama's team took notice. Bovard has routed his new site to the homepage of the National Rifle Association. So, whenever anyone goes to www.organizingforaction.net they end up seeing the homepage of the NRA. Naturally, Obama and his fellow community organizers were furious. So furious, in fact, that they have replied by filing complaints against Bovard—and, apparently, a variety of other people who had registered domain names that OFA now wants." [42857]

Meanwhile, even the Obama sycophants at MSNBC are outraged that the Organizing for Action team is offering access to Obama for donations of at least \$500,000. The New York Times reports, "Giving or raising \$500,000 or more puts donors on a national advisory board for ...Obama's group and the privilege of attending quarterly meetings with [Obama], along with other meetings at the White House." MSNBC's Chuck Todd says, "This just looks bad. It looks like the White House is selling access." (It doesn't "look like" he is—he *is*.) Bob Edgar, president of Common Cause, states, "It just smells. [Obama] is setting a very bad model setting up this organization." [42858, 42873]

When reporters question White House press secretary Jay Carney about the "Obama access for \$500,000" scheme, he responds by reading a prepared statement that dodges the question of propriety. [42859, 42873]

Congressman Steve Stockman (R-TX) charges that the Obama team is using fake Twitter messages to make it appear that his agenda has more citizen support than it does. Stockman states, “Obama’s anti-gun campaign is a fraud. Obama’s supporters are panicking and willing to do anything to create the appearance of popular support, even if it means trying to defraud Congress. I call upon [Obama] to denounce this phony spam campaign.” According to TheHill.com, “Stockman said that in response to Obama’s call for people to tweet their congressman in support of gun control legislation, he received just 16 tweets. But he said all of these messages were identical, and that a closer look at them revealed that only six were from real people. ‘The other 10 are fake, computer-generated spambots,’ his office said in a press release. As evidence, he said these 10 tweets use default graphics and names, and have not engaged in any interaction with other people. Two of the tweets were sent at nearly the same time, and both follow just one person: Brad Schenck, Obama’s former digital strategist.” (MSNBC leftist Rachel Maddow has also been caught using numerous phony Twitter accounts to promote her own program. Using dozens of aliases, Maddow repeatedly sent the same message: “Confession: I yell at my TV while watching Rachel Maddow talk about filibuster reform in the same way most people do during football.”) [42860, 42902, 43036]

Barack “most transparent administration ever” Obama addresses the National Governor’s Association and then takes questions from the governors—after first ejecting all members of the media from the room. (The move is no doubt to prevent reporters from making a record of criticism of the administration.) [42880]

During a press conference after the National Governor’s Association conference, South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley tells reporters, “I could not be more frustrated than I am right now. How many more times are the governors going to have to pick up the mess of Washington DC? How many more times are we going to have to deal with these issues over and over again because of the finger pointing and the blame game that keeps on happening in Washington? What I will tell you is—we heard today a whole lot of ‘no’ [from the Obama administration] And that seems to be the new word in DC is ‘no’ from everybody.” Addressing the upcoming sequester cuts, Haley says, “Something’s wrong. My kids could go and find \$83 billion out of a \$4 trillion budget. This is not rocket science. What this is is an inability to want to get to work. ...Has there ever been more of a time where government was more intrusive than it is today? And to the point that it is really psychotic. There is something very wrong in this town.” [42861, 42913]

Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal says, “I think [Obama] is trying to force us into a false choice. The reality is, there is no reason for these cuts to be made this way. ...It is [Obama’s] job as the chief executive to prioritize” spending cuts, but he refuses to do so. [42913]

Republican governors at the gathering are angry over the Obama administration’s release of a state-by-state analysis of spending cuts to the media. Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker tells reporters, “You all got it in the media before we got those. So I think it’s pretty clear that those were put out for political purposes ...If you were serious about

having a discussion with the governors about the implications, you wouldn't give it to the press before you gave it to the governors." [42913]

On *On the Record*, Arizona Governor Jan Brewer discusses the National Governors Association meeting with Greta Van Susteren. Brewer states that Obama said "he wasn't running for election. His elections were behind him and that he was going to do what he thought was right for the country. And he wasn't going to look at polls, like some politicians do because (they're) always looking forward to that next election. And that gave me a chill, because that tells me that he's going to do whatever he wants to do. And he's big on executive orders and exercising his power. So I think it's going to be a real scary time for America, not hopeful." Obama, says Brewer, "he doesn't want to compromise one little bit. [The] Bottom line is, is that he wants to raise taxes, and he doesn't want to cut [any spending]. And I think the American people believe that. You know, the time now is to start cutting the budget, \$17 trillion [national debt]. And he wants to continue to spend. He doesn't want to [cut spending]. He wants to raise taxes. ... You know, on the federal level, Greta, I really, truly believe spending has been out of control, just totally out of control. We cannot continue down that path. Compromise is always a good thing, but [Obama is] not going to compromise. It's his way or the highway." [42881]

Harry C. Alford, president and CEO of the black chamber of commerce, tells DailyCaller.com, "I don't really support [Obama] too well and he knows it and that's a badge of honor. He's bad. He's bad and I supported him. I voted for him the first time around. I had hopes because he was black. Shame on me. ... And then when he started doing all these executive orders, banning right-to-work, and other things, hurting my members, my constituents. I had to back off. I had to represent my people." Reminded of Obama's "spread the wealth around" comment, Alford responds, "I kind of ignored it. I said, 'well, maybe he's just talking.' [But] He was serious. He was real serious, and it is truly—if you read the Communist Manifesto—that's that philosophy. [Obama] is not Adam Smith. He does not believe in capitalism the way Americans, our Founding Fathers did. He is very socialist and it's getting borderline communist." [42870, 43013]

The Obama administration shamelessly warns that the nation will be flooded with illegal immigrants if the sequester cuts are allowed to go into effect. Janet Napolitano, head of the Department of Homeland Security, tells reporters, "I don't think we can maintain the same level of security. If you have 5,000 fewer Border Patrol agents, you have 5,000 fewer Border Patrol agents." (Napolitano is apparently too stupid—or unwillingly—to identify other areas in her budget that could instead be cut. Cutting border agents should be her last consideration, not her first. Most Americans would probably prefer that TSA agents be laid off instead—allowing them to travel without being frisked.) [42867, 42874]

In Berlin, Secretary of State John Kerry is asked by a Muslim student, "I want to know what comes into your mind when you hear and see people like me, young Muslim adolescents in Germany. What comes into your mind? And do you see a difference about Muslim teenagers in Germany and Muslim teenagers in America?" Kerry responds, "I

don't know enough about Muslim teenagers in Germany to tell you. I mean, I just don't know enough about that. But if they're like you, here asking a question, standing up in public, and inquiring about the possibilities and working as a member of JUMA and being part of this effort to try to reach out and talk about a different kind of future, if you're—if they're like that, and I think they are, then you have a lot in common. Because in America, we have total—occasionally, you have—I can't tell you that a hundred percent, sometimes you have somebody who's a little, not as tolerant as somebody else, and that happens anywhere. But as a country, as a society, we live and breathe the idea of religious freedom and religious tolerance, whatever the religion, and political freedom and political tolerance, whatever the point of view. I mean, some people have sometimes wondered about why our Supreme Court allows one group or another to march in a parade, even though it's the most provocative thing in the world and they carry signs that are an insult to one group or another. And the reason is that that's freedom, freedom of speech. In America, you have a right to be stupid if you want to be, and you have a right to be disconnected to somebody else if you want to be, and we tolerate it. We somehow make it through that. Now, I think that's a virtue. I think that's something worth fighting for. And unfortunately, in too many parts of the world, some religions—not—and I'm not just speaking of one religion or another. You have intolerance in a number of different kinds of religions or points of view in different things. I know that Islam is not represented by a lot of jihadists and others. I know it's a beautiful religion. I've read more and more about it.” (Whether Kerry's strange, rambling response will lead some Senators to wish they had not voted to confirm his is not known. But it is clear that in America one not only has the right to be stupid, it might not even prevent one from becoming Secretary of State.) [42889, 42920]

CNSNews.com reports that Obama's salary was exempted from being cut when the Budget Control Act was passed in 2011. (The sequestration cuts will affect his paycheck.) [42876]

On *Special Report* Charles Krauthammer comments, “Cutting [federal spending] is always attractive in the abstract, but in the detail it rarely is, because there are constituencies who get affected if you have cuts. But the cynicism of the campaign of this administration is astonishing. ...What we're talking about here is two cents on the dollar. Every dollar the government spends on today, 35 cents is borrowed from the Chinese and others. What is going on here is ending up in a position where we borrow not 35, but 33 cents, and that is going to bring Armageddon. ...An example of the cynicism of this campaign is one lobbyist for liberal causes ...told *The Washington Post* the following: ‘The worst case scenario is the sequester hits and nothing really bad happens.’ Think of the cynicism of that. ‘The worst case scenario is that the government makes a small, minuscule cut in spending on the way to beginning of a journey of recovery into fiscal health, and that it doesn't hurt us. We actually come out of it alive’—that to them is the worst case. It means, think of how they are weighing the national interest, which needs cut in spending and these parochial special interests.” [42869, 42912]

On February 26 Michelle Obama is interviewed by ABC's Robin Roberts for *Good Morning America* to discuss gun control. Noting the shooting of 15-year-old Hadiya

Pendleton, she says "...she was caught in the line of fire because some kids had some automatic weapons they didn't need. I just don't want to keep disappointing our kids in this country. I want them to know that we put them first." In fact, Pendleton's killer used a handgun—not an automatic weapon, rifle, or AR-15. Conveniently for the White House, ABC edits the interview to remove Obama's error before it is aired. The broadcast version: "She was standing out in a park with her friends in a neighborhood blocks away from where my kids grow—grew—up, where our house is. ...And she was caught in the line of fire... I just don't want to keep disappointing our kids in this country. I want them to know that we put them first." (ABC later provides an excuse: "The edits made to Robin's interview with the First Lady were made *solely* for time." For those readers who believe ABC, *The Obama Timeline* has a bridge in Kyrzakhstan to sell you.) [42887, 42888, 42931]

Senate Republicans cave in and end debate on the issue of Obama's nomination of the unqualified, anti-Israel Chuck Hagel to replace Leon Panetta as Secretary of Defense. Hagel is confirmed by a vote of 58–41. (Every Senate Democrat votes for Hagel's confirmation. They are joined by Republicans Thad Cochran of Mississippi, Rand Paul of Kentucky, Mike Johanns of Nebraska, Richard Shelby of Alabama. Had they chosen to do so, the Republicans could have blocked the confirmation.) [42862, 42897, 42908]

A Washington Post/Pew poll asks, "If an agreement to prevent automatic federal spending cuts is not reached before next weeks [sic] deadline, who do you think would be more to blame (Republicans in Congress) or (...Obama)?" (Apparently the poll's creators are not aware that Democrats control the U.S. Senate.) HotAir.com comments, "In this case, Pew and the Washington Post didn't just leave out an option. They left out the real culprit, both in the acute crisis (since the Senate still hasn't produced a sequestration alternative in this session or the previous one) and in the chronic budget failure that produced it." [42871]

The House Republican Conference releases a video pointing out that since February 13 Obama has traveled 5,226 miles on Air Force One to campaign against the sequester spending cuts but has not once traveled the 1.7 miles to meet with Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV)—even though the problems are the fault of Reid, who has refused to produce a Senate budget in four years. [42872]

Congresswoman Barbara Lee (D-CA) introduces legislation that would create a federal "Department of Peacebuilding." (Some might argue that it would be far less expensive—and no less effective—to post "War-Free Zone" signs around the world.) [42899]

Federal Reserve Board chairman Ben Bernanke tells the Senate Banking Committee "We do not have a specific target" date for the cessation of "quantitative easing." (In other words, Bernanke will continue to expand the money supply by \$85 billion per month—because he is either too stupid or too lacking in courage to do the right thing for the nation.) Bernanke provides a typical Washingtonian justification: "The reason is—a couple of reasons—one is... that there are a lot of other things happening in our economy like the fiscal issues... but in addition, we are paying very close attention... to the

efficacy and costs of these policies, and that makes it very difficult to say ‘this is the number we’re going to achieve. ... We have not been able to come to a specific number which encapsulates both the changes in the labor market and the assessment of costs and efficacy which is another part of the decision process.’ (That is, “We have no idea what we are doing or whether what we are doing is working, but we are afraid to stop doing it.”) [42877]

CNSNews.com reports, “U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) has released ‘several hundred’ illegal aliens from detention centers across the country citing concern over the ‘possible sequestration’ of some federal spending that, under the Budget Control Act that ... Obama signed in 2011, could take effect this Friday [March 1].” (Some news reports claim the number of prisoners released was about 2,000, and another 3,000 are set to be released.) ICE spokeswoman Gillian Christensen states, “As fiscal uncertainty remains over the continuing resolution and possible sequestration, ICE has reviewed its detained population to ensure detention levels stay within ICE’s current budget. Over the last week, ICE has reviewed several hundred cases and placed these individuals on methods of supervision less costly than detention.” Congressman Bob Goodlatte (R-VA) responds, “It’s abhorrent that ... Obama is releasing criminals into our communities to promote his political agenda on sequestration. By releasing criminal immigrants onto the streets, the administration is needlessly endangering American lives. It also undermines our efforts to come together with the administration and reform our nation’s immigration laws. Unfortunately, this administration has a poor record of enforcing our immigration laws and has routinely sought to undermine them.” (Obama’s release of illegal immigrants is arguably an impeachable offense, as he swore an oath to protect the laws of the United States and has chosen to ignore their enforcement for his own political and ideological purposes.) [42878, 42879, 42909, 42916, 42921, 42968, 43023, 43058]

Arizona Governor Jan Brewer says, “I’m appalled to learn the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has begun to release hundreds of illegal aliens from custody, the first of potentially thousands to soon be freed under the guise of federal budget cuts. This is pure political posturing and the height of absurdity, given that the releases are being granted before the federal sequestration cuts have even gone into effect.” [42901]

House Speaker John Boehner comments, “It’s very hard for me to believe that they [ICE] can’t find cuts elsewhere in their agency. I frankly think this is outrageous. ... I can’t believe that they can’t find the kind of savings they need out of that department short of letting criminals go free.” [42927]

According to a new report from the Government Accountability Office, Obamacare will increase the long-term federal deficit by \$6.2 trillion. Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) states that the report “confirms everything critics and Republicans were saying about the faults of this bill” and “dramatically proves that the promises made assuring the nation that the largest new entitlement program in history would not add one dime to the deficit were false. ... The big-government crowd in Washington manipulated the numbers in order to get the financial score they wanted, in order to get their bill passed and to increase power and influence. The goal was not truth or financial responsibility, but to pass the bill. This

is how a country goes broke.” (NationalReview.com reminds readers that in September 2009 Obama told a joint session of Congress, “I will not sign a plan that adds one dime to our deficits—either now or in the future. I will not sign it if it adds one dime to the deficit, now or in the future, period.” He was, of course, lying.) [42884, 42911]

Meanwhile, some Democrats prefer that the amount of the national debt be kept hidden. DailyCaller.com reports, “During a House Financial Services Committee hearing... on the budget, two Democrats complained after House Financial Services Committee chairman Jeb Hensarling instructed that two monitors in the hearing room display a real-time running national debt clock. California Rep. Maxine Waters and Minnesota Rep. Keith Ellison both issued complaints about the displays, according to video of the hearing.” [42896]

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) tells reporters, “[Obama] has been traveling all over the country, and today going down to Newport News in order to use our military men and women as a prop in yet another campaign rally to support his tax hikes. Now the American people know if [Obama] gets more money, they’re just going to spend it. The fact is that he’s gotten his tax hikes. It’s time to focus on the real problem here in Washington, and that is spending. [Obama] has known for 16 months that the sequester was looming out there when the super committee failed to come to an agreement. And so for 16 months [Obama has] been traveling all over the country holding rallies instead of sitting down with Senate leaders in order to try to forge an agreement over there in order to move a bill. ...If the Senate acts, I’m sure the House will act quickly” to deal with legislation to prevent the sequester cuts. We have [already] moved a bill in the House twice, we should not have to move a third bill before the Senate gets off their ass and begins to do something ...It’s time for the Senate to act. It’s not about the House.” On the floor of the Senate, Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) says, “What does it say about the size of government that we can’t cut it by two or three percent without inviting disaster? Personally I don’t think the world will end.” [42890, 42900, 42907, 42918]

Congresswoman Lynn Jenkins (R-KS) says, “The fact is, when we accepted [Obama’s] sequester 18 months ago, we made a deal, a dollar for cuts for a dollar of debt limit increase. If he wants to do the bait-and-switch now, we will have lied to our constituents by replacing those with tax increases. This leads you to the truth, and the truth is [that Obama] needs to come back from his campaign style tour, stop scaring people, and work with us to address the issue of the debt and deficits, get the economy moving and people back to work. ...Find me an American family, a hardworking taxpayer that hasn’t already cut over 2 percent out of their budgets at home without cutting essential things. ...[W]e are going to take in more money this fiscal year than we have ever taken in before. The budget this year, we will spend more money this year than we spent last year even if the sequester goes into effect. We will spend more money even if the sequester goes into effect.” [42917]

Providing further proof that the Democrats are unwilling to cut any federal spending that is not defense related, House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer (D-MD) rejects both the across-the-board cuts of the sequester and targeted cuts. He tells reporters, “I think the

White House believes and I believe and most economists believe that cuts of this magnitude, whoever does them and however you do them are going to harm the economy and undermine job creation and slow growth.” (Hoyer wants to raise taxes—which he somehow does not believe would harm the economy or destroy jobs.) [42919]

Governor Chris Christie of New Jersey joins several other Republican governors in caving in on the creation of an ObamaCare insurance exchange in his state. (The decision almost guarantees that Christie will not be the Republican candidate for president in 2016. If he wants a big chair in the Oval Office he’ll have to run as a Democrat and hope Hillary Clinton is somehow unable to run.) [42894, 42909]

The Ulsterman Report hears from the White House insider (WHI), who states, “...Organizing for Action is the post-2012 kick-the-shit-out-of-traditional-America program that is meant to be in place long after Obama has gone into his version of political retirement. It’s global. It’s tied in with the U.N., climate change, gun control, healthcare, taxation, global taxation, currency, education, poverty, hunger, they got every big name item involved and it is what was intended all along. All they need to finish it up is to clear the runway for Barack Obama in 2014 [by helping Democrats win the House of Representatives]. That’s what this sequestration is all about, what it intended to do the whole damn time. Mr. Republican Insider called it right from the very beginning. I wasn’t so sure at first but then I got word from one of my media contacts, one of the few who still talk to me, that the White House and NBC/MSNBC were working together on a big post election campaign to pummel Republicans. This was going to be not only news coverage, but a film tied into it, millions and millions in advertising, the whole kitchen sink. And it was gonna be linking up to some of the 99% framework that is still left, the unions are going to be involved of course, all the players who gave us Obama version 2008 and 2012 are now gunning for the 2014 midterm [elections]. They have to remove Republicans from power. Take 2014 and then take 2016 and hold for another eight years. Game over. ...So if you want to try and stop this mess then y’all better stand up and be counted. Call bullshit if that media campaign hits. Call bullshit because that’s what it is. And it means the news agency that’s putting it out there is in on it. And the business buying up ad time is in on it. And any politician who was part of the filming is in on it and all down the line.” [42925]

Ulsterman adds, “The fix is in—and clearly has been for some time. If WHI is right, and given their [sic] record of consistent accuracy regarding the goings-on of the Obama administration I have little reason to doubt them [sic] now—the sequester ‘crisis’ will be followed up with the government shutdown ‘crisis’ and a media anti-Republican onslaught will be provided to tear Republicans down (be they good or bad) to clear the way for the attempted take back of the House of Representatives and ‘clear the runway’ for Barack Obama to finalize the agenda after 2014. Please spread the word—don’t let people fall for this. Help to trap these Democrats in their own deception.” (Obama has no intention of resolving problems. His goal is to create chaos and blame the Republicans all the way to the November 2014 elections. If the Democrats can retain the Senate and recapture the House there will be no stopping Obama’s socialist schemes. Obama and his comrades would rather see America suffer for the next two years if that is what it takes to

regain unrestricted power. They would rather get everything they want in 2015 than compromise with Republicans and get only some of it in 2013 and 2014. Ulsterman and the White House insider are correct: Obama's plans are being aided and abetted by the leftists in the mainstream media. There is almost full coordination of their schemes, and White House operatives tell the socialist media sycophants what to report, when to report it, and what the "theme of the day" will be.) [42925]

Obama campaigns against the sequester cuts at Newport News Shipbuilding, saying, "They're not smart. They're not fair. They're a self-inflicted wound that doesn't have to happen" (They were also his idea.) "We can't just cut our way to prosperity." (Obama apparently believe the nation can borrow its way to prosperity.) "We can't ask seniors and working families like yours to shoulder the entire burden of deficit reduction while asking nothing more from the wealthiest and the most powerful." (No one has demanded that the burden be placed solely on senior citizens and working families.) "We're not going to grow the middle class [sic] just by shifting the cost of health care or college onto families that are already struggling, or forcing communities to lay off more teachers or cops or firefighters or shipbuilders, and then folks who are doing really well don't have to do anything more. That's not fair, and it's not good for the economy." (Teachers and police officers are paid by their local communities, *not* the federal government. Additionally, "the folks who are doing really well" were just hit with a \$600 billion tax increase on January 1, 2013.) [42918]

Obama continues, "If the Republicans in Congress don't like every detail of my proposal, which I don't expect them to [sic], I've told them my door is open. I am more than willing to negotiate. I want to compromise. There's no reason why we can't come together and find a sensible way to reduce the deficit over the long term without affecting vital services, without hurting families, without impacting outstanding facilities like this one and our national defense." Laughably, Obama adds, "I'm not interested in spin. I'm not interested in playing a blame game. At this point, all I'm interested in is just solving problems." [42918]

Obama also tells the Virginia audience, "You don't want to have to choose between, let's see, do I close funding for the disabled kid, or the poor kid? Do I close this Navy shipyard or some other one?" (Obama is essentially saying, "I have no desire to cut anything. Further, I only know how to campaign and cast blame. I have no ability to make difficult decisions or provide leadership. You cannot trust me to do the right thing, so just let me raise taxes and avoid decisions altogether." Of course, Obama's question is also another of his infamous false choice arguments. He expects people to believe that there are *no places to cut spending* other than closing a shipyard or deny handicapped children federal benefits. Obama believes a majority of Americans are stupid, and he will use that belief to accomplish his goals and way he can.) [42923]

Dick Morris, former political strategist for Bill Clinton, writes, "...Obama's massive and voluble campaign against the sequester has a deep political motivation that is not apparent on the surface. He is engaging in a battle he knows he'll lose. Republicans are not going to budge on agreeing to tax hikes to avoid the sequester's spending cuts, and

Democrats won't opt for entitlement cuts to avoid it, either. So why is he fighting so hard when he has no leverage and battling a measure that will take effect on March 1 if Congress does nothing—something it does rather well? Here's the answer: He knows the economy is tanking. He realizes that we are headed for a double-dip recession. He expects unemployment to soar. He understands that his almost \$300 billion in tax increases this year will drive us into recession. So he needs an out. That's where sequestration fits in: If it goes into effect, he can blame Republican budget cuts for the economic disaster that will probably unfold this year. It will be the GOP's fault. All the warnings of the dire impact of these across-the-board budget cuts—including a New York Times article about how states fear the economic impact of sequester—are designed to set up a massive blame game in which he excoriates Republicans for the recession.” [42942]

“Such a stance will, of course, be totally phony. Having raised payroll taxes by \$200 billion; income taxes by \$65 billion; health insurance premiums by 10–20 percent this year alone; and capital gains taxes by 9 percent; as well as having imposed a home sales tax of 4 percent, a package well north of \$300 billion—Obama will blame sequester, amounting to \$85 billion, for all the fallout his taxes will cause. Obama has always survived by using excuses. The recession and unemployment were George W. Bush's fault. The slow recovery was because of the tsunami in Japan, the collapse of Greece was uncertainty over the debt limit, political gridlock in Washington is Republican threats to shut down the government. His policies are always blameless. But now his failed policies are really coming up for a pasting. With the economy about to slip into a double-dip recession (we are likely already there) and then fall some more, he needs a super-excuse. It's hard to say that a spending cut of one-half of 1 percent of gross domestic product will be responsible. So the big lie bears repeating again and again and again. First it emerges as a policy statement, then as a warning and prediction, and finally it becomes an explanation and a justification—a poor substitute for a correct policy in the first place. Obama realizes he is running out of time and excuses. Now into his second term, a falloff in the economy is less likely to be blamed on Bush and more likely to kindle discontent with Obama's policies. In bad economic times, we tend to blame the president, not his predecessor.” [42942]

On *Hannity*, Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN), a Muslim socialist also known as Hakim Muhammed, and host Sean Hannity exchange insults. Ellison says, “Quite frankly you are the worst excuse for a journalist I have ever seen.” In a discussion of the massive federal deficit, Ellison expresses opposition to spending cuts and instead calls for higher taxes from the elimination of several corporate and individual tax deductions. (Ellison's “solution” would generate less than \$10 billion per year in new tax revenue—which would not even be noticed with a deficit in excess of \$1 trillion.) Hannity, who arguably gets the better of Ellison by demonstrating that he is a loudmouth ideologue, closes the segment with the statement, “Congressman, you are a total waste of time. I'm moving on because our audience deserves better. Thank you for being with us. I tried to give you a fair shot.” [42895, 42904, 42938]

On February 27 *Washington Post* journalist Bob Woodward appears on MSNBC's *Morning Joe* and remarks that Obama exhibits a "kind of madness" with his decision not to deploy an aircraft carrier in the Persian Gulf and blame it on the Republicans for not raising taxes to avoid spending cuts. "Can you imagine Ronald Reagan sitting there and saying, 'Oh, by the way, I can't do this because of some budget document?' Or George W. Bush saying, 'You know, I'm not gonna invade Iraq because I can't get the aircraft carriers I need?' Or even Bill Clinton saying, 'You know, I'm not going to attack Saddam Hussein's intelligence headquarters' ...because of some budget document? Under the Constitution, [Obama] is commander-in-chief and employs the force. And so we now have [Obama] going out because of this piece of paper and this agreement [and saying], 'I can't do what I need to do to protect the country. That's a kind of madness that I haven't seen in a long time.'" (Most would assume that Woodward pulled his punches with his criticism of Obama and has very little respect for him. He cannot afford to be completely blunt because most of his fellow journalists are leftists who will run him out of town if he is too honest.) [42922, 42924, 42939]

After hearing of Woodward's "kind of madness" comment, Obama quickly retaliates. On CNN later in the day Woodward says that a "very senior person" at the White House (economic advisor Gene Sperling) sent him an email stating, "you're going to regret doing this." (Obama is fuming not only because of the "madness" quote, but because Woodward dared to report in his recent book *The Price of Politics* that it was Obama and Jacob Lew who came up with the idea for the automatic sequestration cuts and because Woodward reported that it was Obama who scuttled the 2011 budget agreement by insisting on additional last minute tax increases—after the Republicans had already agreed to a deal with the White House and the Democrats. Obama simply cannot tolerate any message other than his own being disseminated.) It is later reported that Sperling's actual statement was, "I think you will regret staking out that claim" about Obama moving the spending cuts and tax increase goal posts. The White House states, "Of course no threat was intended." [42929, 42930, 42932, 42933, 42936, 42948, 42954, 42956]

At WhiteHouseDossier.com Keith Koffler comments on the Woodward controversy: "Normally this doesn't surprise me, it's how the White House operates, bullying reporters who write things it doesn't like. Frankly, it's Nixonian. This is suppression of speech. Maybe this will finally shine a seriously bright light on scurrilous Obama White House tactics. That they would go after Woodward is a bit of a surprise, both because of the respect he commands and because if he decided to really focus his journalistic talents on Obama, we would find out all sorts of things the White House doesn't want us to know." [42936]

AtlasShrugs.com's Pamela Geller writes, "Mr. Woodward, how does this compare to Watergate? You have a lot to answer for. You and the rest of the enemedia have been at war with the American people for decades. You destroyed the right, the rational and the reasoned—the rights of the individual. Did you think they wouldn't come for you?" [42937]

The White House claims that Obama was unaware ICE was releasing prisoners. Press secretary Jay Carney tells reporters, “This was a decision made by career officials at ICE, without any input from the White House, as a result of fiscal uncertainty over the continuing resolution as well as possible sequestration.” (The public is expected to believe that DHS head Janet Napolitano does not communicate with Obama, or that “career officials” on her staff—who should certainly know better—let people out of jail without telling her. If Carney is being truthful—which is unlikely—Napolitano should fire those officials immediately. If she does not it will be clear that Carney and the White House are lying.) [42926, 42927, 42935, 42951, 42952]

The Obama administration also claims that all the released prisoners were “low-risk, non-criminal detainees.” (There is no explanation as to why they had been jailed if they were “non-criminals.”) [42952]

Rory Cooper, a spokesman for House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) notes that Obama had previously warned that illegal immigrants might have to be released from jail because of the sequester cuts, his administration in fact did so, and now Obama claims he knew nothing about it—after also not knowing anything about Operation Fast and Furious or the security risks in Benghazi. Cooper Tweets: “One person has this control? It’s ok folks. ...Obama will be answering questions about the criminal release on The View next week.” [42951]

At WashingtonExaminer.com Susan Ferrechio reports that Congressman Michael McCaul (R-TX) “is demanding that the Department of Homeland Security explain why it is releasing the illegal immigrants now in police custody. McCaul, chair of the House Homeland Security Committee, wrote to John Morton, director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (which falls under DHS), asking him to provide the details of the release. ICE claims the prison release will be supervised and is necessary because of a 5 percent budget cut coming under Friday’s sequester. McCaul wants to know how many detainees are being released and why they were arrested in the first place. McCaul is also demanding ‘the specific monitoring and tracking actions’ ICE will use to keep track of those they have set free.” [42935]

Politico reports that Obama “will hold a White House meeting Friday to discuss plans to avoid the sequester cuts with House Speaker John Boehner, Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell... This will be Obama’s first face-to-face meeting with Congressional leaders to discuss the sequester cuts, which by then will have already hit the March 1 deadline.” (Politico does not explain why Obama delayed the meeting until the day the cuts go into effect.) Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) tells states, “The meeting Friday is an opportunity for us to visit with [Obama] about how we can all keep our commitment to reduce Washington spending. With a \$16.6 trillion national debt, and a promise to the American people to address it, one thing is perfectly clear: we will cut Washington spending. We can either secure those reductions more intelligently, or we can do it [Obama’s] way with across-the board cuts. But one thing Americans simply will not

accept is another tax increase to replace spending reductions we already agreed to.” [42898]

The U.S. Supreme Court hears oral arguments in *Shelby County [Alabama] v. [Attorney General Eric] Holder*, which charges that Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act is unconstitutional because it violates the rights of states. (At Heritage.org Hans A. Von Spakovsky notes that Section 5 “effectively presumes that all voting-related actions by certain states and jurisdictions are discriminatory and therefore requires that they obtain pre-approval from the federal government for otherwise ordinary and routine actions, such as moving a polling station from a school that is under renovation to another one down the street or drawing new redistricting plans. This is a major and unusual imposition on state sovereignty.” In practice, the Obama administration has used Section 5 to harass Republican-leaning states.) [42892, 42893, 43004]

Democrat strategist, frequent CNN guest, and Obama toady Donna Brazile sends a Twitter message: “What’s on your menu? Just got off the phone with my health care provider asking them to explain why my premium jumped up. No good answer!” (The answer, of course, is ObamaCare.) [42905, 42906, 42928, 42947]

While Brazile displays ignorance of reality about ObamaCare, Subway restaurant chain founder and president Fred Deluca appears on CNBC and says the business environment has “continuously gotten worse because there’s [sic] more and more regulations. It’s tougher for people to get into business. Especially a small business. I tell you, if I started Subway today, Subway would not exist, because I had an easy time of it in the ’60s when I started. I just see a continuous increase in regulation.” [42941]

A Kaiser Family Foundation poll shows that support for ObamaCare among Democrats has plunged 15 percent since November 2012, from 72 to 57 percent. (Among all those polled, regardless of party affiliation, the approval/disapproval/no opinion percentages for Obamacare are 36/42/23.) [43021, 43022]

According to a Rasmussen poll, “Forty-eight percent (48%) of Likely U.S. Voters think the health care law [ObamaCare] is more likely to hurt the economy than cutting government spending. A new Rasmussen Reports national telephone survey finds that 29% believe spending cuts will hurt the economy more. Fifteen percent (15%) think neither will hurt economically.” [42914]

Obama falls to –9 in Rasmussen’s Presidential Approval Index, with 29 percent of those polled “strongly approving” of his performance and 38 percent “strongly disapproving.” His total approval/disapproval ratings are 50/48. [42915]

By a vote of 71–26 the Senate confirms Jacob Lew as Obama’s new Secretary of the Treasury—despite questions of conflicts of interest. [42950]

The U.S. Census Bureau reports, “New orders for manufactured durable goods in January decreased \$11.8 billion or 5.2 percent to \$217.0 billion... This decrease, down following four consecutive monthly increases, followed a 3.7 percent December increase. ...Unfilled orders for manufactured durable goods in January, down following four consecutive monthly increases, decreased \$2.1 billion or 0.2 percent to \$989.2 billion. This decrease followed a 0.8 percent December increase. Transportation equipment, also down following four consecutive monthly increases, drove the decrease, \$5.0 billion or 0.9 percent to \$582.8 billion. ...Inventories of manufactured durable goods in January, up fifteen of the last sixteen months, increased \$0.7 billion or 0.2 percent to \$374.8 billion. This increase followed a 0.1 percent December decrease. Transportation equipment, up thirty consecutive months, drove the increase, \$1.1 billion or 0.9 percent to \$115.8 billion.” (The bad news is reported by the mainstream media as good news. CBS News: “Orders jump for most long-lasting factory goods.” CNBC: “Factory Orders Fly Even As Defense in the Dumps.”) [42960, 42961]

TheHill.com reports, “The White House repeatedly asked Ben Carson for his speech before the rising Republican star criticized ...Obama at the National Prayer Breakfast earlier this month. Carson, a prominent neurosurgeon at Johns Hopkins University, declined to do so, noting that he doesn’t put his speeches down on paper beforehand.” Carson says, “I told them that I don’t have an advance copy because I don’t write out my speeches and I don’t use teleprompters. ...they asked more than once ...I gave them the [Biblical] texts around which the remarks would be framed ...I said read those texts, the remarks will be framed around those ...that should have told them something.” [42964, 42965, 43047, 43076]

Obama gives Republican lawmakers seven minutes of his time to “discuss” the sequester cuts with House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY). (The White House calls it a “meeting.” It is actually nothing more than a way for Obama to claim that he met with Republicans when they accuse him of being uncooperative and unwilling to negotiate compromise.) Republican strategist Steve Schmidt tells *The Washington Times*, “It is a sincere conviction among Republicans that [Obama’s] negotiating posture isn’t about getting a deal done, it’s a zero-sum political game where his aim is to destroy the Republican [House] majority in the next election. It’s certainly not an effective strategy for a leader in search of a deal. ...Republicans gave in on the higher tax rates on the revenue front [in December], but that doesn’t mean a permanent acquiescence on these issues. [Obama] is beating Republicans in a public argument, but in fact Republicans are highly likely to retain the [House] majority [in the 2014 elections] because of demographics and where the competitive races are. If you’re lurching from crisis to crisis, people eventually get numb to it. There’s a ‘boy who cried wolf’ quality to it [Obama’s tactics].” Another GOP strategist, Whit Ayres, says, “[Obama] is really good at campaigning and really bad at governing. So he’s doing what he’s good at.” [42940]

New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg tell reporters, “There’s a lot of posturing [about the sequestration cuts]: ‘I’m going to lay off my employees today unless you do something. We’re going to close the hospitals down. We’re going to take all the prisoners

from jail and put them on the street.’ Spare me. I live in that world. I mean, come on. On Monday we’ll be able to police the streets, there will be a fire engine that responds, an ambulance, teachers will be in front of the classroom. If there’s snow, we’ll be able to plow.” [42934]

Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D-CA) says, “...we don’t need, uh, to be, um, having [sic] something like secrestration [sic] that’s going to, uh, cause these job losses—over 170 million jobs that could be lost.” (With only about 134 million Americans holding jobs, it is difficult to know how cutting the federal budget by a mere \$40 billion will cause 170 million people to lose their jobs.) Waters is probably a close friend of Congressman Hank Johnson (D-GA)—who once warned, “My fear is that the whole island [of Guam] will become so overly populated that it will tip over and capsize.” [42945, 42946, 42949]

The Associated Press reports, “White House-backed legislation in the Senate to replace \$85 billion in across-the-board spending cuts would raise the deficit through the end of the budget year by tens of billions of dollars, officials said late Wednesday as the two parties maneuvered for public support on economic issues. The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office said that under the Democratic measure, deficits also would rise in each of the next two years before turning downward. Democratic officials had said earlier in the day their bill would spread one year’s worth of anticipated savings—\$85 billion—over a decade in an attempt to avoid damaging the shaky economic recovery. The legislation would cancel across-the-board cuts due to begin on Friday. Instead, it would eliminate payments to some farmers, enact defense reductions beginning in two years and impose tax increases, mostly on millionaires. White House spokesman Jay Carney recently told reporters at the White House the administration supports the measure.” [42943, 42944]

Townhall.com political editor Guy Benson later comments, “Too perfect. Their ‘deficit reduction’ plan entails defense cuts, new tax hikes, and *adding to the deficit*. No wonder these guys have avoided committing a budget to paper for the last four years. Their mindless slogans do not, and cannot, comport with reality. Note that last line, too: ‘The White House... supports the measure.’ Of course they do. Hey, it’s a plan that isn’t the Republican one. [Obama’s] specific plan is non-existent, though he did manage to squeeze in a seven minute meeting with Congressional leaders... I’m sure that was productive. Like everyone else in Washington, Senate Democrats have known that the sequester was coming for the last sixteen months, and this is what they’ve come up with at the very last minute? Republicans passed two bills containing explicit plans to replace [Obama’s] sequester with more responsible offsetting cuts. Democrats blocked both, then sat around and did nothing until Harry Reid filed cloture on this hilarious bill... We’ll have Senate votes ...both on this non-starter and the Senate Republicans’ alternative—which is also going nowhere.” [42943, 42944]

Linda Joy Adams, an alleged Kansas-born relative of Obama’s mother, Stanley Ann Dunham, posts claims about Obama’s ancestry. According to Adams, Obama was born in Kansas and his father was not the Kenyan, Barack Hussein Obama, Sr. Adams writes,

“Obama Sr. did marry Ann for convenience of both.” Adams claims that Obama’s father was murdered and his body “washed up on a sand bar before 6/62.” (Adams’ story is inconsistent with the fact that Stanley Ann Dunham attended high school in Seattle, Washington and then attended her first year of college at the University of Hawaii. She could not have become pregnant by a black man in Kansas in late 1960 if she was then attending classes in Honolulu. Nor is it likely that she would have become pregnant in Hawaii and then returned to Kansas to give birth.) [43108, 43109]

On MSNBC, Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) tells Andrea Mitchell, “The Republicans are insisting, are actually going to allow the sequester to occur, abdicate their responsibility. They are actually suggesting giving our responsibility in Congress to [Obama], which would mean that nameless, faceless bureaucrats in federal agencies would decide on the spending cuts as opposed to members of Congress like me, who are elected by our constituents to make that decision. They have to see the wizard and grow some courage.” (In fact, House Republicans twice approved legislation outlining where the spending cuts should be made—and the Democrat-controlled Senate refused to vote on that legislation. Wasserman Schultz ignores the fact that the Democrats and Obama are also willing to let the across-the-board cuts take place, as they have not pointed out what they would cut instead.) [42959]

On *Special Report* Charles Krauthammer says, “Well, [Obama] did it again. He went back to the corporate jet loophole. Well, I did the math on the way over. If you collect it for a hundred years it will not cover a month of Obama spending—the corporate jet loophole. If you collect it for a century it is less than what Obama spends in a month. It’s a joke; it’s a way of making a point. It’s the old class war stuff, it’s meaningless. And it shows when he talks about loopholes, all he is interested in is raising taxes so that he can spend. ...Obama wants to close loopholes not so he can encourage economic expansion with lower rates of taxation, he wants it so he can spend it on entitlements. He is the entitlement president and what all of this is about is creating enough revenue, increasing American taxation, so that he can have an entitlement state as you have in Europe, which requires the European levels of taxation. He’s not interested in debt; he’s not interested in cutting; he’s not interested in [reducing] deficits. He wants to spend because he wants an expanded state. That’s what all of this is about.” [42959]

On CNN, former White House advisor David Gergen says that Obama’s planned meeting with Congressional leaders “is very strange. I mean, it almost adds insult to injury for an awful lot of folks. In going around the country, I find Americans are ...turned off and tuned out of [sic] what’s going on, because they’re so angry with the antics. They understand that there are important issues at stake here, but they’re now increasingly saying, ‘Look, why can’t both these sides get together?’ ...I cannot remember a time when we’ve seemed so leaderless. Nobody is stepping up and taking the reins and saying, ‘Okay, guys, this is serious. The country really ...could suffer here. ...I think they [in the Obama administration] are quite intentionally allowing cuts to go on that are gonna be painful, and that’s what’s irresponsible. ...I’m one who put a lot of blame on the Republicans the last two years, ...but I think now the blame is shared on this one. I think

the Democrats and [Obama] deserve as much blame as the Republicans do on this one, and they both have a responsibility to get us out of this mess.” [42966, 42971]

On February 28 the Democrat-controlled Senate rejects proposed legislation from Republicans that would give Obama discretion over where to apply the sequester cuts. The vote is 38–60. (Obama has spent weeks whining about the across-the-board cuts, and when he is offered the opportunity to target the cuts every one of his Democrat allies dismisses the offer—and Obama threatened to veto the bill if it passed. That is additional proof that Obama wants the cuts to do damage to as many Americans as possible—for the sole purpose of using it to hammer Republicans until the November 2014 mid-term elections. Obama’s goal is not to work toward a balance budget; it is to gain Democrat control of the House so he does not have to be burdened with such concerns—and can tax, borrow, and spend the nation into oblivion.) [42984, 43001]

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) tells reporters, “There are many people in Washington who... don’t believe that the government has a spending problem: the minority leader, the minority whip, who don’t believe that we’ve got a spending problem. [Obama] told me directly back in December, ‘We don’t have a spending problem.’ In the nearly four years since Senate Democrats last passed a budget, government spending has driven our national debt to over \$16 trillion. That’s more than \$52,000 for every man, woman, and child in our country, and I don’t believe the debt is a result of insufficient taxation. This year the federal government will bring in revenue more money in from the taxpayers [sic] than any year in our history. And the debt is a result, I believe, of spending that’s out of control. I think the spending problem that we have here in Washington is threatening the future for our kids and our grandkids, and frankly threatening the American dream. Last year we proposed generating new revenue through tax reform. We did that as an alternative to [Obama’s] demand for higher tax rates. Ultimately, [Obama] got his revenues, and he got it *his* way—through higher rates. And, given those facts, the revenue issue is now closed. Any revenue generated by closing loopholes should be used to lower rates across the board for American families. That will create jobs and make America more competitive. So the choice is simple. Should tax reform focus more on funding government or on creating jobs. I’m for more jobs.” [42986]

Several journalists come forward to state that, like Bob Woodward, they have also been threatened by the White House when their stories are not “well received” by the administration. HotAir.com observes, “Either (a) this sort of antagonism is wholly unremarkable for modern presidential administrations when dealing with the press behind the scenes, in which case there’s no reason to assume Obama doesn’t know or approve of it, or (b) it is remarkable in its nastiness, in which case either Obama’s a much nastier customer than thought or he’s lost control of his inner circle vis-à-vis media relations.” Former Bill Clinton aide Lanny Davis tells Politico, “[Sperling] should know better. Did Bob Woodward get a single fact wrong? He said that Barack Obama initiated the idea of sequestration as a club to get the Super Committee to do the Grand Bargain. That’s a fact. If Gene says it isn’t a fact, then explain that it’s not a fact. But when you go beyond

disputing facts to passing political judgments—‘You’re going to regret this’—I hear that as a threat.” [42955, 42962, 42969, 42975, 42976, 42977, 43002]

In general, however, most in the media circle the wagons to protect Obama and comment that Woodward exaggerated the significance of the threat from Sperling. *Atlantic* columnist Jeffrey Goldberg tells Politico, “It’s not a big deal. You’ve been yelled at by people in the White House, I’ve been yelled at by people in the White House—I’m sure this has happened to a thousand people in Washington. The whole thing seems like a tempest in a teapot.” (The administration telling reporters, “You’re going to regret this” is apparently routine.) NBC’s Chuck Todd states, “I get emails like this almost every hour, whether it’s from the White House or Capitol Hill. For better or worse, flacks get paid to push back.” (Considering the way the media has enthusiastically pushed the Obama agenda for four years and failed to thoroughly investigate the administration scandals, it may be difficult for some to believe that the White House ever has a reason to get annoyed with reporters. Obama and his staffers must be incredibly thin-skinned if sending angry emails is a common practice. They do it to psychologically manipulate the journalists—but Woodward called them out on it.) [42955, 42962, 42969, 42975, 42976, 42977, 42981]

Politico reports, “Senate Democrats fell short of the 60 votes needed to move ahead with their plan to forestall automatic across-the-board spending cuts March 1. The 51–49 roll call failed to attract Republican support because of differences over taxes and the defeat makes it almost certain the sequester cuts will go into effect by midnight Friday.” (According to the Congressional Budget Office, the Democrat plan, laughably called the “American Family Economic Protection Act,” would *increase* the deficit by \$41.5 billion in 2013.) [42963]

Rush Limbaugh tells his radio audience, “Now, the sequester, it’s gonna cut, they’re saying, \$85 billion. We actually know it’s 22. But we’ll go with their 85. We’re gonna cut \$85 billion this year, right? Look at this story. Wall Street Journal today. Secretary of State John Kerry, who served in Vietnam, said that the United States is preparing for the first time to directly provide non-lethal assistance to rebel Syrian fighters as part of a bid to change president Bashar al-Assad’s calculations and to expedite his removal from office. Meaning, we’re gonna pay freedom fighters in Syria some money to get rid of Bashar Assad. You know how much? Sixty million. Sixty million in assistance. No, it’s just chump change. ...But do you think maybe we could save that \$60 million and keep some firemen employed? We’re giving \$60 minimum to Syrian freedom fighters here on the eve of the sequester? I hadn’t planned on offering grief counseling services for those hurt by the sequester tomorrow, but I’ll be glad to help ’em through their darkest hours, and there will be some dark hours starting tomorrow.” [42970]

According to a nationwide Fox News poll, “57 percent of [registered] voters think the ‘only way’ to control the deficit is through actions like the automatic cuts because lawmakers are unable to do it on their own. Some 29 percent have confidence that Congress has the know-how and power to make it happen.” [42973, 42974]

WND.com reports that the Obama team is using scare tactics to raise money for its Organizing for Action propaganda arm: “A new fundraising email asks for donations in the face of massive layoffs, a greater risk of terrorism and the loss of police, firefighters and food for seniors, women and families. ‘On the chopping block are 10,000 teaching jobs, more than 70,000 kids’ spots in Head Start, \$35 million for local fire departments, \$43 million to make sure seniors don’t go hungry, and access to nutrition assistance for 600,000 women and their families. That’s just a few of the things we’ll lose,’ the email says. It ends with a pitch for money. ‘Let’s finish what we started. Chip in \$25 or more to Organizing for Action, the grassroots movement that will get the job done. If congressional Republicans don’t act by tomorrow, we’re going to be hit by a series of devastating, automatic budget cuts called the sequester.’” [42979]

Forbes.com reports that yet another taxpayer-subsidized solar company is running into financial difficulties. Oregon’s SoloPower “is laying off employees, and top executives have left the company recently...” [42999, 43000]

A *Washington Post* editorial excoriates Obama and Congress for their lack of leadership: “To govern is to choose. Congress and ...Obama have chosen not to govern. Instead, each side has concluded that its interest lies in letting the ‘sequester’ proceed as scheduled—and then trying to win the political blame game. This abdication is bad public policy. ...Washington has reached a strange place indeed when the opposition party offers [Obama] more control over spending—and he refuses it. Apparently, in addition to its policy objections, the White House figured that a softened sequester couldn’t force Republicans to accept a long-term deal including higher revenue. It’s a gamble that the worse things might get now, the better they will get later. A strange place, and a sad one.” [42988]

Investors.com writes, “When ...Obama put out his ‘balanced’ plan to avoid the automatic sequester cuts, no one noticed. Which is probably just as well for Obama, given how embarrassingly unbalanced it is. Last week, New York Times columnist David Brooks wrote about how Obama ‘hasn’t actually come up with a proposal to avert sequestration, let alone one that is politically plausible.’ Turns out, Obama did have one, although Brooks can be excused for not knowing it, since the administration hasn’t exactly been promoting this so-called plan. That, too, is understandable, since it isn’t a plan at all, just a list of numbers with little to back them up. There are no details, for example, about the \$200 billion in cuts to defense and domestic discretionary programs, other than that Obama wants them split evenly. And while he offers \$400 billion in ‘health savings,’ 30% are lumped in a bucket labeled ‘other.’ Worse, Obama’s ‘balanced’ plan actually counts hundreds of billions of new revenues from taxes, fees and rebates as ‘spending reductions.’ Examples: His plan to ‘strengthen’ unemployment insurance is labeled as a cut, but it’s really a \$50 billion tax hike. The \$35 billion from the federal worker retirement programs involves boosting worker contributions. Most of the \$35 billion in Medicare savings comes from charging wealthy seniors more. The \$140 billion in ‘reduced payments to drug companies’ are in fact rebates Obama wants drug makers to pay Uncle Sam for selling drugs to poor seniors. Then there’s the \$45 billion in spectrum fees and asset sales that Obama lists as spending reductions. Viewed correctly, it turns

out that more than \$300 billion—about a third—of Obama’s proposed ‘spending cuts’ are actually revenue increases. As a result, instead of \$1.2 trillion in spending cuts called for by the sequester over the next decade, Obama would add more than \$1 trillion in revenues, while cutting outlays only about \$600 billion. And much of those aren’t real cuts, but tiny reductions in projected spending growth over the next decade. And in the end, his plan, such as it is, will do nothing to forestall the nation’s oncoming debt crisis. After four years, Obama’s unseriousness... continues to surprise us.” [42989]

DailyCaller.com reports, “Employees of Obama donor Leo Hindery Jr.’s media conglomerate Intermedia Partners, which now owns most of the top gun-culture media outlets in the country, believe that Hindery plans to gut and destroy all of them as part of a business plan that has already led to numerous layoffs and the virtual shuttering of prominent television production facilities in Minnesota and Montana. Hindery, who was in consideration to be ...Obama’s secretary of commerce, is managing partner of Intermedia Partners. The New York-based media private equity fund owns Intermedia Outdoor Holdings, which publishes 17 hunting, fishing, and shooting magazines, including Guns & Ammo, Handguns, Gun Dog, Rifle Shooter and Shooting Times. InterMedia Outdoor Holdings purchased the pro-gun hunting and fishing network the Sportsman Channel in 2007, and is now in the process of acquiring the Outdoor Channel, pending the federal government’s approval of last month’s merger between InterMedia Outdoors and Outdoor Channel Holdings. InterMedia employees believe that Hindery, a Huffington Post blogger who has contributed to numerous Democratic politicians including Andrew Cuomo and Elizabeth Warren, is in the process of consolidating all of America’s leading gun-culture media outlets and stripping them down to virtual destruction.” (Obama does not—yet—have the nerve to censor gun publications, but an alternative is for his wealthy pals to buy magazine companies and then shutter them.) [42980]

Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich says, “I think Bob Woodward has it right. Obama’s really off the deep end on this. He clearly has a strategy of maximum pain for political gain. They’ve been hysterical about it. As you know, the secretary of education has had to admit that the layoffs he was citing had nothing to do with the sequester. The fact that they’re willing to mess up air travel for 2 million Americans a day when they don’t have to—they could clearly find money without laying off a single air traffic controller. ...Obama already got \$600 billion in tax increases and turns right around and says ‘well, what I really want are tax increases’ and I think it’s clear that what the Republicans have said is, ‘look, show us better, smarter, spending cuts.’ ...The Republicans should propose a bill that says if you are about to be furloughed and you can find the same number of dollars in savings in your agency, e-mail the suggestion here and if we adopt your idea, you won’t get furloughed and you would then have thousands of people who know the agencies finding the savings.” [42982]

Radio talk show host Chris Plante, noting Obama’s claims that the slight budget cut will bring the government to its knees, says, “Since this two percent obviously covers all essential government spending, let’s cut the other 98 percent!” [42987]

Congresswoman Donna Edwards (D-MD) says sequester cuts mean that women will be “forced to stay in their homes with their abuser”—because domestic violence shelters will have to be closed. “The harm is real,” says Edwards. “230,000 victims will be calling crisis hotlines and those calls will go unanswered. 230,000 calls to crisis hotlines around the country. So can you imagine that in the middle of the night a woman is being battered, she has her two children, she wants to get to safety, she places a phone call to a hotline and that line goes unanswered. That’s what sequestration means to victims of domestic violence.” (Edwards does not explain why a two percent budget cut would result in total shutdowns of programs.) [43003]

At NationalReview.com Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal writes, “[T]he Obama years will be remembered as the Era of Government Greed. There isn’t a problem ... Obama thinks can’t be solved by more taxes and more spending. His solution is always to take more money out of the American economy and put it into the government. You can’t grow the economy by taking money out of the economy. Yet that’s [Obama’s] plan, and it’s leading us down a dangerous path. First, the greed of Wall Street crippled our economy, and now ... Obama’s Government Greed is threatening to drown our economy. It’s time for [Obama] to show leadership. It’s time for him to send to Congress a list of reductions that preserves critical services. Every governor has had to balance budgets during tough economic times. Every family has to balance budgets, too. Every business has had to become more efficient and tighten its belt. It’s time for [Obama] to stop campaigning, stop deploying scare tactics, and do his job.” [43008]

Senator Jeff Sessions (R-AL) issues a statement: “Replacing the sequester would require [Obama] to save \$85 billion out of a \$3,500 billion federal budget. One would think that any [leader] would leap at the opportunity to make government more effective and responsive. But what does [Obama] do instead? He says Republicans are ‘cutting vital services for children’ in order to ‘benefit the well-off and well-connected.’ This has been the strategy now for years: block any attempt to reform the government and then relentlessly attack the reformers. Does any lawmaker, reporter, or citizen believe that the only way to save taxpayer dollars is to hurt children, that every government program is effective and helpful and not one penny is wasted? While the White House operatives may think this [line of] attack is clever, it betrays an astonishing elitism: the federal government is perfect and requires no reform. That is why they have no plan to make our government leaner and more efficient. [Obama] had 18 months to develop reforms to improve the government, but instead he announced furloughs of federal workers as a political cudgel. Yet, his golf weekend at the yacht club with Tiger Woods cost taxpayers over a million dollars—enough money to save 341 federal workers from furlough. These workers know firsthand how much waste and inefficiency exists in the government. Our Budget Committee office will look for a way to solicit federal employees to send suggestions for how to save money in their departments, agencies, and divisions. What is better? To furlough someone or to empower them to make their office more efficient?” [43009]

Sessions continues, “Now, we learn that [Obama] is going to submit his budget plan—which contains his recommendations to Congress, the reason the law requires it to be

submitted early in February before our budget work begins—on March 25th. Yet he will be submitting it after the House and Senate have produced a budget proposal and adjourned for Easter. So while [Obama] speaks of his deep concern for American workers and families, he fails to even submit to Congress his financial plan to help those workers and families. Why then doesn't [Obama] furlough his entire 500 person staff at the Office of Management and Budget instead of threatening teachers and law enforcement personnel? The budget deals with more than just deficits. It is the chief executive's plan for American prosperity. What does it mean that he doesn't want to lay that out? He is the CEO of the Executive Branch and every cabinet official and government employee answers to him. It is his duty to the American people to be the person advancing reform, not blocking it. Also at issue is the fact that our massive federal government is, right now, creating poverty and hurting families. Look at cities like Baltimore, Chicago, and Detroit. Raising taxes—instead of reforming government—denies struggling Americans the help they need. There is nothing just or virtuous about protecting a stale welfare state that is failing the people it is supposed to help. ...Obama is defending the bureaucracy at the expense of the people. It is time for [Obama] to end the permanent campaign and work with both parties to make this government work better." [43009]

At FrontPageMagazine.com Daniel Greenfield writes, "Can Obama be stopped? He can, but it requires taking control of the public agenda. In the current media environment that is extremely difficult, but not impossible. The Tea Party won the argument on ObamaCare by concentrating on populist protests and hammering home the personal economic issues. The left eventually figured out how to clumsily duplicate that effort with Occupy Wall Street. ...Obama has a very simple playbook. 1. Create anxiety about an issue. 2. Demand action on it. 3. Hammer the Republicans for their inaction. Every morning the news stories are largely a reflection of one of the three phases of that strategy. In this game, Republicans can either take the initiative or defend their lack of action on the Obama agenda. What we are seeing lately is a Republican Party that is constantly on the defensive, trying to explain why they haven't yet done what Obama wants them to do and how they would have done it already if he didn't keep on interrupting them. The Republican Party does need to 'evolve.' It needs to evolve into becoming a predator, instead of its prey. What it doesn't need to do is adopt a Democratic agenda. That way lies one defeat after another as every game becomes an away game played by rules that make winning all but impossible. ...If the Republican Party wants to put its own stamp on the next two years, it will have to pick a gut issue and turn that into the centerpiece of an economic agenda. If it doesn't, then Obama Inc. will go on depicting it as useless and irrelevant." [43032]

On *Special Report* Charles Krauthammer observes, "[T]hey [in the White House] know that they really overshot, and it was [Obama] himself—he could have had surrogates out there, but you know the only thing he left out of his litany of catastrophes was pestilence, earthquakes, brimstone, and plague. I mean, it's actually hilarious that he goes through all of this. And now, all of a sudden having discovered that the Republicans are not gonna [sic] budge and that he hasn't won the propaganda war, all of a sudden it's a tumbledown and it's not a cliff. And it is a tumbledown and I think the Republicans have to be armed.

I think they have the upper hand to date because of the [Obama] scare tactics. But if they want to stay ahead of the game they gotta [sic] got to do two things. They have to emphasize that they are offering [Obama] authority over how the spending cuts are done. The Senate has rejected it. [Obama] has said he would not accept it; he'd exercise a veto. They have to explain. If [Obama] says, 'We have to do X' and 'We have to cut TSA' and 'We have to curtail meat inspection,' they have to say every day, 'We have offered [Obama] utter discretion on how to spend the money and he chooses that it should be the meat inspection and not consultants and the wasteful meetings that they have in expensive hotels. And secondly the Republicans ought to highlight every day all of these useless, obsolete, or idiotic stuff happening in the federal government. It isn't hard to find; every year Senator [Tom] Coburn compiles a list of all this waste... It's all out there. What you do is [provide] an example a day, every day, and say to the administration, 'Why didn't you cut X?'" [42985]

On *Hannity*, Bob Woodward says the Obama administration "got caught and—this is an old trick—made the conduct of the press the issue rather than their conduct. The biggest story in Washington is the town itself. What a craze it has become." Woodward notes that he has not called Gene Sperling's email a "threat" and it is a mistake to do so. But Sperling's warning that he would "regret" what he said might be considered a threat by some people. "The problem is there are all kinds of reporters who are much less experienced, who are younger—and they're going to get roughed up in this way. I'm flooded with emails from people in the press saying, 'This is exactly the way the White House works. They're trying to control and they don't want to be challenged or crossed.' ... We live in a hyper-partisan era—extreme partisanship. There are also a group of people—MSNBC—a lot of people who support Obama, who believe he can do no wrong. I believe in the First Amendment, and we need to bring this back to the center so we can have a reasoned discussion about it." [43010]