

The Obama Timeline – Part II

The Doomed Presidency

January 2014

On January 1 the top income tax bracket goes from 35 to 39.6 percent. The capital gains tax increases from 15 percent to 28 percent. The dividends tax increases from 15 percent to 39.6 percent. The estate tax increases from zero to 55 percent.

As of January 1, 2014 more Americans are without health insurance than before the passage of ObamaCare. Nevertheless, Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius tweets, “Today, lifetime limits are gone, those with pre-existing conditions have protection, and there are millions of newly insured Americans!” (Sebelius apparently considers 1.1 million alleged ObamaCare enrollments to be “millions.” She does not mention that more than five million health insurance policies have been canceled because of ObamaCare. Nor does she state how many of the 1.1 million have actually sent in a payment to the insurance companies to complete the enrollment process. In the state exchanges, only about one-half of those enrolled have made a payment.) [53060, 53063, 53073, 53093, 53094]

Hardcore Marxist and political operative Bill de Blasio is sworn in as mayor of New York City. Administering the oath of office is millionaire Bill Clinton, as millionaire Hillary Clinton looks on, and millionaire communist calypso singer Harry Belafonte delivers a keynote address in which he rails against income inequality—to the delight and the applause of all the millionaires seated around him. (At NoisyRoom.net Teresa Monroe-Hamilton writes, “These pampered, spoiled, wealthy idiots have elected a Mayor who will destroy everything they covet. They believe that they are among the elite and will be taken care of, while the lower class—the masses—are kept in line and in their place of servitude. They are flanked by the useful idiots who believe this false prophet will benefit their station in life somehow. What fools. To have never even read history, but to be destined to repeat its bloody past and worse. Be careful what you wish for Progressives, because you are sure to get it in spades. ...The Washington Post and the other propaganda outlets of the American Marxists fell right into line, praising de Blasio and the resurgence of Progressives. According to them it is a new dawn for America. I’m pretty sure that is a **red dawn**, but I digress. Every flawed argument for spending, control, the elimination of Constitutional rights and on and on is just more of the same—the clarion call to communism. For some reason a very small minority of radicals seem to be running the country and we can’t wrest control back. We better do so and soon. 2014 is literally do or die for conservatives and the Republic. New York has gotten the communist leader they deserve in Bill de Blasio. Let not the whole of America follow down that dark and deadly path into a bloody and murderous history.”) [53116, 53117, 53147, 53148, 53169, 53579, 53688]

De Blasio's pledges to ban the city's horse-drawn carriage rides—which are popular with tourists. At Spectator.org, Robert Stacy McCain suggests the ban “is a corruption scandal masquerading as an animal-rights crusade. Defenders of the carriage industry point to a real-estate executive who is one of de Blasio's major campaign donors as the driving force behind the effort to abolish the carriages.” The horse stables are housed on valuable property that the campaign donor, Steve Nislick, is possibly seeking to develop. McCain writes, “Mayor de Blasio's willingness to do the bidding of his anti-carriage backers has puzzled many observers, who can't fathom why he would make the issue such a focus. ‘What makes him think this subject is important enough to occupy his first days in office?’ asked *New York Times* editorial page editor Andy Rosenthal. Evidently, reporters at Rosenthal's newspaper can't be bothered to do the kind of ‘follow the money’ investigative journalism that might provide an answer to that question, although supporters of the Carriage Association have created a Web site... to expose what they're calling the ‘CarriageGate’ scandal.” (At TakiMag.com, Guy Somerset comments on de Blasio's misplaced priorities: “You can get raped in Central Park, but sitting with your sweetheart in a carriage will soon be illegal.”) [53256, 53257, 53258, 53353]

It can be assumed that Obama was thrilled by the election of de Blasio—and the focus on “income inequality” in virtually all of the event's speeches. De Blasio says, “Think about it. A five-year tax on the wealthiest among us—with every dollar dedicated to pre-K[inderergarten] and after-school. Asking those at the top to help our kids get on the right path and stay there. That's our mission. And on that, we will not wait. We will do it now. Of course, I know that our progressive vision isn't universally shared. Some on the far right continue to preach the virtue of trickle-down economics. They believe that the way to move forward is to give more to the most fortunate, and that somehow the benefits will work their way down to everyone else. They sell their approach as the path of ‘rugged individualism.’” (By “asking those at the top” de Blasio means, “Forcing those at the top to pay more via higher taxes.” Additionally, those on the “far right” have never demanded that anyone “give more to the most fortunate.” They believe that individuals should *earn* their wealth by providing goods and services others purchase voluntarily. De Blasio's class warfare remark follows the Obama/Elizabeth Warren/Karl Marx argument that if person X has more than person Y, he must have somehow gotten it by illegal or fraudulent means. It does not occur to them that individuals, *not the government*, create wealth, and that those with less can also work hard to create their own wealth. But “work hard and prosper” is not as easy a sell as, “Vote for me and I'll give you some of theirs,” and that theme is likely to be heard quite a bit during the 2014 campaign season.)

NationalReview.com's Jonah Goldberg comments on de Blasio's address: “Over and over again, de Blasio invokes and appeals to the cult of unity to justify his policies. In One City we're all in it together and therefore what is yours is ours and what is ours is yours. It's lifeboat logic applied to the democratic polis. In a lifeboat, if you have ten candy bars and someone else has none, you must share. Property rights go out the window. The problem with lifeboat logic—which is just another version of the moral equivalent of war—is that it only applies in lifeboat situations. It doesn't apply when you can jump out of the lifeboat and swim to shore. It certainly doesn't fly when the boat is tied to the dock. That's why the moral equivalent of war argument is evil when

misapplied. By invoking an existential crisis when there is none, you are saying that the rule of law and individual rights must be suspended for the greater good. If I yank you out of your car and drive off to defuse a nuclear bomb, I am a badass hero who did what was necessary. If I yank you out of your car and drive off because you can afford to get another one, I'm a thief with a penchant for romantic rationalizations of my crimes."

The ban on standard 60-watt and 40-watt incandescent light bulbs goes into effect. (Across the country, approximately 40,000 new laws, regulations, and resolutions will take effect during 2014. The Heritage Foundation warns about "overcriminalization" and the fact that it has become impossible to even know what is against the law. "Last year police charged 46-year-old Ocean Beach, Calif., resident Juvencio Adame with 'defacement, damage and destruction' of public property in excess of \$400—charges that could have resulted in significant prison time. His crime? Trimming shrubbery next to his home. Then there's 17-year-old Cody Chitwood of Cobb County, Ga. Police charged him with a felony for bringing weapons into a school zone. The 'weapons' were fishing knives, and they were in a tackle box in Cody's truck. Georgia law states that any knife 'having a blade of two or more inches' is a weapon, and that anyone who carries a weapon onto school property is *by that very act* guilty of a crime." The Heritage Foundation notes, "Overcriminalization strikes at the heart of our constitutional order. In *Bouie v. City of Columbia* the U.S. Supreme Court explained the constitutional doctrine of 'fair notice,' which holds that a criminal law 'must give warning of the conduct it makes a crime.' Traditionally, this requirement was satisfied if (1) the prohibited act was inherently wrongful—such as murder, arson, theft, robbery, or rape—or (2) an individual did something that he or she knew was illegal, even if it was not inherently wrongful.") [53013, 53033, 53052, 53067, 53095, 53507]

New taxes also take effect in 2014, among them 18 in the Affordable Care Act alone. Uninsured individuals are subject to ObamaCare's "individual mandate" tax of \$95 or, if greater, one percent of annual income. (The tax increases to \$695 or 2.5 percent in 2016.) Health insurance companies face a new tax that will likely be passed on to customers in the form of higher premiums (estimated to be between 1.9 and 2.3 percent in 2014). A "reinsurance fee" of \$63 per covered individual is charged to insurance companies. (That also will likely be passed on to businesses and consumers.) In addition to new taxes, ObamaCare cuts Medicare spending by \$41 billion in 2014. [53086, 53089, 53091]

At AmericanThinker.com J. R. Dunn writes, "There's some irony in the fact that ObamaCare is hitting the wall at the precise moment that the incandescent bulb is being yanked off the market by government fiat—but not as much as you might think. Their origins were quite distinct in time—the bulb ban, buried within the 'Energy Independence and Security Act,' was passed in 2007, ObamaCare three years later. Both were subject to phased implementation, so as to not alarm the peasants. Bulbs have been phased out over a two-year period, 75 to 100 watt last year and the lesser wattages now. ObamaCare was delayed for three years to allow for... development, I guess they called it. But it's no real coincidence that these should be interwoven. There are so many such efforts in progress that it was inevitable that they would begin to cross each other's tracks. Even as those two were ripening, the destruction of the American coal industry is

moving right along, a product of Obama executive decrees and EPA regulations. And if we were to look deeper we'd find plenty of others. The attempted transformation of the economy that we are witnessing is by no means limited to a handful of isolated and unrelated programs. What does this transformation look like overall? It involves drastically cut energy sources, seriously limited forms of transportation, 19th-century (or even more primitive) health care, less food, expensive light sources, seriously truncated job opportunities, and higher education too expensive for any but the elite. In other words, Americans are to become poor, cold, hungry, and stupid, while sitting in the dark. That's the progressive plan for the wealthiest nation in the long human record." [53080, 53081, 53372, 53495]

Attorney Orly Taitz sends a Freedom of Information Act request to the government's Health Benefit Exchange Authority asking for a copy of any court order by any court that directed the removal of any information related to Obama from the ObamaCare databases. She further requests "any and all documents, directives, rules and regulations showing that there are safeguards in place... that prevent individuals with stolen and fabricated Social Security numbers and other fraudulent IDs to be enrolled..." and "...any documentary evidence showing that there are requirements for employees of the Washington DC exchange to report... evidence of identity theft, fabricated IDs, Social Security fraud that is obtained by... exchange employees..." According to Examiner.com, the response received by Taitz states the agency "does not have any order by any judge directing them to remove Obama's identification information from their database" and "there is no mechanism to protect US tax payers from fraud and use of ACA (Obamacare) by illegal aliens or people using stolen Social Security numbers." Additionally, "there is no reporting requirement for employees of the Exchange to report identity fraud, identity theft and use of stolen IDs by individuals signing up for [ObamaCare]." [53254, 53255]

Infowars.com reports, "The Department of Health and Human Services has ordered 14 million doses of potassium iodide, the compound that protects the body from radioactive poisoning in the aftermath of severe nuclear accidents, to be delivered before the beginning of February. According to a solicitation posted on the Federal Business Opportunities website, the DHHS asks contractors to supply, 'potassium iodide tablet, 65mg, unit dose package of 20s; 700,000 packages (of 20s),' a total of 14 million tablets. The packages must be delivered on or before February 1, 2014. Potassium iodide helps block radioactive iodine from being absorbed by the thyroid gland and is used by victims of severe nuclear accidents or emergencies. Under current regulations, states with populations living within 10 miles of a nuclear plant are encouraged, but not required, to maintain a supply of potassium iodide. ...The ongoing crisis at the Fukushima nuclear power plant has prompted concerns that the purchase is connected to the threat posed by radioactive debris washing up on the shores of the west coast or the potential for another natural disaster occurring in Japan which could impact the U.S." Meanwhile, DCClothesline.com lists "36 Signs The Media Is Lying To You About How Radiation From Fukushima Is Affecting The West Coast." Among the signs: "71 U.S. sailors who assisted with the initial Fukushima relief efforts have developed serious diseases such as testicular cancer, thyroid cancer, Leukemia, 'unremitting gynecological bleeding' and

brain tumors since that time as a result of exposure to radiation coming from Fukushima.” At StoryLeak.com Anthony Gucciardi writes, “The reality is that even getting a hold of low quality potassium iodide, which I would not ever personally take over a higher quality form of pure iodine, is becoming difficult as the population becomes aware of Fukushima’s expansive dangers. Many manufacturers are now stockpiling raw iodine and holding on to the element as a form of investment with the knowledge that Fukushima may very well meltdown [sic; melt down] in the coming months.” Scientist David Suzuki has stated, “I have seen a paper which says that if in fact the fourth plant goes under in an earthquake and those rods are exposed, it’s bye bye Japan and everybody on the west coast of North America should evacuate.” [53074, 53075, 53076, 53077, 53078, 53101, 53102, 53110, 53133, 53163, 53228, 53229, 53241, 53440, 53452, 54003]

Meanwhile, *The National Enquirer* claims O. J. Simpson may have brain cancer and reportedly wants Obama to grant him a pardon so he can die at home. [53126]

The White House issues a statement in response to Supreme Court Justice Sonya Sotomayor’s temporary blocking of the ObamaCare regulation requiring that The Little Sisters of the Poor Home for the Aged provide birth control, abortifacients, and sterilization coverage for their employees. The statement reads, “We defer to the Department of Justice on litigation matters, but remain confident that our final rules strike the balance of providing women with free contraceptive coverage while preventing non-profit religious employers with religious objections to contraceptive coverage from having to contract, arrange, pay, or refer for such coverage.” NYPost.com writes, “The Obama argument is astounding. The gist is that the nuns really aren’t religious enough to qualify for the church exemption. The administration backs up that position with hefty fines for the Little Sisters if they don’t cave. For example, just for their home in Denver, where there are 67 employees, it could run to \$6,700 a day. That’s money the Little Sisters simply don’t have.” The Obama administration absurdly argues that if the nuns do not want to be in any way involved with insurance that provides contraceptives, they should simply not cover their employees at all. (That means they would have to pay a \$2,000 per employee fine for not providing insurance. Of course, the concept of having insurance cover birth control pills is as absurd as having car insurance cover oil changes or having homeowners insurance cover burned out light bulbs. The point of insurance is to “spread the risk” of *uncommon* expenses over a large population. If the expenses are *common* there is no point in having insurance cover them.) [53070, 53072, 53085, 53104, 53105, 53144, 53261, 53262, 53263, 53536, 53605]

MSNBC’s Alex Wagner—whose boyfriend happens to be White House chef Sam Kass—absurdly claims, “It seems this administration has bent over backwards to ensure that people can exercise their religion.” Former Vermont Governor Howard Dean laughably asserts, “[T]his is an argument about whether the Sisters of the Poor have the right to force their views of religion on all their employees.” (Most reasonable Americans probably believe that every person who works for the Little Sisters of the Poor shares their religious convictions, inasmuch as the charity’s mission statement reads: “Our vision is to contribute to the Culture of Life by nurturing communities where each person

is valued, the solidarity of the human family and the wisdom of age are celebrated, and the compassionate love of Christ is shared with all.”) At Townhall.com Cortney O’Brien observes, “The Planned Parenthood Federation of America is an organization with about 800 clinic locations around the country and has a budget of \$1 billion—much of which goes toward abortion. Sisters of the Poor is an organization dedicated to the sanctity of life. Who’s really the bigger threat here?” [53306]

At Townhall.com Sarah Jean Seman notes, “The 2013 scorecard for abortion pill mandate cases made on religious freedom claims is 53–7, and the Obama Administration is losing. The mandate requires employers to provide abortion-inducing drugs and contraceptives to their employees. Nuns, private Christian colleges and religiously-run companies such as Hobby Lobby have filed court cases against the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.” According to the Alliance Defending Freedom, “To date, there have been 60 [court] rulings touching on the merits religious freedom claims against Obamacare’s abortion pill mandate. 41 involve family—or religious—run businesses, and 19 involve non-profit religious organizations. Overall, the score is 53–7 in favor of religious liberty, involving 53 injunctions against the abortion pill mandate. Within these cases, the score in favor of families doing business is 35–6. The score in favor of non-profit religious entities is 18–1.” [53120, 53121, 54102, 54103, 54344]

On CNN, Lech Walesa, the former president of Poland and 1983 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, says, “When [Obama] was elected... there was great hope. We were hoping Obama would reclaim moral leadership for America. That failed. ... In terms of politics and morality, America no longer leads the world. America did not regain its leadership status. We were just lucky there were no big conflicts in the world.” [53096]

Judicial Watch posts its list of Washington, D.C.’s “Ten Most Wanted Corrupt Politicians” for 2013. In alphabetical order, they are: Speaker of the House John Boehner (R-OH), CIA Director John Brennan, Senator Saxby Chambliss (R-GA), former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Attorney General Eric Holder, former IRS Commissioner Steven T. Miller and former IRS Official Lois Lerner, former DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano, Obama, Senator Harry Reid (D-NV), and Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. (Dishonorable Mentions for 2013 include: former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, outgoing Virginia Gov. Bob McDonnell (R) and incoming Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe (D), former Congressman Rick Renzi (R-AZ), and National Security Adviser Susan Rice.) Of Obama, Judicial Watch writes that he “actually tops this ‘Top Ten Most Wanted Corrupt Politicians’ list for 2013 as the driving force behind so many of the misdeeds. This is Obama’s seventh straight year on the list, dating back all the way to 2007 (in 2006, he earned a ‘Dishonorable Mention’). He is a master at catch-me-if-you-can, corrupt politics. This year, he has again acted as a one-man Congress, rewriting entire sections of federal law on his own. Not only is his administration secretive and dishonest; its callous disregard for the rule of law undermines our constitutional republic.” (McAuliffe quickly proves he deserves a spot on the list. Just days after taking office he rewards a political consultant with a \$124,000 per year job as head of the Alcoholic Beverages Control board. Prior to the election, the

consultant made it known to others that the appointment would be his reward.) [53177, 53178, 53790]

On January 2 *The Washington Post* notes a study published in *Science* that “showed a 40 percent increase in emergency department visits among those low-income adults in Oregon who gained Medicaid coverage in 2008 through a state lottery. This runs counter to some health-care law supporters’ hope that Medicaid coverage would decrease this type of costly medical care, by making it easier for low income adults to see primary care providers.” Jonathan Gruber, one of the architects of ObamaCare, says, “I would view it as part of a broader set of evidence that covering people with health insurance doesn’t save money. That was sometimes a misleading motivator for the Affordable Care Act. The law isn’t designed to save money. It’s designed to improve health, and that’s going to cost money.” (Gruber’s statement conflicts with Obama’s promises, of course, that the Affordable Care Act would save the typical family \$2,500 per year on insurance premiums and reduce the federal deficit. The Affordable Care Act is proving not to be affordable. The mainstream media ridiculed critics of ObamaCare who, from the beginning, correctly claimed that millions more Americans could be covered while spending less.) [53082, 53083, 53146, 53197]

Weapon accessories manufacturer Magpul announces it is leaving Colorado because of restrictive new gun laws and moving its operations—and its 200-plus employees—to Wyoming and Texas. CEO Richard Fitzpatrick states, “Moving operations to states that support our culture of individual liberties and personal responsibility is important. This relocation will also improve business operations and logistics as we utilize the strengths of Texas and Wyoming in our expansion.” (Colorado will lose an estimated \$80 million in revenue each year because of Magpul’s move.) [53090, 53099, 53136]

TheBlaze.com reports, “...Obama’s half-brother told an Israeli newspaper that when he first met Barack, he was struck by his sibling’s rejection of Western culture. ‘I remember that my impression at the first meeting was that Barack thought that I was too white, and I thought that he was too black,’ Mark Okoth Obama Ndesandjo told Maariv. ‘He was an American citizen on a journey in search of his African roots, while I was a resident of Kenya seeking to find his white roots. I remember that when I spoke with him about the heroes of Western culture he rolled his eyes impatiently. My feeling was that, here is an American who in many ways is trying to be a local Kenyan youth. This is something I tried to flee my entire life,’ Ndesandjo said of the brothers’ first meeting in Kenya, which Obama described in his 1995 best-selling memoir, ‘Dreams From My Father.’ ...The siblings share the same Kenyan father, Barack Obama Sr., but had different white American mothers. ...Ndesandjo today is a businessman and musician who lives in China. He published an autobiographical novel several years ago which described an abusive Kenyan father. He also runs the Mark Obama Ndesandjo Foundation which promotes cultural exchanges between Asia, Africa and the U.S. and provides instruments and music teachers to needy children in China. When his parents divorced, Ndesandjo moved to the U.S. where he studied physics at Brown University and Stanford and earned an MBA from Emory University. Ndesandjo’s mother, Ruth Nidesand, Obama Sr.’s third wife, was born in the U.S. to Lithuanian Jewish immigrants. Ndesandjo told Maariv he

considers himself a member of the Jewish people: ‘I am a Jew not only because I have a Jewish mother but first and foremost because there exists in me great pride to be a part of the Jewish people. I feel great belonging to Jewish heritage, to Jewish culture, and to the Jewish philosophers.’” [53103, 53179]

Obama plays golf at the Kaneohe Klipper Golf Course in Hawaii—his seventh game of golf since his vacation began. [53109, 53134]

In *The Washington Post* Charles Krauthammer writes, “First order of business for the returning Congress: The No Bailout for Insurance Companies Act of 2014. Make it one line long: ‘Sections 1341 and 1342 of the Affordable Care Act are hereby repealed.’ End of bill. End of bailout. End of story. First, Section 1341, the ‘reinsurance’ fund collected from insurers and self-insuring employers at a nifty \$63 a head. (Who do you think the cost is passed on to?) This yields about \$20 billion over three years to cover losses. Then there is Section 1342, the ‘risk corridor’ provision that mandates a major taxpayer payout covering up to 80 percent of insurance-company losses. ...A huge government bailout [is] Obamacare’s escape hatch. And—surprise, surprise—it’s already baked into the law. Which is why the GOP needs to act. ...No bailout, no Obamacare. Such a bill would be overwhelmingly popular because Americans hate fat-cat bailouts of any kind. ...The GOP House should pass it and send it to Harry Reid’s Democratic Senate. Democrats know it could be fatal for Obamacare. The only alternative would be single-payer. And try selling that to the country after the spectacularly incompetent launch of—and subsequent widespread disaffection with—mere semi-nationalization. Do you really think vulnerable Democrats up for reelection will vote for a bailout? And who better to slay Obamacare than a Democratic Senate—liberalism repudiating its most important creation of the last 50 years. Want to be even bolder? Attach the anti-bailout bill to the debt ceiling. That and nothing else. Dare [Obama] to stand up and say: ‘I’m willing to let the country default in order to preserve a massive bailout for insurance companies.’ ...Who can argue with no bailout? Let the Senate Democrats decide: Support the bailout and lose the Senate. Or oppose the bailout and bury Obamacare. Happy New Year.” [53180, 53188, 54405]

At Newsmax.com Fred Fleitz, who served for 25 years with the CIA, the State Department, and the House Intelligence Committee staff, writes, “[A] stunning new revelation that the [New York] Times had a reporter on the scene during the 2012 [Benghazi] attack on the U.S. Benghazi consulate is turning this into a scandal for the Times—one that raises questions about its journalistic ethics. ...Obama, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and other Obama officials have been accused of lying about the Benghazi terrorist attack to prevent it from hurting [Obama’s 2012] re-election chances by claiming the attack was the result of a spontaneous demonstration in response to the anti-Islam video. [David] Kirkpatrick’s article appears to be an attempt to shore up these claims to protect ...Obama’s legacy and to prevent this issue from being used against Clinton if she runs for president. Accusations that Kirkpatrick’s article is pure political advocacy has struck a nerve at the Times and led its editorial page editor Andrew Rosenthal to make an unusual public defense of Kirkpatrick, noting that the paper has not yet endorsed a candidate in the 2016 presidential race. He also ‘definitively’ stated ‘there

was no editorial/newsroom conspiracy of any kind.’ To paraphrase Hamlet, methinks Rosenthal doth protest too much. Rosenthal may need to weigh in again as Kirkpatrick’s story has sparked a new scandal: The New York Times had a reporter on the ground who was ‘talking to the attackers during the attack.’ Kirkpatrick tweeted this information on Dec. 30. ...This raises several serious ethical questions. Why was this information withheld for 15 months and not published in September 2012?” [53114]

Fleitz continues, “Are there ethical guidelines for Times reporters that would bar them from being embedded with terrorists in the act of conducting a terrorist attack? How could a reporter stand by and watch a U.S. Embassy be attacked and burned? Didn’t this reporter and the Times have a moral obligation to immediately contact U.S. officials about the attack? Did the reporter have a cell or satellite phone that he could have used to alert U.S. authorities or his New York Times editor in New York? What does this reporter know about the death of Ambassador [Christopher] Stephens? Has he told Congress what he knows? Kirkpatrick concedes in his article that the attack on the embassy was not spontaneous although he says it was not ‘meticulously planned.’ If the Times had a source in Benghazi during the consulate attack, it knew this in September [2012] and also knew Obama officials were lying about this issue to the American people in the final stretch of the 2012 presidential campaign. This means it’s conceivable The New York Times withheld crucial information about the Benghazi consulate attack that could have prevented Barack Obama from being re-elected. It seems to me, Mr. Rosenthal, there clearly is a New York Times editorial/newsroom conspiracy here.” [53114]

At Politico, *Foreign Policy* columnist Michael Weiss writes, “It’s hard to pinpoint just when, exactly, Barack Obama’s Syria policy fell apart. Was it in December, when Islamists humiliated U.S.-backed rebels by seizing what limited supplies America had given them? Was it back in September, when Obama telegraphed his reluctance to enforce his own ‘red line’ after the Syrian regime used chemical weapons on its own people? Was it in the months beforehand, when the administration quietly and mysteriously failed to make good on its pledge to directly arm the rebels? Or did it collapse in August 2011, when Obama called on Syrian dictator Bashar Assad to go, only to do almost nothing to make it happen? But collapse it has, and more than 130,000 deaths later, the White House is now pinning its hopes on a peace conference in Switzerland later this month that is being billed as the last, best hope for a negotiated solution to a conflict that has displaced a staggering 40 percent of Syria’s total population, some 23 million people, in what the United Nations says is fast becoming the worst and most expensive humanitarian catastrophe in modern history. Thirty countries, the United Nations, the European Union and the Arab League are all sending representatives to the Jan. 22 conference, where they are expecting to broker a peace accord between Syria’s two warring sides. As it now stands, however, the meeting, known as Geneva II, is already a fiasco. None of Washington’s affiliated rebels has any significance on the ground in Syria any longer, and the rebels who do matter on the battlefield want absolutely nothing to do with the conference; they will not talk with Assad or his state sponsors Russia and Iran, the arms dealers and militia builders who are after all underwriting Assad’s war machine. In the months since Obama’s decision to cancel military retribution for the regime’s Aug. 21 chemical weapons attack in

Damascus, we have witnessed the near-total collapse of the U.S.-backed Free Syrian Army (FSA), and with it the last shred of U.S. influence on the trajectory of the conflict.” [53132]

The news media begins reporting tales of patients unable to receive treatment because of problems confirming ObamaCare coverage. The *Daily Mail* reports, “Hospital staff in Northern Virginia are turning away sick people on a frigid Thursday morning because they can’t determine whether their Obamacare insurance plans are in effect. Patients in a close-in DC suburb who think they’ve signed up for new insurance plans are struggling to show their December enrollments are in force, and health care administrators aren’t taking their word for it. In place of quick service and painless billing, these Virginians are now facing the threat of sticker-shock that comes with bills they can’t afford. ‘They had no idea if my insurance was active or not!’ a coughing Maria Galvez told MailOnline outside the Inova Healthplex facility in the town of Springfield. She was leaving the building without getting a needed chest x-ray. ‘The people in there told me that since I didn’t have an insurance card, I would be billed for the whole cost of the x-ray,’ Galvez said, her young daughter in tow. ‘It’s not fair—you know, I signed up last week like I was supposed to.’ The x-ray’s cost, she was told, would likely be more than \$500.” (Galvez may have “signed up” for ObamaCare, but she has no coverage if she has not yet made her first premium payment. In fact, she states, “No one sent me a bill.” A fair number of Americans likely mistakenly believe they do not have to pay anything and are covered simply because they enrolled at Healthcare.gov.) [53124, 53125, 53154, 53191]

According to WashingtonTimes.com, Obama’s Hawaiian vacation “has been an unbroken stretch of luxurious living... with his family at a beach house in trendy Kailua, an oceanfront neighborhood in Oahu where the homes rent for \$3,500 per day—more than many families earn in a month. The Obamas are paying for the \$56,000 cost of the rental home, although taxpayers foot the bill for the first family’s travel on Air Force One—which, at more than \$180,000 per hour, makes for a couple of million-dollar flights. What’s more, hundreds of federal workers—from White House staffers to the Secret Service security detail needed to protect the Obamas—join in for what turns out to be an all-expenses-paid vacation. According to watchdog.org, the government rented at least seven homes in the area, costing taxpayers more than \$183,750 of what the organization says will likely be a \$4 million bill.” [53134]

At PJMedia.com Bridget Johnson writes, “Secretary of State John Kerry was in Jerusalem today determined to ram through a Mideast peace deal despite recently spurning Israel on the Iran nuclear deal and pressing forward without the cooperation of half of the Palestinian territories. Kerry and ...Obama are both desperate to make the forging of some peace plan a legacy issue, and Kerry quickly jumped into the task after Secretary of State Hillary Clinton—who was reportedly critical of Obama’s stance toward Israel—left the post. Hamas not only dismissed Washington’s fresh push for talks over the summer, but welcomed Kerry by firing at least three rockets from Gaza into Israel over the past five days. ‘I know that you’re committed to peace, I know that I’m committed to peace, but unfortunately, given the actions and words of Palestinian leaders, there’s growing doubt in Israel that the Palestinians are committed to peace,’ Israeli

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in remarks with Kerry at his side before their meeting. ...Netanyahu continued to pour a reality check on Kerry's plans, adding that 'in the six months since the start of peace negotiations, the Palestinian Authority continues its unabated incitement against the state of Israel.' ...Kerry acknowledged 'that there are many who are skeptical of whether or not the two parties can achieve peace. But I will tell you that I have personally learned something about the power of reconciliation.'" (Kerry is unable to comprehend that the Palestinians do not want a reconciliation; they want the elimination of Israel and the death of all Jews.) [53171, 53602]

At TheHill.com Rebecca Shabad reports, "Eleven GOP attorneys general say the Obama administration is breaking the law by repeatedly making changes to ObamaCare without going through Congress. The attorneys general specifically criticize ...Obama's executive action that allowed insurance companies to keep offering health plans that had been canceled for not meeting ObamaCare's more rigorous standards. 'We support allowing citizens to keep their health insurance coverage, but the only way to fix this problem-ridden law is to enact changes lawfully: through Congressional action,'" the attorneys general wrote in a letter to Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. 'The illegal actions by this administration must stop.' They say the healthcare fix was 'flatly illegal under federal constitutional and statutory law.' HHS did not respond to a request for comment. ...Republicans have often criticized the administration for making changes to the law after the fact. Other switches included the decision to delay the employer insurance mandate for a year, something many lawmakers said should have required a congressional vote." (Sebelius and Obama will ignore the letter, of course, and continue to flaunt the law. The attorneys general will have to file a lawsuit to have any chance of slowing down the Obama administration's lawlessness—or Congress will have to gather the courage to confront Obama and Sebelius.) [53145, 53152, 53166]

TwinCities.com reports, "It's a new year, but [Minnesota's ObamaCare exchange] MNsure continues to struggle with old problems involving its website and call center. The application and account services portion of the state health exchange website was down Thursday afternoon until 6:30 p.m. for technical reasons as people continued trying to acquire health insurance. The trouble connecting with MNsure was particularly annoying for consumers who still aren't clear whether they have coverage. Meanwhile, the average wait time for people calling MNsure for help Thursday was 62 minutes. The call center had received more than 2,500 calls as of 5 p.m." [53155]

MLive.com reports on the problems faced by a couple in Michigan who have repeatedly and unsuccessfully attempted to enroll in ObamaCare because their prior policy—with which they were satisfied—was cancelled because it did not comply with the Affordable Care Act. Shannon Wendt has spent "roughly 25 hours on the phone with dozens of health insurance navigators and supervisors" but "she still has been unable to sign up for insurance. The reason: her five children are deemed ineligible." (She and her husband are U.S. citizens, as are their five children. There is no reason for them to be considered ineligible.) "Working with navigators by phone, she filed and deleted an application 12 times. She had her husband set up a separate application, but that ran into problems. At

one point, a navigator said she may have to submit proof of citizenship for the children. All five children were born in the U.S., and all have social security numbers, she said. ‘Nobody’s said anything about it since then,’ she said. ‘That’s kind of my working assumption—that somehow our kids are not considered citizens and that’s why they were rejected.’” [53156]

Chicago gastroenterologist Dr. John Venetos tells CBS news there is “tremendous uncertainty and anxiety” among his patients, many of whom are uncertain as to whether they have insurance . “They’re not sure if they have coverage. It puts the heavy work on the physician. At some point, every practice is going to make a decision about how long can they continue to see these patients for free if they are not getting paid.” [53157]

NJHerald.com reports, “Pennsylvanians who applied for health insurance through the federally run website Healthcare.gov and were found to be eligible or potentially eligible for Medicaid were cautioned Thursday by Gov. Tom Corbett’s office that they may not have coverage yet. An administration spokesman said the federal government continues to have trouble transferring the electronic files of more than 25,000 applications to the state’s Department of Public Welfare.” [53158]

The Associated Press reports, “Obama administration officials estimate that 2.1 million consumers have enrolled so far through the federal and state-run health insurance exchanges that are a central feature of the federal law. But even before coverage began, health insurance companies complained they were receiving thousands of faulty applications from the government, and some people who thought they had enrolled for coverage have not received confirmation. Tens of thousands of potential Medicaid recipients in the 36 states relying on the federal exchange also are in limbo after the federal website that was supposed to send their applications to the states failed to do so. Reports of other complications were scattered around the country. In Burlington, Vt., the state’s largest hospital had almost two dozen patients seek treatment with new health insurance policies, but more than half of those did not have insurance cards. Minnesota’s health care exchange said 53,000 people had enrolled for coverage through its marketplace, but it was unable to confirm the insurance status of an additional 19,000 people who created accounts but did not appear to have purchased plans.” [53159]

“In Connecticut, officials were pleading for patience as call centers fielded calls from people who are concerned because they had yet to receive a bill for premiums or an insurance identification card. ...Julie Cadorette, 63, of Maynard, Mass., said she has spent dozens of hours on the phone trying to find out the status of her application through Massachusetts Health Connect, which she said she sent by certified mail three months ago. Her current plan ends Jan. 31. ‘It’s very hard to deal with them, they’re so behind,’ she said Thursday. ‘When you call them, they ask you specific questions. [But] You can’t ask them any questions.’ ...In California, employees of the state health exchange were still going through some 19,000 paper applications sent in the early days after Covered California launched on Oct. 1, spokesman Dana Howard said. He could not say how many were outstanding. The entire tracking system was ‘in a sort of chaos’ Thursday as consumers tried to use or confirm their new insurance, said Kelly Fristoe, an insurance

agent in Wichita Falls, Texas. ‘I’ve got pharmacies that are calling in to verify benefits on these new plans that are getting incorrect information,’ he said. ‘I have people that are calling to make their initial premium payment, and they’ve been on hold for maybe three or four hours at a time and then they get hung up on.’” [53159]

Despite Obama’s assurances that families would see their premiums go down by \$2,500 per year, state insurance officials in Hawaii approve rate increases of 9.2 percent for 11,000 individual health plans and 5 percent for 26,300 small business plans administered by Kaiser Permanente, according to the *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*. Hawaii Medical Service Association premiums for 14,300 individual policies will increase by 7.5 percent. [53161]

Rocky King, head of Oregon’s problem-plagued ObamaCare exchange, resigns effective March 5. OPB.org notes, “King is the second official connected to the exchange to resign. Carolyn Lawson, chief information officer for the Oregon Health Authority who oversaw most of the exchange’s development, resigned in mid-December.” [53165]

NewsBusters.org reports, “A group of climate change scientists were rescued by helicopter Jan. 2, after being stranded in the ice since Christmas morning. But the majority of the broadcast networks’ reports about the ice-locked climate researchers never mentioned climate change. The Russian ship, Akademik Shokalskiy, was stranded in the ice while on a climate change research expedition, yet nearly 98 percent of network news reports about the stranded researchers failed to mention their mission at all. Forty out of 41 stories (97.5 percent) on the network morning and evening news shows since Dec. 25 failed to mention climate change had anything to do with the expedition. In fact, rather than point out the mission was to find evidence of climate change, the networks often referred to the stranded people as ‘passengers,’ ‘trackers’ and even ‘tourists,’ without a word about climate change or global warming. Chris Turney, the expedition’s leader, is a professor of climate change at the University of New South Wales. According to Turney’s personal website, the purpose of the expedition is to ‘discover and communicate the environmental changes taking place in the south.’” [53168, 53174]

The Telegraph then reports, “A ship which was used to rescue by helicopter 52 people from a trapped Antarctic ship has now found itself in need of rescue—after it got stuck in heavy ice. Having not moved for several days while preparing to airlift the passengers, the Chinese-owned Snow Dragon is now wedged in ice. The ship was used as a launch pad to pick up the passengers on Thursday, after they had spent nine days stranded. Their ship, the Akademik Shokalskiy, became wedged in ice on Christmas Eve as it was heading towards Antarctica.” (The article makes no mention of the purpose of the trip and refers to the climate change scientists “passengers.” According to NewsBusters.org, “Forty out of 41 stories (97.5 percent) on the network morning and evening news shows since Dec. 25 failed to mention climate change had anything to do with the expedition.” According to NASA, “In late September 2013, the ice surrounding Antarctica reached its annual winter maximum and set a new record. Sea ice extended over 19.47 million square kilometers (7.51 million square miles) of the Southern Ocean. The previous record of

19.44 million square kilometers was set in September 2012.”) [53173, 53200, 53201, 53227, 53273, 53322]

At PJMedia.com Tom Blumer lists “5 myths propping up... Obama.” “1. The economy has become strong, and is getting stronger.” “2. The government’s finances have stabilized.” “3. Obamacare will work out.” “4. We’re running out of time to stop global warming.” “5. Our ‘smart diplomacy’ is holding our enemies at bay.” [53170]

The *Daily Mail* reports, “Italian carmaker Fiat has signed an agreement to take full control of U.S. carmaker Chrysler, paving the way for the creation of the world’s seventh-largest auto group. The New Year’s Day announcement ends months of tense negotiations. Fiat Spa said it could complete its acquisition of Chrysler without having to raise new capital through a rights issue. ...Fiat said it had reached an agreement with the United Auto Workers union-controlled trust fund holding 41.5 per cent of Chrysler’s shares. Fiat already held all the other shares. ...Fiat will pay \$1.75 billion (about 1.35 billion euros) in cash. Another \$1.9 billion (almost 1.5 billion euros) will be paid as extraordinary dividends. The deal is due to close by January 20.” (Obama did not “save” the U.S. auto industry; he saved the Italian auto industry. Fiat will use Chrysler profits to shore up its European losses.) [53175, 53189, 53202]

At Human Events.com John Berlau writes, “In ‘saving’ the American auto industry, Obama gave an American company away. And he gave it away at the expense of pension funds and other secured creditors, which were given a much smaller stake in the new company than they would have been given under traditional bankruptcy proceedings. American manufacturing workers also lost out on the deal; many are now hostages to the woes of Fiat and the Italian economy. ...But ironically, Fiat’s [CEO Sergio] Marchionne has made Chrysler profitable again not by producing more of Fiat’s mini-cars, as the Obama administration urged it to do, but rather by doubling down on Chrysler’s most ‘environmentally incorrect’ light trucks and sport-utility vehicles, such as the Jeep Grand Cherokee and Dodge Durango. In reporting Chrysler’s profit surge, Bloomberg noted that these earnings were ‘boosted by demand’ for Jeep Grand Cherokees, while Fiat has ‘delayed new models such as the Punto hatchback.’ ...Had Chrysler gone through a traditional court-approved bankruptcy *before* it received any government money (as Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney advocated in a 2008 New York Times op-ed), its investors and workers would have had the opportunity to ask questions about Fiat’s financial viability. Even in 2009, Fiat was showing strains as its credit rating had already been downgraded to ‘junk,’ so a good bankruptcy judge might have blocked such a merger.”) [53202, 53203]

On *Special Report* Charles Krauthammer comments, “What we’re experiencing... with this high unemployment [level]... is a new normal. We are now approaching, not quite, but European levels of chronic unemployment. These are people who are not going to return [to work], and in Europe they are merely sustained on the dole for decades. And I think—that’s never happened here—but I think as a result of the slow recovery here, when these people are left behind, that’s going to be our new normal. And that’s why there’ll be a sense of things not having recovered correctly or in any way fully. ...The

great irony here is that Obama has decided he's going to dedicate himself and the rest of his time in office to fighting [income] inequality. He has created the greatest inequality, because of the zero interest rate [policy], because the Fed[eral Reserve] has put a trillion dollars, which had to go into higher assets, meaning the [stock] market. It's the rich who got richer and it's left everyone else behind, and that's why you get the mass of discontent and the sense of the economy not improving. he is the cause and now he's going to redeem us from the misery that he has contributed." (Krauthammer is correct. The difference in income between the wealthy and the working poor has grown considerably under Obama, partly because his policies have led to reduced working hours for many American, and largely because the artificial expansion of the money supply has gone mostly into the stock market.) [53135, 53222, 53806]

On January 3 the White House announces two executive actions relating to gun control: "The Department of Justice (DOJ) is proposing a regulation to clarify who is prohibited from possessing a firearm under federal law for reasons related to mental health, and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is issuing a proposed regulation to address barriers preventing states from submitting limited information on those persons to the federal background check system. ...Some states have noted that the terminology used by federal law to prohibit people from purchasing a firearm for certain mental health reasons is ambiguous. Today, DOJ is issuing a proposed rule to make several clarifications. For example, DOJ is proposing to clarify that the statutory term 'committed to a mental institution' includes involuntary inpatient as well as outpatient commitments. In addition to providing general guidance on federal law, these clarifications will help states determine what information should be made accessible to the federal background check system, which will, in turn, strengthen the system's reliability and effectiveness." (Some will certainly argue that the broadening of the regulations will be misused in an effort to prohibit many individuals from owning guns.) [53139, 53140, 53149, 53182, 53330]

Michelle Malkin writes at Townhall.com, "Is ...Obama sleeping well on his Hawaiian holiday? I can think of many families of American soldiers who might not be enjoying the same bliss right now. That's because 2014 opens with alarming news that the Afghan government will free an estimated 650 prisoners from a Bagram detention facility—including scores involved in deadly attacks on our men and women in uniform. The White House handed over control of the jihadi-clogged prison to the Afghan government last spring. Some 3,000 notorious Taliban and al Qaeda killers call the jail home. Surprise, surprise: After the Obama administration supposedly secured 'private assurances' that no dangerous criminal operatives would be released, U.S. officials are now balking that the agreement has been broken. Everyone, put on your shocked faces. ...The families of the fallen continue to fight for accountability on both sides of the pond, and to push for both the U.S. and U.K. to take meaningful remediation steps to secure coalition bases. It's safe to say that 'Freeing imprisoned Taliban and al Qaeda jihadists who targeted and killed American troops' wasn't on any military family's New Year's wish list. As for the commander-in-chief? It's back to the golf course. Fore!" [53138]

NBCNews.com reports that there is no way for families with ObamaCare coverage to update the Healthcare.gov web site with new information such as the birth of a baby. (If, for example, a family with two children enrolls in ObamaCare and a third child is born, there is no way to let the system know that there are now three children.) “Right now the HealthCare.gov website can’t handle such updates. It’s a reminder that the new coverage for many uninsured Americans comes with a third party in the mix: the feds. And the system’s wiring for some vital federal functions isn’t yet fully connected. It’s not just having a new baby that could create bureaucratic hassles, but other life changes affecting a consumer’s taxpayer-subsidized premiums. The list includes marriage and divorce, a death in the family, a new job or a change in income, even moving to a different community. Such changes affect financial assistance available under the law, so the government has to be brought into the loop. ... Insurers say computerized ‘change in circumstance’ updates to deal with family and life developments were supposed to have been part of the federal system from the start. But that feature got postponed as the government scrambled to fix technical problems that overwhelmed the health care website during its first couple of months. ‘It’s just another example of ‘We’ll fix that later,’” said Bob Laszewski, an industry consultant who said he’s gotten complaints from several insurer clients. “This needed to be done well before January. It’s sort of a fly-by-night approach.”” (It is more than a “fly by night” approach. The situation reflects the monumental stupidity and incompetence of the Obama administration bureaucrats responsible for Healthcare.gov.) [53141, 53142, 53164, 53316]

FreeBeacon.com reports, “The U.S. government is trying to apprehend an al Qaeda terrorist wanted for his role in the 2012 Benghazi terrorist attack that killed four Americans. The suspect, Muhammad Jamal, was imprisoned in Egypt last fall and in September was being held by the Egyptian government. His current whereabouts could not be confirmed, said U.S. officials who spoke on condition of anonymity. One official said Jamal remains in Egyptian custody, contrary to reports that he was in Yemen. Jamal was labeled a designated terrorist by the United Nations Oct. 18, identifying him and the group he formed, the Muhammad Jamal Network, as linked to the Sept. 11, 2012, Benghazi attack. ... The identification of Jamal as an al Qaeda member linked to the Benghazi attack contradicts a recent *New York Times* investigative report that concluded there was no evidence al Qaeda or foreign terrorists were behind the Benghazi attack that is currently the subject of several congressional inquiries.” [53172]

Yahoo News reports, “Secretary of State John Kerry is proposing to offer up US troops to help secure the borders of the new state of Palestine, according to some unconfirmed news reports coming out of Israel. How plausible is the possibility? And would it be a good idea, or, as some military analysts argue, would the White House... be ‘nuts’ to consider it? The US troops would be tasked with helping to prevent anti-Israel forces from coming out of Jordan and reaching Israel, according to Debkafile, an Israeli intelligence and security news service. Palestinian officials are demanding that Israel move its forces from the Jordan Valley, where the US troops would be stationed. This point may have proved pivotal in the US administration’s reported decision to offer them up.” (First, there is no “new state of Palestine.” Second, the likelihood of there being an Israeli-Palestinian agreement is minimal—because the Palestinians refuse to accept the

existence of Israel and want all Jews expelled from the region. Third, in the event that an agreement could be reached, Obama would be asking for trouble if he used U.S. troops to guard any border, as public sentiment against him would be enormous after the first U.S. soldier lost his life—and U.S. troops would most certainly be targeted by the anti-Israeli Muslims. Kerry—who once said, “I’m an internationalist. I’d like to see our troops dispersed through the world only at the directive of the United Nations”—may have made the proposal, but it is largely irrelevant.) [53176, 53946]

During Obama’s Hawaiian vacation, his motorcade traveled for 30 minutes to reach the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Puowaina Punchbowl Crater, where his maternal grandfather, Stanley Armour Dunham, is buried. Obama reportedly remained there for four minutes, and then took his daughters to the Honolulu Zoo (after its 4:30 p.m. closing time, so the family could have the zoo to themselves). [53181]

RT.com reports that the White House’s online “We the People” petitions have been largely ignored by the administration, even though Obama stated the process would “giv[e] Americans a direct line to the White House on the issues and concerns that matter most to them.” Thirty petitions have received enough signatures to warrant a White House response, based on the administration’s own rules, but remain unanswered. [53183, 53184]

Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) announces that he will file a class action lawsuit against the Obama administration over the NSA’s unconstitutional surveillance programs. Paul states, “I’ve asked Internet providers and phone companies to join me in a class-action lawsuit to stop Barack Obama’s NSA from snooping on the American people.” Paul’s lead attorney is Ken Cuccinelli, former attorney general of Virginia. Appearing on *Hannity* with guest host Eric Bolling, Paul invites “anyone with a cell phone” to join the lawsuit by signing up at his 2016 senatorial campaign website. Paul asks, “Constitutionally, can you have a single [search] warrant apply to millions of people?” [53185, 53190, 53193, 53208]

On January 4 Caroline Glick writes, “*The New York Times* just delivered a mortal blow to the Obama administration and its Middle East policy. Call it fratricide. It was clearly unintentional. Indeed, is far from clear that the paper realizes what it has done. Last Saturday the *Times* published an 8,000-word account by David Kirkpatrick detailing the terrorist strike against the US Consulate and the CIA annex in Benghazi, Libya, on September 11, 2012. In it, Kirkpatrick tore to shreds the foundations of ...Obama’s counterterrorism strategy and his overall policy in the Middle East. ...Obama’s first assertion is that radical Islam is not inherently hostile to the US. As a consequence, America can appease radical Islamists. Moreover, once radical Muslims are appeased, they will become US allies, (replacing the allies the US abandons to appease the radical Muslims). Obama’s second strategic guidepost is his claim that the only Islamic group that is a bona fide terrorist organization is the faction of al-Qaida directly subordinate to Osama bin Laden’s successor, Ayman al-Zawahiri. Only this group cannot be appeased and must be destroyed through force. The administration has dubbed the Zawahiri faction of al-Qaida “core al-Qaida.” And anyone who operates in the name of al-Qaida, or any

other group that does not have courtroom-certified operational links to Zawahiri, is not really al-Qaida, and therefore, not really a terrorist group or a US enemy. These foundations have led the US to negotiate with the Taliban in Afghanistan. They are the rationale for the US's embrace of the Muslim Brotherhood worldwide. They are the basis for Obama's allegiance to Turkey's Islamist government, and his early support for the Muslim Brotherhood-dominated Syrian opposition. They are the basis for the administration's kneejerk support for the PLO against Israel. ...With Kirkpatrick's report, the *Times* exposed the utter falsity of both. Kirkpatrick showed the mindset of the US-supported rebels and through it, the ridiculousness of the administration's belief that you can't be a terrorist if you aren't directly subordinate to Zawahiri." [53187, 53385]

"...Kirkpatrick's claim that al-Qaida played no role in the attack was refuted by the *Times*' own reporting six weeks after the attack. It has also been refuted by congressional and State Department investigations, by the UN and by a raft of other reporting. His claim that the YouTube video did spur some of the attackers to action was categorically rejected last spring in sworn congressional testimony by then-deputy chief of the US mission to Libya Gregory Hicks. ...Kirkpatrick's larger message—that the reasoning behind Obama's entire counterterrorist strategy and his overall Middle East policy is totally wrong, and deeply destructive—has been missed because his article was written and published to whitewash the administration's deliberate mischaracterization of the events in Benghazi, not to discredit the rationale behind its Middle East policy and counterterrorism strategy. This is why he claimed that al-Qaida wasn't involved in the attack. And this is why he claimed that the YouTube video was a cause for the attack. ...So pathetically, in a bid to defend Obama and Clinton and the rest of the Democrats, the *Times* published a report that showed that Obama's laser-like focus on the Zawahiri-controlled faction of al-Qaida has endangered the US. By failing to view as enemies any other terror groups—even if they have participated in attacks against the US—and indeed, in perceiving them as potential allies, Obama has failed to defend against them. Indeed, by wooing them as future allies, Obama has empowered forces as committed as al-Qaida to defeating the US. Again, it is not at all apparent that the *Times* realized what it was doing. But from Israel to Egypt, to Iran to Libya to Lebanon, it is absolutely clear that Obama and his colleagues continue to implement the same dangerous, destructive agenda that defeated the US in Benghazi and will continue to cause US defeat after US defeat." [53187, 53385]

In his weekly Internet/radio address, Obama calls on Congress to extend unemployment benefits—complaining that “Republicans in Congress went home for the holidays and let that lifeline expire”—while he spends two weeks in Hawaii (playing eight rounds of golf) and every Democrat member of Congress is also on vacation. Obama says, “We make this promise [of unemployment benefits] to one another because it makes a difference to a mother who needs help feeding her kids while she's looking for work; to a father who needs help paying the rent while learning the skills to get a new and better job. And denying families that security is just plain cruel. We're a better country than that. We don't abandon our fellow Americans when times get tough—we keep the faith with them until they start that new job.” (Unemployment benefits have already been extended for about one and a half years. Obama does not provided any cut-off point, suggesting he

would be willing to extend benefits forever. An extension of unemployment benefits only extends the poor economy, as it provides a job seeker with an excuse not to accept a job offer that isn't "exactly what I was looking for.") [53194, 53209, 53211, 53215]

AmericanOverlook.com reports, "According to the GAO [Government Accounting Office], Obama's administration will be handing over more than \$300 million tax dollars to Muslims to help pay their mortgages. \$110 million of this money will be used as loans for businesses located in [Israel's] West Bank. The name of the group in charge of this is called the Overseas Private Investment Corporation. According to their website, 'OPIC provides financial products, such as loans and guaranties; political risk insurance; and support for investment funds, all of which help American businesses expand into emerging markets.' The OPIC is partnering with a group created by the Palestinian Authority president. The GAO notes, 'PIF is governed by a board of directors and a general assembly appointed by the Palestinian Authority President, and manages investments throughout a number of sectors...' They claim this will help emerging U.S. business in the middle east. Though, some argue this money will be going to terrorist linked groups and businesses [sic]. The OPIC claims all groups who will manage the money have been vetted to make sure the money isn't going to the wrong people." (Some Americans might argue that any foreigners, even if they are not terrorists, are the "wrong people" to be given U.S. tax dollars.) [53199]

In Iraq, al-Qaeda-linked terrorists capture the city of Fallujah and raise their flag over government buildings. FoxNews.com reports, "Hadi Razeij, head of the Anbar province police force, said police had left the city center entirely and had positioned themselves on the edge of town. ... The U.S. State Department expressed its concern in a statement, saying it would continue to work with Iraqi authorities and tribes allied against [the terrorists] 'to defeat our common enemy.'" (U.S. troops left Iraq in late 2011. On October 18, 2012 Obama said, "We focused on the terrorists and al Qaeda is on the run.") Senators John McCain (R-AZ) and Lindsey Graham (R-SC) issue a joint statement: "While many Iraqis are responsible for this strategic disaster, the administration cannot escape its share of the blame. When ...Obama withdrew all U.S. forces ...over the objections of our military leaders and commanders on the ground, many of us predicted that the vacuum would be filled by America's enemies and would emerge as a threat to U.S. national security interests. Sadly, that reality is now clearer than ever." [53204, 53205, 53225, 53226, 53234, 53236, 53238, 53242, 53243, 53264, 53351]

Obama and his daughters return to Washington, D.C., while his wife remains behind in Hawaii. According to Breitbart.com, Obama "reportedly let his wife stay on in Hawaii with friends as a 'birthday present.' Michelle Obama will turn 50 years old on Jan. 17. It is a birthday present whose costs, in separate travel and security expenses, are likely to be borne, in part, by taxpayers. On a previous occasion, when Mrs. Obama left for a Hawaii vacation in advance of her husband, the additional cost to the Treasury was estimated to be at least \$63,000, and potentially upwards of \$100,000." [53216, 53217, 53235, 53237]

On January 5 Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) appears on *Face the Nation* argues for an extension of unemployment benefits—without explaining where the \$26

billion to pay for those benefits will come from. Reid also claims that for every dollar spent on unemployment benefits “the government and the country gets [sic] back 50 cents extra.” (If that were true, the nation would be better off if everyone were unemployed. At Townhall.com Katie Pavlich points out, “Here’s an inconvenient fact: 9.5 million people have left the work force since ... Obama took office in 2009, meaning millions of people haven’t seen their jobs come back and therefore, they’ve given up looking. In addition, the labor participation rate is at its lowest since 1978.” (Some Obama supporters incorrectly claim the decline in the participation rate is the result of retiring “baby boomers,” but Americans age 65 or older are not counted as being in the work force—unless they happen to continue working.) [53207, 53240, 53253]

Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) appears on *This Week* and reports that not only has he been unable to successfully enroll his family in ObamaCare because of web site issues, he incorrectly enrolled his son in Medicaid and sent him an identification card: “I actually tried to get my son signed up through the Kentucky exchange, you know, that the Democrats have said is so good. We didn’t try to get him Medicaid. I’m trying to pay for his insurance. But they automatically enrolled him in Medicaid. ... He had to go down to the welfare office, prove his existence. Then the next thing we know, we get a Medicaid card. ... I’m uncertain now whether I’m enrolled in D.C. and/or Kentucky [plan]. And it’s a mess. I keep getting an error code every time I go in [to the web site]. It will not let me edit my policy to try to make sure that my family is covered. ... This is an unfolding disaster that I don’t think gets better any time soon.” [53210, 53223, 53224, 53230, 53244]

On CNN’s *State of the Union*, “objective” host Candy Crowley asks Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker, a Republican, why anyone who is unemployed or making only the minimum wage would want to vote Republican. (Apparently it does not occur to Crowley that getting a job is better than being on welfare, or that raising the minimum wage results in low-skilled workers losing their jobs. An example is a computerized sorter in use at Hall Winery in Napa Valley which, according to head winemaker Steve Leveque, can sort two tons of grapes in 12 minutes—as opposed to the two hours formerly needed by 15 workers. The more the minimum wage is increased, the more businesses will look to machines to replace them. Future high-paying jobs will be in designing and building those machines, while those workers whose only skills are “grape triage” or bragging about degrees in “LGBT studies” or “climate change” will be begging for jobs. Kristin Rose, owner of the Napoleon Cafe in Jackson, Michigan, tells MLive.com a \$10.10 minimum wage “could kill me as an employer.” Hard Knock Grill chef and kitchen manager Daniel Pratt says, “If you’re paying a dishwasher \$10 an hour, then cooks and other staff, who might have a higher skill set, are going to expect a similar increase. We might have four or five [kitchen] people working at a time, plus myself. A \$3 increase [per hour] a person would be a drastic, drastic change.”) [53705, 54072, 54073, 54355, 54356]

Obama and his fellow Democrats often push an increase in the minimum wage by using emotional terms, saying workers need a “living wage.” Of course, the minimum wage is *not* meant to support a family. It is intended to be nothing more than a wage floor, with

the assumption that most people earn that low wage for only a brief period of time before working their way up, learning new skills, and increasing their value to employers. According to a Pew Research study, 50.6 percent of minimum wage earners are ages 16–24, and 24 percent are teenagers (16–19). Few would argue that a teenager who lives at home with his middle class family and works part-time at a fast-food restaurant should be paid a “living wage”—enough to maintain a family of four. Granted, a man in his forties with a wife and two children at home would have a difficult time providing for that family if he is paid only the minimum wage. The important question to be asked, however, is not, “Why is that man not paid more than \$7.25 per hour?” but “Why has a man in his forties not yet developed enough skills to make him worth more than \$7.25 per hour?” [55112]

Newsmax.com reports, “Millions more Americans are expected to seek medical treatment under Obamacare, but many are likely to have difficulty finding easy access to a doctor. ...The Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) predicts that there could be a shortage of 45,000 primary care doctors in the United States by 2020, and a shortfall of 46,000 specialists. To make matters worse, many primary care doctors do not accept Medicaid patients due to low reimbursement rates, and many of those who are newly insured under Obamacare will be covered through Medicaid. Christine Mitchell, director of federal affairs for AAMC, said many of the estimated 36 million people expected to gain coverage under Obamacare will endure long waits to see a doctor in their community or need to travel far from home for medical care elsewhere. ...Many doctors in the boomer generation will retire. And fewer medical students are opting for primary care in favor of specialties.” [53213]

MedicalDaily.com reports, “In a reversal, the Obama administration on Thursday [January 2] announced they would permanently relax unpopular nutrition rules for the federal school lunch program. The rules were intended to fight childhood obesity by lowering calories and portion sizes, but proved wildly unpopular with students and parents throughout the country. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) initially loosened the regulations in late 2012 by suspending daily and weekly portion limits for grains, meat, and meat alternatives—permitting school districts to rejigger portion sizes without federal overrule. ...The regulatory scheme had drawn protest from not only political conservatives wary of federal oversight but parents and children alike, who complained the lower-calorie meals left children hungry and unsatisfied. In many schools across the country, lunches deemed unpalatable by children were thrown uneaten into the trash. The new rules follow a bill introduced by Senators John Hoeven and Mark Pryor, a Republican from North Dakota and a Democrat from Arkansas, to permanently loosen requirements instituted in 2012 as part of the administration’s focus on the growing problem of childhood obesity and related diseases.” (TheBlackSphere.net comments, “I’m surprised that Michelle Lunch Program Obama hadn’t issued a proclamation, *‘If you like your nutrition plan, you can keep your nutrition plan.’* Because one of her first acts as First Lady was to serve America’s school children crap. That’s why schools had to go BACK to ‘junk meals.’ And apparently they get to keep them. ...Liberal elitists must tinker, as a meth head tweaks. They break things in such a way that what they break is never the same again. In the case of food, they blame fast-food, junk food, and about

everything else, but they won't blame the group they should, which is the kids' parents! It's not foods' fault for fat kids. It's parents who allow them to over-indulge.") [53286, 53287]

USAWatchDog.com's Greg Hunter interviews Shadowstats.com economist John Williams and reports that Williams "thinks 2014 will mark the beginning of hyperinflation. Williams contends, 'You are going to see, early on, a crisis in the dollar that will start to trigger the inflation ...as the inflation picks up, that's going to savage the economy, which is already in a depression. It never recovered.' Forget what you have heard about the so-called recovery. Williams says, 'The consumer is in trouble. There is nothing happening to turn the economy around.' The weak economy is bad news for the dollar. According to Williams, 'Anything that would suggest deficit deterioration here, and a weak economy would do that, will have a devastating impact on the dollar.' And if foreigners start selling some of the 12 trillion U.S. dollar based assets, such as bonds and currency, things will turn ugly fast. Williams says, 'We're dependent on the rest of the world continuing to go along with us and continue to support the dollar. That's not going to happen.' So, the big question everyone is asking is when will the buck take a hit in value? Williams says the dollar will likely begin selling off before the middle of this year, and he adds, 'It's really going to be a currency panic ...when the fundamental selling pressure really starts to pick up, when the selling gets heavy ...in turn, the weakness will be seen in a spike in oil prices and a spike in gasoline prices.' Williams says there will be a panic out of the dollar and he predicts, 'Once you see a massive sell-off here, I see the game as being over.'" (Meanwhile, according to MoneyNews.com, "Despite the 6.5% stock market rally over the last three months, a handful of billionaires are quietly dumping their American stocks ...and fast. Warren Buffett, who has been a cheerleader for U.S. stocks for quite some time, is dumping shares at an alarming rate. ...Fellow billionaire John Paulson, who made a fortune betting on the subprime mortgage meltdown, is clearing out of U.S. stocks too. During the second quarter of the year, Paulson's hedge fund, Paulson & Co., dumped 14 million shares of JPMorgan Chase. ...Finally, billionaire George Soros recently sold nearly all of his bank stocks, including shares of JPMorgan Chase, Citigroup, and Goldman Sachs. Between the three banks, Soros sold more than a million shares." [53266, 53272]

WashingtonPost.com reports that 1,600 applicants showed up for 36 jobs at an ice cream plant in Hagerstown, Maryland. [53422, 53423]

A retired military officer writes, "My wife and I are on Oahu for our annual Hawaii trip with good friends and two granddaughters enjoying the hospitality of the Hawaiian people on this lovely Island. Being retired military allows us the privilege of using the military facilities and especially the highly desirable golf courses. Yesterday, Jan 4, we had a tee time of 12:04 to play golf at Kaneohe Marine Corps on Oahu. We arrived early because we were advised [Obama] was possibly going to play but also that he was leaving to fly back to D.C. that same day. We checked in and were second off and waiting for carts when we were advised that he really may be coming but there was no count of when or how many in the party. We then got body scanned, our golf bags searched and [we were] briefed on the proper behavior expected. [Obama] and his party

finally arrived at 1:00 and he then hit balls on the range and then drove right in front of us on his way to the first tee hollering Happy New Year to the small group (50 or so) golfers waiting to play. They keep two holes clear for him both front and rear and the secret service used 30 carts in all. After he teed off they went down the first fairway and I spotted a single golfer going to the first tee. I hollered at him to get off and he slowly ambled my way and when within talking distance he said he was White House staff and was allowed within the two hole space. I cannot repeat what I said to him. We were finally allowed to tee off at 1:30 and watched as [Obama] bullied his way thru all the young Marines who were able to take a day off as they prepared to go to wherever to protect us all. No words of thank you for your service or how are you doing, just he and three of his civilian high school buddies messing up the day for many. They would make the two groups ahead of his progress move to the side and allow the group to play through. It really is bothersome to view firsthand the egotistic ass that is [Obama]. I asked numerous Marines who were standing around what they thought of him and not one of the thirty or so had any kind words. The common refrain was why did he not come out and join a threesome of young marines and play golf with them. That would have been so appropriate. Why doesn't his staff make a tee time like all of us and cancel if necessary? That would eliminate all the confusion. Why does he not respect the lives of all around him instead of being so arrogant. Thank God he left last evening. We were out there for 5-1/2 hours and quit after 14 holes and left the course with a total lack of respect for [Obama].”

On January 6 MSNBC's Ed Schultz calls Republicans “heartless and cruel” for not wanting to extend unemployment benefits because of the current biting cold weather—which he speculates was caused by “climate change” (previously known as “global warming”). He says: “No one can control the weather. You know what? Not everybody can control their employment situation. Not only can we [not] stop the wind from blowing, we can't stop the Republicans from being heartless and cruel. There is no doubt that we have special circumstances. Just like people are taking special conditions in their lives to deal with these kinds of numbers, we need to be taking certainly some special measurements to help people who have been unemployed for a long time.” [53221]

White House press secretary Jay Carney is asked by ABC's Jonathan Karl how many Americans age 18–35 have enrolled in ObamaCare. Carney replies, “We don't have the data to provide. We don't have data that is ready to be released. Demographic data is not available.” (Either Carney is lying or the Obama administration is incompetent. ObamaCare can succeed only if a large percentage of younger, healthy individuals enroll. It is almost impossible to believe that the government is not paying close attention to the demographics.) [53206, 53282]

Carney is also asked by Ed Henry if Obama is paying for his wife's extended stay in Hawaii. He responds, “As with all personal travel, the first family will appropriately fund personal expenses, Ed, and in line with travel of past presidents and first ladies, the first lady will travel via government aircraft. But you're accurate in your description that this was her decision to remain—actually, [her husband's] suggestion—in Hawaii to spend time with friends ahead of her upcoming very big [50th] birthday, and, you know, if you

have kids, you know that telling your spouse that they [sic] can go spend a week away from home is actually a big present.” (Rush Limbaugh comments, “What a guy. So Obama did give his wife permission to stay in Hawaii as a present. It was his suggestion, that’s what Ed Henry was told here by Jay Carney. Let me tell you how these expenses work, folks. It’s the same for candidates. Moochelle [Michelle] is gonna get on a government plane, probably a Boeing 757, and she’ll get on with whoever. She’s staying at Oprah’s place in Maui with [close Oprah Winfrey friend] Gayle King and [Obama advisor] Valerie Jarrett and [Attorney General] Eric Holder’s wife. That tells me the country is gonna be run from Maui. If Valerie Jarrett’s there, and Moochelle is there, then that’s where the country’s gonna be run from. But, anyway, the way the expenses work, she’ll get on board a government plane, a Boeing 757, and she and Obama will pay the first-class equivalent airfare. Even if it costs \$18,000 an hour to fly that airplane, she will pay the cost of a single first class seat for herself and whoever else from the family. That’s how it’s technically drawn up on paper. And that’s what Jay Carney was talking about.”) [53250, 53251, 53260, 53277]

Meanwhile, etiquette experts criticize Michelle Obama for invitations to her 50th birthday party that advise guests “to eat before you come.” (If the party were an official government event, the taxpayers would pick up the expenses. But because it is a personal celebration, the Obamas have to pay for it. Hence, “Eat before you come.” It is later reported that about 500 guests were invited.) [53509, 53510, 53643, 53704, 53831]

According to a December 15–18 nationwide poll of likely voters conducted by The Morning Consult, “Obamacare remains a challenging midterm issue for Democrats, with a majority of likely voters disapproving of Obamacare, including 65 percent of likely voters who currently say they are undecided when it comes to who to vote for in 2014. These undecided likely voters currently give the Republican Party an 8-point advantage on who they trust to handle healthcare.” Twenty-six percent of Democrats who were polled disapprove of ObamaCare; 80 percent of Republicans disapprove; and 65 percent of undecided voters disapprove. “On the generic Congressional ballot, 53 percent of likely voters say they’d support a ‘Republican who will be a check and balance to Barack Obama,’ while 47 percent prefer a ‘Democrat who will help Obama pass his agenda.’ That’s a six-point GOP edge. Among independents, Republicans hold a 30-point lead on this question.” [53407, 53408]

At Spectator.org David Catron notes that doctors are increasingly refusing to accept new Medicaid patients and are, in fact, “firing” them. “Medicaid, the government program that ostensibly provides health coverage for the poor, imposes so much red tape and pays so parsimoniously that [my own doctor] simply cannot afford to treat these patients if she wishes to avoid bankruptcy. ... This is a conscientious doctor, and she is clearly troubled that Medicaid forces her to choose between solvency and treating patients who truly need care. Nor is she alone. This choice is being forced on physicians across the nation. And the ironically titled Affordable Care Act is about to make the problem far worse. As Avik Roy writes in his new book, *How Medicaid Fails the Poor*, ‘Obamacare will shove 17 million more Americans into Medicaid, the developed world’s worst health care system.’ Thus, over half of the uninsured ACA will allegedly cover will receive nothing but a

useless [identification] card. This is the cruelest deception of the ‘reform’ law. As Roy phrases it: ‘There’s a massive fallacy at the heart of Medicaid and therefore at the heart of Obamacare. It’s the idea that health insurance equals health care.’ And, as is usually the case with the deliberately deceptive fallacies promoted by the Democrats, the target victims are poor Americans. Just as Obamacare’s Medicare Advantage cuts will be felt primarily by low-income seniors, its Medicaid fraud will hurt the country’s most vulnerable patients. It will restrict their access to doctors and reduce the quality of what little care they receive. ...Roy reinforces this point by citing a chilling study from the University of Virginia: ‘Patients on Medicare were 45% more likely to die before leaving the hospital than those with private insurance; the uninsured were 74% more likely; and Medicaid patients were 93% more likely.’ Medicaid coverage is clearly bad for one’s health. And yet Obamacare’s more cynical pimps are now touting Medicaid’s metastasis as an under-reported success story. ...[M]illions of poor patients who will be herded onto Medicaid by Obamacare will be unable to access care. ...The Democrat record regarding the underprivileged isn’t pretty. ...It shouldn’t be surprising, then, that the Democrats have created a health ‘reform’ program that denies poor people access to decent medical care.” [53384]

By a vote of 56–26 the Senate confirms Janet Yellen to succeed Ben Bernanke as chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, effective February 1. Yellen will follow in Bernanke’s footsteps and continue to expand the money supply, creating inflation and setting the stage for future price increases. Former Congressman Ron Paul (R-TX) tells DailyCaller.com Yellen is “worse than average, but I don’t dwell on that at all. It was never the chairman himself, herself that’s the problem. It’s the whole system. ... I put a lot of blame on the problems that we have, the booms and the busts and the unemployment and this recession that we can’t get out of—it’s all due to the monetary system. ...And the head of the Federal Reserve just is the symbolic head of a deeply flawed system that should’ve never been created. I think they’re living a pipe dream and it’s going to soon be very apparent what terrible shape our economy is in. ...They’ve taken the interest rates down to zero, the only tool they have is printing money, creating money out of thin air, so there’s nothing left. And she believes in even doing more of it.” (The government and the Federal Reserve have painted themselves into a corner. The national debt is so large that it would bankrupt the government if interest rates rose even a few percentage points. As a result, the Federal Reserve has to manipulate the interest rate and keep it artificially low. The result is that senior citizens who have saved all their lives for their retirement now find themselves getting almost no return on their deposits. But if the interest rate on the national debt were to increase to only four percent, it would not be long before the government would owe more than \$1 trillion per year on interest alone.) [53274, 53279, 53304, 53314, 53606, 53816]

FoxNews.com reports, “At the same time Secretary of State John Kerry is warning that terrorists are fueling unrest across Iraq and Syria, he is now reaching out to a country his own department for decades has singled out as one of the prime sponsors of terrorism. On Sunday, Kerry suggested that Iran could play a role in Syria peace talks, either formally or informally. The comments, though, have riled groups in the United States concerned about Tehran’s long track record of propping up the Assad regime and fomenting chaos

in the region. Iran this month marks its 30th year on the State Department's list of State Sponsors of Terrorism—while Syria has been on that list longer than any other. 'You have a forest fire that's raging and you're calling in some of the arsonists ...to discuss the best way to put it out,' said Rabbi Abraham Cooper, associate dean of the Simon Wiesenthal Center, a Jewish human rights group. 'It's mind-numbing.'" [53259]

Chuck Canterbury, president of The National Fraternal Order of Police, writes Obama to express outrage over his nomination of Debo Adegbile to be Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice. Canterbury observes, "As word of this nomination spreads throughout the law enforcement community, reactions range from anger to incredulity. Under [Adegbile's] leadership, the Legal Defense Fund (LDF) of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People *volunteered* their services to represent Wesley Cook, better known to the world as Mumia Abu-Jamal—our country's most notorious cop-killer. There is no disputing that Philadelphia Police Officer Daniel Faulkner was murdered by this thug. His just sentence—death—was undone by your nominee and others like him who turned the justice system on its head with unfounded and unproven allegations of racism. ...[Your nomination of Adegbile] can be interpreted in only one way: it is a thumb in the eye of our nation's law enforcement officers. It demonstrates a total lack of regard or empathy for those who strive to keep you and everyone else in our nation safe in your homes and neighborhoods—sometimes giving their lives in the effort." (At [AtlashShrugs.com](#) Pamela Geller writes, "Once again, Obama appoints the most vicious radical to a key leadership position. At [the Department of] *Justice*, no less. An anti-American, enemy of freedom demagogue. Obama's hatred for this country sends shivers up my spine. Radical racist Debo Adegbile has worked hard to free Mumia Abu-Jamal. Abu-Jamal gunned down policeman Daniel Faulkner in Philly in cold blood. As Faulkner tried to arrest Abu-Jamal's brother during a traffic stop, Abu-Jamal shot the policeman once in the back and then stood over him and shot him four more times at close range, once directly in the face. Welcome to Obama's Department of Justice. The inmates are running the asylum.") [53297, 53298, 53299, 53300, 53301, 53393, 53471, 53946, 54824]

At [FrontPageMag.com](#) Matthew Vadum writes, "Like Attorney General Eric Holder, [Debo] Adegbile is a staunch affirmative action supporter and doesn't appear to believe that white Americans are entitled to civil rights protection. Currently he serves as senior counsel to the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, which is chaired by Sen. Pat Leahy (D-VT). It's yet another nomination to high federal office in which Obama isn't even trying to conceal his anti-American radicalism. 'Obama's nominee process involves finding the worst person on earth for that job or any job,' as Daniel Greenfield observes. 'It's a process that never fails.' Interestingly, Adegbile has a personal story that's similar to Obama's. The DoJ nominee was raised by a single mother in the absence of her son's Nigerian father... The NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund is an important component of the left-wing legal firmament. ...Obama calls NAACP LDF 'simply the best civil rights law firm in American history.' The nonprofit litigation shop is supported financially by the usual suspects in the world of radical left-wing philanthropy. Anti-American billionaire and convicted inside trader George Soros has given to the organization through his Open Society Institute (\$950,000 since 2004) and his

Foundation to Promote Open Society (\$833,000 since 2009).” [53303, 53307, 53308, 53393, 53471, 53946, 54824]

“...At the Justice Department, Adebile would replace the notorious Thomas Perez, a radical who was barely confirmed by the Senate as labor secretary on an unusual strict party line vote of 54 to 46 last July. As the nation’s top civil rights enforcer at the Department of Justice, Perez refused to prosecute hate crimes committed against white Americans. He was reportedly instrumental in the Justice Department’s dismissal of a case involving two members of the New Black Panther Party who intimidated white voters in Philadelphia on Election Day 2008. ...Adebile is more measured and circumspect than Perez when speaking publicly, so outrageous, inflammatory quotations from the nominee are harder to find. But the would-be civil rights division chief appears to be just as radical as Perez. ...Adebile lost a case before the Supreme Court last year (*Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder*) in which he argued that large swaths of America are racist hellholes that maliciously prevent minorities from voting. ...He’s an ideologue who believes that the legal system should be used to dispense favors to non-whites. White Americans, he feels, should be treated as second-class citizens in order to make up for America’s past racial injustices, real or perceived. Of necessity, he despises the Constitution. This makes Adebile an ideal Obama nominee.” [53303, 53307, 53308, 53393, 53471, 53946, 54824]

Economics expert Gary North explains how the Democrats erred with ObamaCare and why it will fail: “Always before, welfare state politics has been based on a specific strategy: ‘Benefits first. Costs later.’ This is called front-loading and back-loading. The best examples of this process are Social Security and Medicare. The costs are now coming due for these two programs. ...Politicians care only about the immediate future, namely, the next election. The politicians come to the general public, and they promise that the state will intervene on the side of the middle class. The state will do so also to help the poor. The costs will be borne exclusively by the rich. Politicians are careful never to define how much money is going to be paid by the middle class, especially the upper-middle-class. This is always kept secret. ...By front-loading the benefits, and by back-loading the costs, the politicians have extended the welfare state to encompass virtually every area of life. ObamaCare is the exception. ObamaCare is front-loading the costs, and it is back-loading the benefits. ...The front-loading is taking place today, in a congressional election year. The pain will be imposed on middle-class voters and younger voters prior to the election. It will build all year long. ...Because of the timing of the increased premium costs, which are coming this year, the traditional back loading strategy has hit the Democrats right between the eyes. It took too long to get from the promise, which was made in 2010, and the benefits, which are only appearing this year. ...Congress voted for the bill, and now the targeted losers are finding out just how large the bill really is. They’re finding this out in an election year.” [53265]

“Because of the unique situation in which all Republicans voted against the bill, it is now possible to gain political acceptance by Republicans for the principle of the repeal of ObamaCare. That will have to require the election of a Republican president and Republican majorities in both houses of Congress in 2016. If, as expected, Democrats

lose ground in the Senate in 2014, the scene will be set for a complete repeal in 2017. ...Democrats insist that once the program gets rolling, a majority of voters will support it, and Democrats will be re-elected. ... This is the position of the mainstream media. They are hoping, though of course not praying, that there will be enough beneficiaries on the rolls to offset the losers who had their policies canceled, their premiums increased, and their liabilities increased. So far, this hope is an illusion. The horror stories are going to begin very soon. These horror stories will be people who have had their deductibles increased, and who are hit by a medical bill. They will find out that the deductible must be paid every year. If they get hit by a multi-year disease, they will pay these high deductibles every year from now on. The political pain will be intense. While the mainstream media may not feature these stories, there will be lots of them on the alternative media. Horror stories gain readership. These are human interest stories. There are going to be thousands of them every year. Again, the Democrats have made a mistake. They have voted as a party in favor of a program that has front-loaded the costs and back-loaded the benefits.” [53265]

CNN’s David Hamby comments, “I talked to a former Obama White House person, just before Christmas, when Obama was sort of adrift, figuring out what to do, his poll numbers were pretty low. And he said, ‘Look, [Obama] needs to find an issue to campaign on. This is what he’s good at. He’s really good at campaigning, maybe not governing,’ according to this Democrat.” [53248]

Noting the cold wave affecting much of the nation, Jay Leno quips, “ It is so cold most of the country has numbers lower than ...Obama.” [53247]

On January 7 the Republican National Committee airs radio ads in 12 states, linking various Democrat Senators and Congressmen to the ObamaCare lie of the year: “If you like your plan you can keep it.” According to Politico, the ads will target Senators Mark Begich (D-AK), Mark Pryor (D-AR), Mark Udall (D-CO), Mary Landrieu (D-LA), Kay Hagan (D-NC), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), and Mark Warner (D-VA), and Congressmen Bruce Braley (D-IA), Gary Peters (D-MI), Tim Bishop (D-NY), and Nick Rahall (D-WV). [53232, 53233, 53457]

By a vote of 60–37 the Senate moves forward on considering a three-month extension of unemployment benefits—but the legislation includes no method of funding them. Six Republican Senators join the Democrats to pass the measure: Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), Dan Coats (R-IN), Susan Collins (R-ME), Dean Heller (R-NV), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), and Rob Portman (R-OH). (The three-month extension is an effort by Democrats to force the issue to come up again before the mid-term elections, putting the Republicans on the defensive. The House is unlikely to approve the extension without also demanding \$6.5 billion in offsetting spending cuts, such as the elimination of the wind power subsidy. Republicans would be wise to call the Democrats’ bluff, and agree to extended benefits only if the recipients perform some form of community service in exchange for the continued payments.) [53239, 53245, 53253, 53276, 53278, 53293, 53313, 53389]

Predictably surrounded by shameless, unemployed human props, Obama calls on Congress to once again extend unemployment benefits. He says, "For the Americans who join me at the White House today and millions like them who were laid off in the recession through no fault of their own, unemployment insurance has been a vital economic lifeline. For a lot of people it's the only source of income they've got to support their families while they look for a new job. These aren't folks who are just sitting back, waiting for things to happen. They're out there actively looking for work. They desperately want work. But although the economy has been growing, and we've been adding new jobs, the truth of the matter is, is that the financial crisis was so devastating that there's [sic; there are] still a lot of people who are struggling, and in fact if we don't provide unemployment insurance, it makes it harder for them to find a job. ... And we know, there but the grace of God go I. So that's the values case for this. That's the moral case for this. But there's an economic case for it as well. Independent economists have shown that extending emergency unemployment insurance actually helps the economy, actually creates new jobs. ... Now, I've heard the argument that says extending unemployment insurance will somehow hurt the unemployed because it saps their motivation to get a new job. I... I really want to... I want to go at this for a second. I... you know, I... that really sells the American people short. I meet a lot of ... I... I meet a lot of people. And I can't... I can't name a time where I met an American who would rather have an unemployment check than the pride of having a job." (Obama is, of course, incorrect. Studies have shown that many unemployed people wait until their benefits are ready to run out before they earnestly look for a job. In fact, recessions tend to end when unemployment benefits are exhausted. Additionally, Democrats have frequently claimed that "for every available job there are three people looking for work." There are about 12 million unemployed Americans, so that three-to-one ratio suggests there are about four million available jobs. In fact, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there were 3.925 million job openings in October, 2013. Why then have 3.925 million of those 12 million unemployed not taken those available jobs? Are none of those 12 million people qualified for those 3.925 million jobs?) [54893, 54894]

After Obama delivers his speech calling for an extension of unemployment benefits Rush Limbaugh comments, "This guy is an absolute economic idiot." He's sitting there, he's touting the benefits of unemployment insurance for the last twenty minutes. And, the first thing that comes to my mind is, 'Wait a minute, I thought we had this great economic recovery going because of him,' and because of his astute, brilliant policies. I thought [Obama] had given us an economic recovery, and we're starting to come back here. 'They're reporting fourth quarter growth at four percent, did you hear that? By the way, they're using new metrics to measure [the Gross Domestic Product]; it's nowhere near growing at four percent. But that's what they're saying. And in the midst of all of this economic growth, and all of this economic rebound, the most important thing is avoiding another government shutdown and extending unemployment benefits. [Obama] just said that unemployment benefits actually create new jobs. Now stop and think about that for a second. Unemployment benefits create new jobs. What is unemployment insurance? It is paying people not to work. Let's change the term. Let's get rid of 'unemployment insurance' and let's call it 'paying people not to work. [Obama] just said to resounding applause, well I'm not sure that he got applause, the only thing that's really gotten any

applause in the White House, he's got all kinds of people standing behind him, is when he said 'we can't dare have another government shutdown.' That got a standing ovation. So, it tells you that kind of people are in the room. Anyway, [according to Obama] paying people not to work can grow the economy. Paying people not to work can create jobs." [53246, 53285]

Limbaugh also speculates on what Obama will do after he leaves the White House: "This did not get a lot of attention when it was made public. Shortly before the Christmas break, Obama announced that he was going to continue to live in Washington when his term expires. ...Now, Obama's home is Hawaii, or Chicago. I fully expected Obama and Michelle to set up the Barack Obama Library of Social Justice at the University of Hawaii or something and go back there, and they may in fact do that. But Obama is going to stay in Washington. Can you guess why that might be? ...He's gonna stay in town to make sure that whatever he accomplishes is not unwound. Let me give you an example. ...If the next Republican president says that we are going to start dismantling certain aspects of ObamaCare... Obama is gonna call the media and he's gonna go on TV as though he's still [in power]—and the media will treat him that way, by the way—and he will launch into this Republican president trying to harm people, hurt the American people, trying to unwind the great things Obama did. He's going to stay there to make sure that whatever he's done to remake this country is not changed, is not unwound. He's going to stay there, and the media is gonna cover him. I guarantee you, folks, even after he's out of office, he is going to be treated by the media as though he's still [in office]—and this may be the case even with a Democrat president. Whatever the next president does, the media is gonna go to Obama every day." [53295, 53296]

"Look, folks, Barack Obama has already, along with Bill Clinton, blown up a number of time-honored traditions... One of those is, when your time's up, you go, and you don't comment on your successor. Bill Clinton has blown that smithereens... George H. W. Bush hasn't and George W. Bush hasn't, and neither of them ever will. Ronald Reagan did not ever say a word about Bill Clinton and what he was doing. But I'm here to tell you that within days of the next president's inauguration, Obama is going to be calling press conferences. Wherever he's hanging out, a think tank or whatever, the media's gonna be there, and what Obama thinks of what the next administration's doing is gonna be the news of the day. There's no other reason to stay there. ...You [had] better prepare yourselves for the media continuing to treat him as though he is still [in office]. He is going to be given the opportunity to pass judgment on everything the next president does daily if he wants to, and he will do it. Look, he's not gonna just let these eight years be unwound if the Republicans happen to win. He's not just gonna sit idly by and say, 'Okay, you know, I had my eight years and somebody else is trying to have theirs.' He's gonna stay there and guard the investment. He's gonna stay there and protect the investment. He's going to stay there and make sure that whatever he's done stays in place and intact—and this is gonna be a real challenge for the next president, particularly if it's a Republican. It's gonna be a real challenge. It's gonna be unprecedented, the [predecessor] commenting every day on what you're doing and trying to undermine you if you're trying to take the country in a different direction from that which Obama took it. Do not doubt me on this." [53295, 53296]

“...See, the thing that I don’t think people, particularly Republicans, don’t understand is, this [advancing socialism] is life and death to these people [Democrats]. Transforming this country, getting rid of capitalism, making it a socialist welfare state, they know they can’t do it in eight years. Obama’s moving, no matter what you think, he’s moving much slower than his supporters want him to move. He’s moving much slower than he wants to move. It’s a massive bureaucracy. It’s a massive country. You have to make at least a pretense of doing all this in a democratic way. And so he’s having to go here at a deliberate pace, making remarkable progress, but it’s not nearly as fast his rabid supporters, his party and he would like it to be. After eight years they’re not just gonna go away and leave it to chance that this stuff stays rooted. This is life and death to them. This is why they live. This is why they exist. He’s gonna be staying there to protect his legacy and to make sure it is never unwound. Unless he’s run out of town in shame. I mean anything can happen between now and then but, I mean, if we just have a normal unfolding of the second term—and believe me, if the Democrats win the House in November, there is no such thing as a lame duck second term. They’re gonna be able to do whatever they want, folks. ...The final two years, if they win the House, that’s where they start running at Indy 500 speed implementing the rest of their agenda. There will be no way to stop them. And after that, if that so angers people that the next Republican president wins in a landslide, Obama stays in town to guard what happened to make sure it doesn’t change, and he will have the media and every liberal think tank on his side.” [53295, 53296]

According to WashingtonExaminer.com, the Obama administration issued “a whopping 3,659 rules and regulations” in 2013. ...The surge in regulations has led critics to charge that Congress is now a bystander to federal regulatory agencies.” The Conservative Enterprise Institute’s Wayne Crews comments, “The deterioration of the Constitution’s separation of, and balance of, powers means that regulators and bureaucrats now make most laws. Congress is so 1789, after all. The executive branch increasingly imposes its will: ...Obama and his administration repeatedly say they are not going to wait for Congress, so brace yourselves.” [53404]

At Townhall.com Guy Benson reports, “Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates serves up several devastating accounts and assessments of the Obama administration in a forthcoming book, alleging that the White House’s approach to foreign policy and national security was dominated by political considerations. Gates—who has worked for every president since Richard Nixon, save for Bill Clinton—served as Obama’s Defense Secretary from 2009 to mid-2011. The *Washington Post*’s Bob Woodward reports on the contents of ‘Duty,’ which is due for release later this month: ‘Gates unleashes harsh judgments about ...Obama’s leadership and his commitment to the Afghanistan war, writing that by early 2010 he had concluded [Obama] ‘doesn’t believe in his own strategy, and doesn’t consider the war to be his. For him, it’s all about getting out.’ Leveling one of the more serious charges that a defense secretary could make against a commander in chief sending forces into combat, Gates asserts that Obama had more than doubts about the course he had charted in Afghanistan. [Obama] was ‘skeptical if not outright convinced it would fail,’ Gates writes in ‘Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War.’

Obama, after months of contentious discussion with Gates and other top advisers, deployed 30,000 more troops in a final push to stabilize Afghanistan before a phased withdrawal beginning in mid-2011.’ ...That mission was ordered by Obama himself. Why would Obama put 30,000 additional troops in harm’s way to carry out an effort he believed would fail?” [53270, 53288, 53289, 53290]

“According to Woodward, Gates also writes that he became frustrated by top White House officials’ suspicious and disrespectful attitude toward senior military leaders. He includes a damning story about ...Obama and then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton discussing their Iraq war posturing: ‘All too early in the [Obama] administration,’ he writes, ‘suspicion and distrust of senior military officers by senior White House officials—including [Obama] and vice president [Joe Biden]—became a big problem for me as I tried to manage the relationship between the commander in chief and his military leaders.’ Gates offers a catalogue of various meetings, based in part on notes that he and his aides made at the time, including an exchange between Obama and then-Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton that he calls ‘remarkable.’ He writes: ‘Hillary told [Obama] that her opposition to the [2007] surge in Iraq had been political because she was facing him in the Iowa primary. .?.?. [Obama] conceded vaguely that opposition to the Iraq surge had been political. To hear the two of them making these admissions, and in front of me, was as surprising as it was dismaying.’ ...Gates, who is widely respected and trusted across the political spectrum in Washington, now states that both former Senators privately acknowledged that they were playing cynical politics with the war effort. In other passages, Gates seethes over ‘breaches of faith’ by [Obama], including getting sandbagged on ‘Don’t Ask Don’t Tell’ and budgetary matters. [53270, 53288, 53289, 53290, 53302, 53323, 53362, 53441]

AtlasShrugs.com’s Pamela Geller is not alone in asking, “What took so long, Gates? ...Why didn’t Gates say so at the time, and why did he stay so long?” Gary North writes, “But Gates signed on anyway. The disasters of two wars happened on his watch. He is responsible for them. He could have quit. But he thought he could get credit for being a success. He couldn’t. Now he writes a self-justifying book. ‘It’s not my fault!’ Yes, it is. It was. When you can quit in protest, but you decide instead to stay as a team player on an incompetent team, you become responsible. When you then stay on as a bipartisan team player on an equally incompetent team, you have made the failure yours. As Colin Powell told Bush in 2002, before Bush invaded Iraq: ‘If you break it, you buy it.’ Gates bought it.” [53270, 53288, 53289, 53290, 53302, 53323, 53362, 53441]

Responding to the furor over the Gates book, National Security Council spokesman Caitlin Hayden states, “It is well known that [Obama] has been committed to achieving the mission of disrupting, dismantling and defeating al-Qaeda, while also ensuring that we have a clear plan for winding down the war [in Afghanistan], which will end this year.” [53320]

Congressional Quarterly reports, “The White House is said to be at least a month behind its own schedule for developing a fiscal 2015 budget, which by statute is supposed to be submitted to Congress on the first Monday in February. That will slow work on next

year's spending bills, even though the budget accord negotiated by House Budget Chairman Paul D. Ryan (R-WI), and Senate Budget Chairwoman Patty Murray (D-WA) established overall discretionary spending levels. There is no penalty for a late presidential budget submission, but appropriators cannot hold hearings until they have a chance to review the administration's proposals. Last year, Obama's budget was released two months late, in early April, a delay that factored into Congress' failure to clear any fiscal 2014 spending bills in 2013." [53280, 53281]

A review by health policy experts and independent insurance agents affiliated with the National Association of Health Underwriters conducted for WashingtonExaminer.com concludes that the health insurance plans provided for Walmart employees are better than the ObamaCare policies. The comparison "found that Walmart's plan is more affordable and provides significantly better access to high-quality medical care than Obamacare. ...Walmart offers its employees two standard plans, a Health Reimbursement Account and an alternative it calls 'HRA High' that costs more out of employees' pockets but has lower deductibles. Blue Cross Blue Shield manages both plans nationally. Also offered is a Health Savings Account plan that includes high deductibles but allows tax-free dollars to be used for coverage. For a monthly premium as low as roughly \$40, an individual who is a Walmart HRA plan enrollee can obtain full-service coverage through a Blue Cross Blue Shield preferred provider organization. A family can get coverage for about \$160 per month. Unlike Obamacare, there are no income eligibility requirements. Age and gender do not alter premium rates. The company plan is the same for all of Walmart's 1.1 million enrolled employees and their dependents, from its cashiers to its CEO. A Journal of the American Medical Association analysis from September showed that unsubsidized Obamacare enrollees will face monthly premiums that are five to nine times higher than Walmart premiums. JAMA found the unsubsidized premium for a nonsmoking couple age 60 can cost \$1,365 per month versus the Walmart cost of about \$134 for the same couple. ...Walmart also gives cash to its employees for any health care expense. The annual payments run from \$250 to \$1,000 and are given at the beginning of the enrollment year in an account that can only be used for health care expenses." [53292, 53294, 53310]

According to the Ahlul Bayt News Agency, Obama-backed Syrian rebels left behind 50 beheaded corpses after they withdrew from the city of Aleppo. The agency wryly comments, "Washington has remained indifferent to warnings by Russia and other world powers about the consequences of arming militant groups." [53359, 53360]

According to the Census Bureau, 31.6 percent of Americans were in poverty for at least two months between 2009 and 2011, an increase of 4.5 percent over the pre-recession period of 2005 to 2007. The Heritage Foundation's Robert Rector tells *The Washington Times* that Obama's plans to address poverty "are basically to give more people more free stuff. ... We've spent \$20.7 trillion on means-tested aid since [President Johnson declared a 'war on poverty'] and the poverty rate is pretty much exactly where it was in the mid-1960s. ... When the war on poverty started, about 6 percent of children were born outside of marriage. Today that's 42 percent—catastrophe." [53305]

In response to the extreme cold weather, Obama's "science czar," John Holdren, is trotted out in an Internet video to declare, "The fact is that no single weather episode can either prove or disprove global climate change." Despite that (correct) statement, Holdren claims the cold weather "is a pattern we can expect to see with increasing frequency as global warming continues. ...I believe the odds are that we can expect, as a result of global warming, to see more of this pattern of extreme cold in the mid-latitudes and some extreme warmth in the far north." (If the earth experiences extreme cold, it won't be because Americans are driving SUVs, but because the sun is at its lowest activity levels in 100 years. The *Daily Mail* reports that scientists "say the conditions are eerily similar to those before the Maunder Minimum, a time in 1645 when a mini ice age hit, Freezing London's River Thames. Researchers believe the solar lull could cause major changes, and say there is a 20% chance it could lead to 'major changes' in temperatures. 'Whatever measure you use, solar peaks are coming down,' Richard Harrison of the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory in Oxfordshire told the BBC. 'I've been a solar physicist for 30 years, and I've never seen anything like this.' He says the phenomenon could lead to colder winters similar to those during the Maunder Minimum. 'There were cold winters, almost a mini ice age. You had a period when the River Thames froze.' Mike Lockwood University of Reading says that the lower temperatures could affect the global jet stream, causing weather systems to collapse. 'We estimate within 40 years there a 10-20% probability we will be back in Maunder Minimum territory,' he said.") [53700, 53701, 53778, 54124]

On CNN's *The Situation Room*, Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus tells Wolf Blitzer, "I think there's going to be an avalanche of information on Hillary Clinton and the things that she's done over the years dating back to [Bill Clinton's] governorship in Arkansas and her role in many of the things that happened back then." Priebus notes the Benghazi attack that resulted in the deaths of four Americans, and adds, "This is a very political person who makes decisions based on how the wind blows. With all of the scandal around her, I'm not so sure it'd be that bad for the Republican Party" if she is the Democrat presidential nominee in 2016. "She wanders, and scandal surrounds her." [53328]

A *Timeline* reader notes 2009 comments from a Kenyan named Kitau related to the copies of alleged Obama birth documents from Kenya posted at ThePowerHour.com. Kitau writes, "I happen to be Kenyan. I was born 1 month before Obama at Mombasa medical center. I am a teacher here at the MM Shaw Primary School in Kenya. I compared my birth certificate to the one that has been put on [the Internet] by [attorney Orly] Taitz and mine is exactly the same. I even have the same registrar and format. The type is identical. I am by nature a skeptical person. I teach science here and challenge most things that cannot be proven. So I went to an official registrar today and pulled up the picture on the web. They magnified it and determined it to be authentic. There is even a plaque with Registrar [E. F.] Lavenders [sic; Lavender's] name on it as he was a Brit and was in charge of the Registrar office from 1959 until January of 1964. The reason the date on the certificate says republic of Kenya is that we were a republic when the 'copy' of the original was ordered. I stress the word 'copy.' My copy also has republic of Kenya. So what you say is true about Kenya not being a republic at the time of Obama's birth,

however it was a republic when the copy was ordered. The birth certificate is genuine. I assure you it will be authenticated by a forensic auditor. We are very proud Obama was born here. We have a shrine for him and there are many people who remember his birth here as he had a white mother. They are being interviewed now by one of your media outlets. Fortunately they even have pictures of his parents with him immediately after his birth at the Mombasa hospital with the hospital in the back ground. It will be a proud day for us when it is proven that he was born here and a Kenyan became the most powerful man in the world. I encourage anyone to come here and visit. I will be happy to take you and show you the pictures at the hospital myself as well as my document and many others that are identical to what Taitz posted.” (The 1961 birth certificate, allegedly obtained by a man named Lucas Smith who bribed Kenyan officials, reads, “Coast Province General Hospital, Mombasa, British Protectorate of Kenya. The copy of the birth registration is dated February 17, 1964 and states, “Office of the Principal Registrar, Coast Province, Republic of Kenya.”) [4145, 4150, 4152, 4156, 4206, 4207, 4404, 4408, 13065, 53311]

On *Special Report*, Fox News senior political analyst Brit Hume comments, “The administration’s appeal for a further extension of unemployment benefits may succeed in putting Congressional Republicans in a tight spot if they resist. In that sense it may be a shrewd political move. Yet embedded in it is an extraordinary acknowledgment of failure by [Obama] and his party. We are now four and a half years into an economic recovery that Democrats keep telling us is getting better all the time. Yet the job market remains so weak, the jobless rate so high, that [Obama] considers it an emergency [to extend benefits].” (The White House calls the situation an emergency—because it is in Obama’s best interests to deflect attention from the ObamaCare fiasco and to put pressure on Republicans to dare to refuse to spend money that does not exist.) [53271, 53275, 53319]

In Virginia, relatively unknown Republican candidate Wayne Coleman trails Democrat Lynwood Lewis by a mere 10 votes in a special election for state senate seat in a district Obama won by 15 points in 2012. Larry Sabato, of the University of Virginia’s Center for Politics, tells *WeeklyStandard.com*, “I’m amazed that Lewis didn’t win by more in that district. Lewis is a member of House of Delegates. Coleman’s barely known.” Sabato suggests a “substantial motivation gap” between Democrat and Republican voters—with the latter so incensed by ObamaCare and Obama’s other action that not bothering to vote becomes out of the question for many of them. (If Lynwood is certified the winner of the election, Coleman may request a recount.) [53345]

On January 8 Hugh Hewitt writes at *Townhall.com*, “*Duty* by Robert Gates has been read in full by only a handful of the tens of thousands who will eventually pour over it, but already two or three judgments it renders won’t ever be forgotten. From Greg Jaffe’s review in the *Washington Post*: ‘He recounts his thoughts during a tense 2011 meeting with Obama and Gen. David H. Petraeus, then in charge of U.S. and NATO forces in Afghanistan, in the White House Situation Room: ‘As I sat there I thought: [Obama] doesn’t trust his commander, can’t stand [Afghan President Hamid] Karzai, doesn’t believe in his own strategy and doesn’t consider the war to be his. For him, it’s all about getting out.’ From Chris Cillizza’s articles on the book analysis in the same paper, two takeaways, the first noting that Gates said about Vice President Joe Biden that he has

[been] ‘wrong on nearly every major foreign policy and national security issue over the past four decades.’ The second Cillizza piece, zeroing on the far more important revelation, relays Gates portrait of Hillary Clinton—softened by some kind words along the way: ‘Hillary told [Obama] that her opposition to the [2007] surge in Iraq had been political because she was facing him in the Iowa primary. ...[Obama] conceded vaguely that [his] opposition to the Iraq surge had been political. To hear the two of them making these admissions, and in front of me, was as surprising as it was dismaying.’ These are hammer blows, each of them, and there will be more as the general public and not the White House-protecting MSM [mainstream media] gain access to the book.” [53309, 53317]

“Take a look at Bob Woodward’s expanded assessment this morning, which evolves as he finds new and even more searing slices at Team Obama: ‘Gates says his instructions to the Pentagon were: ‘Don’t give the White House staff and [national security staff] too much information on the military options. They don’t understand it, and ‘experts’ like Samantha Power will decide when we should move militarily.’ Power, then on the national security staff and now U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, has been a strong advocate for humanitarian intervention.’ ...Like early reports from a remote region hit by a 7.0 trembler, the early assessments of *Duty* almost certainly fail to capture its full impact. Only after the whole book is available for a few weeks to all interested parties—including the military from its senior ranks to its greenest private to its rolls of retired, wounded and widowed—will the full impact of the important memoir be known.” [53309]

Gates also writes in *Duty*, “I felt that agreements with the Obama White House were good only for as long as they were politically convenient.” (Of course, most Obama observers do not need to read Gates’ book to know that. The Heritage Foundation’s James Carafano comments, “You don’t need a book from the former secretary to know that many of the decisions Obama made during Gates’ watch were a disaster.” Carafano spares no criticism of Gates: “It’s hard not to see the former secretary as an enabler for some of [Obama’s] worse decisions. We’ll have to read his account and measure it against what else we know to really trace the roots of military decline under Obama and how the nation wound up less safe than when he took office.”) Another quote from Gates’ book: “I worked for Obama longer than Bush and I never saw his eyes well up. The only military matter, apart from leaks, about which I ever sensed deep passion on his part was ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.’” (The deaths of soldiers did not affect Obama emotionally, but allowing gays to serve openly did.) Of a meeting in which it was learned that Obama might keep troops in Iraq longer than was first anticipated, Gates writes, “I was sitting across from [then-] House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and thought she alternately looked like she had swallowed an entire lemon or was simply going to explode. She drummed her fingers on the table and had a white-knuckled grip on her pencil.” [53334, 53340, 53441]

Obama shares lunch and makes five appearances with Vice President Joe Biden in an effort to show his support after the release of the Gates book quote that Biden was, “wrong on nearly every major foreign policy and national security issue over the past

four decades.” The White House calls Biden, “one of the leading statesmen of his time.” (DailyCalller.com notes, “The public embrace is very unusual. Biden is rarely given much billing in the White House’s schedules, and he is hardly ever photographed with Obama outside a major bill signing or ceremonial event. ...But Obama’s embrace of Biden has a political purpose. Biden and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton are competing for the Democratic Party’s 2016 nomination. Clinton is believed to be far ahead of Biden, but either politician would help Obama by cementing his regulatory policies if they [sic] were elected by the voters.”) [53312, 53324, 53327]

Iraq’s ambassador to Washington, Lukman Faily, tells *The Washington Times*, “The [Obama] administration has to have a better understanding of any adverse impact of any delay in provision of support to Iraq. It cannot afford a whole town or province of Iraq falling to al Qaeda and becoming a safe haven. It’s against the U.S. strategic interest. It’s against the U.S. national security to do that.” Asked whether the White House could do more to improve its relationship with Iraq, Faily says, “To a certain extent they can. But we are no longer in a period in which we had President Bush, who took ownership of that relationship. ... You have a reflection of, ‘Should we have left or should we have not left at the end of 2011?’ To me, in our analysis of that, the abruptness of the U.S. forces leaving, versus our own Iraqi desire to have sovereignty, what we are seeing now is the immediate aftermath of those two things—in which there was no clarity to the day-after scenario. It’s not a matter of blame. It’s a matter of short-termism arriving over the national strategic interests of the countries. For example, the U.S. forces left, but by the time they left, we had no air force. And then we were blamed [by Washington], why the Syrian overflights took place. We had no air force, we can’t force a plane down. And now we’re asking for F-16s, and the U.S. says, why do you need F-16s?” [53329]

At NationalReview.com Patrick Brennan reports, “U.S. officials have told the *Washington Post* that they believe that former Guantanamo Bay detainee and al-Qaeda-linked militant Abu Sufian bin Qumu was involved in the September 11 terrorist attack that killed four Americans in Benghazi, Libya—a claim specifically denied in the *New York Times*’ report last week about the tragedy. Rumors have flown about bin Qumu’s involvement in the attack for a long time: Fox News reported the connection just a week after the attack in 2012, and *60 Minutes*’ ridiculously thinly sourced report this winter about the attacks repeated the claim, though without any evidence of further sourcing. ...Bin Qumu’s group is about to be listed as a terrorist organization by the United States for their role in the Benghazi attack. ...Why is bin Qumu’s involvement important? Well, superficially, his links go straight to the heart of al-Qaeda—‘core al-Qaeda,’ the Arabs based in Afghanistan and Pakistan who perpetrated 9/11 and whose organization the Obama administration has repeatedly claimed to have effectively eliminated. Bin Qumu traveled to Afghanistan in the 1990s to train with bin Laden, fought the U.S. there in the 2000s, and then was captured and sent to Guantanamo Bay. When he was released from Guantanamo Bay, he was turned over to the Libyan government, who held him for a while and then released him...” [53315, 53321]

WCVB reports that Macy's is closing some stores and laying off 2,500 workers. The stores are located in Mesa, Arizona; Overland Park, Kansas; Florissant, Missouri; Irondequoit, New York; and Murray, Utah. [53318, 53447]

About 175 unionized employees of a casino restaurant in New York lose their jobs, months after a labor arbitrator ordered pay increases that doubled their average pay—but caused the restaurant to lose even more money than it had been losing. Casino spokesperson Kerry Lyon tells *The New York Times*, “If we allowed it to remain open, it would have ultimately had a negative impact. If that’s consistently losing money then it becomes a drain on other parts of the business, and then it becomes harder to sustain a business that you certainly want and the community wants to survive.” Union spokesman John Turchiano says, “I’m very upset about this. We are doing everything possible to assist these workers right now.” (Some might argue that the labor union should have considered the impact of demanding wage increases from a money-losing venture. It can be assumed Obama will still demand an increase in the minimum wage in his January 28 State of the Union Address, despite evidence that paying workers more than the market justifies is a recipe for increased unemployment.) [53580]

Obama’s approval/disapproval rating stands at 41/53 in a national Quinnipiac poll. Among women, Obama is 44/49; among men he is 36/58. On the economy, Obama is 39/58; on the federal budget, 34/60; on foreign policy, 41/51. In addition, “Voters want Republicans to take the U.S. Senate 46–42 percent, with independent voters going for the GOP 45–40 percent. Looking at the House of Representatives, 46 percent want Republicans to keep control and 44 percent want Democratic control. ...Raising the minimum wage will lead businesses to cut jobs, voters say 50–45 percent, with Republicans seeing job cuts 68–29 percent and Democrats saying no 65–29 percent. Independent voters expect job cuts 51–45 percent.” [53409]

According to TMZ.com, “Michelle Obama’s visit to Oprah’s Hawaii compound has crippled the neighborhood around O’s home ...and some neighbors are pissed. Some of the residents and business people around Oprah’s palatial 12-bedroom Maui estate—where Michelle recently retreated to spend the last few days of her 40s—are all telling the same story... Michelle’s visit is making day-to-day life almost impossible. The owner of nearby Goble’s Flower Farm tells us... security checkpoints have been set up on the roads... blocking customers from shopping there. Other business owners complain they can’t stock their shelves because road closures have screwed up their deliveries. A worker at Grandma’s Maui Coffee tells us, employees are arriving VERY late to work. And fun is also affected. Recreational areas (like hiking trails) have also been shut down.” [53325, 53326, 53338]

Breitbart.com reports, “The attorney heading the internal investigation into potential unfair targeting of conservative groups by the IRS is a frequent and significant donor to both the Democratic National Committee and ...Obama, [Congressman] Darrell Issa [R-CA] revealed today, in what he calls a ‘startling conflict of interest’ that jeopardizes the investigation.” Issa calls the selection of Barbara Bosserman, a trial attorney within the IRS’s Civil Rights Commission, “unbelievable” and “highly inappropriate.” (Obama and

Holder know the appointment of Bosserman is inappropriate; they do not care. They want a whitewash, and they are daring Congressional Republicans to do something about it.) [53331, 53332, 53336, 53350, 53388, 56037]

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie fires key aide Bridget Anne Kelly immediately after learning from leaked emails that she intentionally used a “traffic study” to tie up traffic in the town of Fort Lee because its mayor did not endorse her boss for reelection. Christie claims he knew nothing of the action and the media—which did not demand that Obama fire anyone over Operation Fast and Furious or the Benghazi, IRS, or NSA scandals—immediately smells blood and suggests his White House hopes are over. Townhall.com political editor Guy Benson writes, “Simple. If Christie cleans house and is telling the truth about his own knowledge, he’s fine. If he’s not being fully honest, he’s in trouble.” (The mainstream media, worried that Christie could both capture the GOP nomination and defeat Hillary Clinton, hopes he is lying.) “If Christie is being fully truthful, this kerfuffle will blow over. Indeed, it *could* end up benefiting Christie, whose decisive response to a burgeoning political emergency over the last 24 hours has been impressive. It was also an object lesson in contrasting leadership styles. ...Obama answers few questions from the press, blames others, fires nobody, and has even derided serious issues as ‘phony’ once the immediate political risk passes. Christie’s presser lasted two hours, during which time he answered dozens of questions, responding in detail to endless follow-ups. Again, how he emerges from all of this depends on his veracity. If he’s telling the truth, and I happen to believe that he is, ‘Bridgegate’ will be a footnote. If he’s not—especially in light of his vehemence today—he’ll look like a pathological liar, and he can kiss any higher ambitions goodbye.” (DailyCaller.com points out that Bill Clinton aide Michael Whouley concocted a scheme during the 2000 New Hampshire primary to keep supporters of Al Gore’s chief opponent, Bill Bradley, from getting to the polls: Gore’s motorcade drove around pro-Bradley neighborhoods to tie up traffic and keep people from voting. Whouley is now working on getting Hillary Clinton elected in 2016. If Christie learns little from the fiasco, he will at least learn that the media long knives will be out to get him every step of the way if he runs for president in 2016—and especially if he wins the GOP nomination.) [53365, 53368, 53374, 53376, 53377, 53378, 53437, 53438, 53879]

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) moves forward with regulations requiring that coal-fired power plants limit carbon dioxide emissions to 1,100 pounds per megawatt hour or electricity produced. At PJMedia.com Bridget Johnson notes, “To meet those standards, plants will have to install carbon capture and sequestration [CCS] technology, which stores the carbon dioxide in geologic formations. A 2010 GAO study found that the technology might be ready in 10 or 15 years, dependent on overcoming economic, legal and technical hurdles—but those barriers remain unconquered today.” (The EPA is therefore imposing a rule that coal-fired power plants have no way to comply with.) The GAO study also concluded that “...CCS would increase electricity costs, and some reports estimate that current CCS technologies would increase electricity costs by about 30 to 80 percent at plants using these technologies.” Senator John Barrasso (R-WY) comments, “It’s absolutely unbelievable that on the 50th anniversary of the war on poverty, the EPA has just announced another regulation that will increase poverty in coal

country. Less than one day after ...Obama pledged to help unemployed Americans, his administration is rolling out red tape that will destroy more jobs and increase energy costs. In addition to contradicting current law, this new regulation will put more Americans out of work and make it even harder for people to provide for their families. It's now more important than ever for Congress to pass the National Energy Tax Repeal Act and protect American jobs across coal country." Senator David Vitter (R-LA) states, "In typical EPA fashion, they're putting the cart before the horse to advance their environmental policy agenda. They're moving forward with a controversial rule to regulate carbon based on technology that isn't commercially available. Not only is this wrongheaded, it's beyond the scope of their legal authority."

Meanwhile, DailyCaller.com reports, "Senate Democrats are planning on setting up a global warming task force to revive the issue in Congress and help ...Obama achieve the goals set out in his climate agenda," and Senators Barbara Boxer (D-CA) and socialist Bernie Sanders (I-VT) "introduced a bill... to tax carbon dioxide emissions..." Sanders laughably claims that taxing carbon emissions "will help families and businesses across America save money." While Senate Democrats seek to impose a carbon tax, Australia is considering the repeal of its carbon tax—which has produced few results beyond higher prices for families and businesses. [53339, 53369, 53372, 53419, 54011]

Congressman Mike McIntyre (D-NC) announces he is retiring at the end of the term. (Although McIntyre voted against ObamaCare in 2010, he would likely face an uphill battle in 2014.) Congresswoman Carolyn McCarthy (D-NY) also announces her retirement. (Her seat is likely to remain in the Democrat column.) [53333]

ABCNews.com reports, "The White House is planning to make a major play to sign up young and healthy Americans for Obamacare when the Winter Olympics open next month. The Department of Health and Human Services will launch a TV ad blitz to take advantage of anticipated increased viewership on NBC stations which will carry the Olympic coverage between Feb. 7 and 23, an administration official confirmed to ABC News. The official said the ads would run in markets with the highest rates of uninsured, but declined to specify the locations or the amount that would be spent." [53335, 53346]

DailyCaller.com reports, "Wisconsin insurance department officials are warning customers that HealthCare.gov is displaying incorrect prices for some exchange plans. Summaries for several Wisconsin insurance plans on HealthCare.gov indicate that the plan has no deductible, when customers will actually be on the hook for out-of-pocket costs. Other plans' detailed summaries of costs and services provided have been switched around, preventing Wisconsin customers from actually knowing what product they're purchasing at what price. The federal government is aware of the problem and working on a solution, according to Wisconsin insurance department spokesman J.P. Wieske, but 'at least several thousand people' in Wisconsin have been affected by the errors. Another signature glitch was uncovered in Maryland this week. HealthCare.gov's search feature to find in-person assistance for picking out a coverage plan is sending consumers with a state-run exchange across state lines to HealthCare.gov for personal help." [53337]

Despite Obama's claim that he has al-Qaeda "on the run," CNN.com reports, "From around Aleppo in western Syria to small areas of Falluja in central Iraq, al Qaeda now controls territory that stretches more than 400 miles across the heart of the Middle East, according to English and Arab language news accounts as well as accounts on jihadist websites. Indeed, al Qaeda appears to control more territory in the Arab world than it has done at any time in its history." Morning Jolt's Jim Geraghty writes, "Remember, 'Bin Laden is dead and Detroit is alive?' Detroit is bankrupt and al-Qaeda now controls more territory than ever." Pamela Geller writes, "Al Qaeda is thriving in the Middle East and Africa. The spread of evil is the symptom of a vacuum. Whenever evil wins, it is only by default: by the moral failure of those who evade the fact that there can be no compromise on basic principles (Ayn Rand). And Obama has compromised on every basic principle of freedom and defense of liberty. That's why the Middle East has descended into chaos so far and so fast." [53339, 53361]

At PJMedia.com Michael Ledeen writes, "Al-Qaeda is back in Fallujah and Ramadi, where we defeated them in the recent past. Everyone in the Middle East knew it, and they all knew al-Qaeda was on the ropes. ... In the ebb and flow of the global war in which we are so reluctantly engaged, that was a moment to be seized. Instead, our new leaders judged it was the perfect time to walk away. They have been walking away ever since. And they had plenty of support, from deep within American tradition, from that oft-fatal conviction that peace is normal and war is an aberration, when the opposite defines human history. So we walked away, abandoning those who had staked their future to America's commitment to freedom, and giving hope and time to our enemies, who regrouped and attacked again. Thus, Iraq, where the slaughter often exceeds the death toll in Syria. Thus, Syria itself. And Lebanon. Al-Qaeda, and others like them, can now say, 'You see, Allah is indeed with us. We are stronger than ever. Much stronger. We used to have bands of terrorists, but today we have armies. The Americans have run away from Iraq, where our flag now flies, and they are running away from Afghanistan, where the Taliban are preparing to impose God's [sic; Allah's] will. The future is clear. We will win. Join us, or perish.' That is the meaning of Fallujah. And everyone in the Middle East knows it. These Americans can win some battles, but they do not have the stomach to win the war." [53351]

"...That's what happens when you deny reality and insist that you can achieve peace by making nice to your enemies; you get more war, with even fewer good options than before. George W. Bush bequeathed Obama a greatly weakened al-Qaeda, a lot of discouraged Islamists, and a cautious Iran. Five years later, Obama faces rampant Islamic forces, new al-Qaeda armies, and an Iranian regime that believes he will bend to their wishes. Our enemies expect to keep fighting until they have defeated us, even if they get beaten up along the way. That's Fallujah again, a sort of Islamist version of the Brezhnev doctrine: once they've conquered territory, it's rightfully theirs forever. They think they've proven it. Fallujah means we can expect things to get worse. Why shouldn't our enemies press ahead? Wouldn't you, in their boots? And why should anyone think it's strategically wise to bond with the new America? The Egyptian generals will explain to you that the Americans can't be trusted to support their friends. Here in Washington, some pundits are saying that things are actually going well, since radical Sunnis and

Shi'ites are killing one another. The problem with this cheery outlook is that eventually one of them will win, and the winner won't be good for us. Moreover, Sunnis and Shi'ites have demonstrated they can work well together when the mission is killing Americans. They can do that even when they're killing one another. Just wait." [53351, 54067]

Home Depot co-founder Bernie Marcus tells the Fox News Channel's Neil Cavuto, "[I]t's just the beginning [of the ObamaCare crisis]. Now you have to remember that the mandate, they put off the big companies until 2015, supposed to come in 2014 with everybody else. So you haven't really seen it hit. And I speak to a lot of business owners and small businesses especially—people who have 100, 200, 300, 400 people working for them [who haven't decided if they will cancel insurance for their employees or move more full-time workers into part-time positions]. ...Neil, you haven't seen anything yet. And what you are going to see in January of 2015, right after the elections are over—boy, the Democrats look beautiful on this one, it is politics as usual. They have put off this thing because America is going to be hit so hard. All of middle-class America is going to get very, very hurt, very, very hurt by this. Because that is where it is going to come out. So if you are somebody working for a living, and you have been doing this for a number of years and your employer has been covering you and paying the premium for you, you are going to end up in two ways—number one, you are going to end up with very little insurance and [number two,] you are going to end up with very, very high co-pays, and you are going to end up with just a mess on your hands." [53380, 53381, 53403]

At CBSNews.com Sharyl Attkisson reports, "The State Department renewed the lease for the U.S. compound in Benghazi two months before the Sept. 11, 2012 terrorist attacks without requiring the facility to meet normal security standards. That news comes from an interview Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC), conducted with a survivor of the attacks. The survivor, a State Department diplomatic security agent whose name isn't being disclosed, spoke behind closed doors in late November to Senators Graham, Bob Corker (R-TN), and Robert Menendez (D-NJ). The previously-undisclosed existence of the year-long lease calls into question the State Department's designation of the compound as 'temporary' and therefore exempt from normal security requirements. ...The lease renewal came shortly after a June 2012 assault in which an improvised explosive device blew a giant hole in the exterior wall of the facility. Graham also says he learned that in addition to other denied requests, the State Department's Regional Security Officer for Libya asked for stronger security for the compound in August 2012 but it was denied." [53341, 53342]

On *The Kelly File*, Maureen Faulkner, the widow of slain police officer Daniel Faulkner, excoriates Obama for nominating to a key Department of Justice (DOJ) position "civil rights" attorney Debo Adegbile—who worked to reverse the death sentence for her husband's killer, Mumia Abu-Jamal. Faulkner tells host Megyn Kelly, "I was absolutely outraged by ...Obama to make this decision [sic] to have a man who defended a murderer, someone who murdered a police officer with pre-meditation and malice, is a radical, is a Black Panther and to give him an appointment, to nominate him to the Department of Justice, it's a disgrace. It's a disgrace. I feel police officers throughout this

country are out there to protect the public and they should be respected and by ...Obama nominating him, it's like spitting on all of our officers and our federal agents throughout America." Former DOJ civil rights attorney J. Christian Adams adds, "Don't forget, the NAACP Legal Defense Fund [where Adegbile worked] chose to get involved in this because Mumia Abu-Jamal is a celebrity. He is a celebrity on the left. The murderer, strangely enough among groups on the left, is a celebrity because he's perceived as a symptom of America's oppression of people in Philadelphia who look this way [black]. So, this is a guy who on the left has been a hero and to get within 100 feet of this cop killer, to defend him by choice, disqualified you from a position at the Justice Department in my view. This is a man with a radical racial background and that's exactly why [Obama] nominated him." [53356]

On January 9 Gallup reports, "The U.S. Payroll to Population employment rate (P2P)...fell to 42.9% in December, from 43.7% in November. The current rate is the lowest Gallup has measured since March 2011. ...Gallup's P2P metric estimates the percentage of the U.S. adult population aged 18 and older that is employed full time by an employer for at least 30 hours per week." Ed Morrissey observes at HotAir.com, "The drop in the payroll/population rate suggests we will see another drop in the civilian workforce participation rate, which is already at or near 36-year lows. We will probably see another large number for people moving out of the workforce, which has the statistically perverse result of lowering the U-3 unemployment rate while chronic unemployment becomes worse. Keep an eye on tomorrow's report for the comparison between the number of jobs added and the number of people leaving the workforce. I'd expect that to be a negative ratio, perhaps by a significant amount." [53343, 53344]

According to the Treasury Department, the Federal Reserve holds \$2,212,924,000,000 in U.S. Treasury securities. (That is, \$2.213 trillion of the federal government's debt is being held by the Federal Reserve—even more than the \$1.317 trillion held by China.) According to CNSNews.com, "The Fed also owns \$1,490,167,000,000 in mortgage-backed securities guaranteed by Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and Ginnie Mae. At the end of January 2009, the month President Barack Obama was first inaugurated, mainland China owned \$744.2 billion in U.S. government debt and the Fed owned \$475.129 billion." (It is worth noting that the Federal Reserve does not "buy" U.S. bonds or notes with "real money." It merely makes accounting entries and miraculously "creates money out of thin air." The U.S. Treasury then spends that money, which in turn causes price increases—because the money supply has been inflated while the supply of goods and services has not.) [53629]

NYTimes.com reports, "Islamic extremist groups in Syria with ties to Al Qaeda are trying to identify, recruit and train Americans and other Westerners who have traveled there to get them to carry out attacks when they return home, according to senior American intelligence and counterterrorism officials. These efforts, which the officials say are in the early stages, are the latest challenge that the conflict in Syria has created, not just for Europe but for the United States, as the civil war has become a magnet for Westerners seeking to fight with the rebels against the government of President Bashar al-Assad. At least 70 Americans have either traveled to Syria, or tried to, since the civil

war started three years ago, according to the intelligence and counterterrorism officials—a figure that has not previously been disclosed. ...Fearing that the handful of Americans who have returned to the United States pose a threat because they may have received extensive training and jihadist indoctrination, the F.B.I. is conducting costly round-the-clock surveillance on a small number of these individuals, according to the officials. ...Most of the Americans who have traveled to Syria are still there, the officials said, though a few have died on the battlefield. Nicole Lynn Mansfield, 33, of Flint, Mich., a convert to Islam, was killed last May while with Syrian rebels in Idlib Province. Another American, Eric G. Harroun, a former Army soldier from Phoenix, was indicted in Virginia by a federal grand jury last year on charges related to allegations that he fought alongside the Nusra Front, one of the Syrian opposition groups linked to Al Qaeda. In September, he pleaded guilty to a lesser charge involving conspiracy to transfer defense articles and services, and was released from custody. Mr. Harroun's involvement was hardly a secret. Last February, he bragged about his role, posting a photo on his Facebook page saying, 'Downed a Syrian Helicopter then Looted all Intel and Weapons!'" [53449, 53450, 53451]

Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei states, "If the Americans are not acting in a [particular] issue, the reason for this is lack of capability, not lack of hostility. They [the Americans] have said, 'If we could, we would dismantle Iran's nuclear industry'—but they cannot... The recent talks showed both America's hostility and its impotence." [54334]

CompleteColorado.com reports, "At the height of controversy surrounding ...Obama's promises on the federal health care overhaul, U.S. Senator Mark Udall's [D-CO] office worked assiduously to revise press accounts that 249,000 Coloradans received health care cancellation notices. Because the 249,000 figure was produced inside the Colorado Division of Insurance, Udall's office lobbied that agency to revise the figure, or revise their definition of what qualified as a cancellation." According to former Congressman Bob Beauprez, writing at Townhall.com, "When Jo Donlin, the director of external affairs for the [Colorado] Division of Insurance informed the Senator's office that the Division stood by the report, Udall turned up the heat. Donlin got what she described as a 'very hostile call' from the Senator's deputy chief of staff." (In other words, Udall—who voted for the Affordable Care Act in 2010—unsuccessfully pressured the state to "cook the books" so the ObamaCare fiasco would not look as bad as it was in reality. Udall is up for reelection in 2014.) Colorado officials later increase the 249,000 figure to 335,000. [53347, 53348, 53366, 53367, 53383, 53434, 53663]

CNSNews.com reports, "The Obama administration, concerned that 'zero tolerance' policies are sending too many students to court instead of the principal's office, on Wednesday urged schools to back off—particularly in the case of minority students and other federally protected groups. 'Racial discrimination in school discipline is a real problem today,' said Education Secretary Arne Duncan, who joined Attorney General Eric Holder in speaking about the new guidance. Holder said 'students of color and those with disabilities' often receive 'different and more severe punishment than their peers.' While the nation's schools are under local control, they must follow federal civil rights

and disability laws. And the new guidance for the nation's schools could subject more of those schools to federal discrimination lawsuits. ...While the guidance is 'voluntary,' it encourages schools to set up a 'recordkeeping system' that tracks demographic information on misbehaving students, including their 'race, sex, disability, age and English-learner status' along with the infraction, the discipline imposed, who imposed it, etc. 'Schools should establish procedures for regular and frequent review and analysis of the data to detect patterns that bear further investigation,' the guidance says." (It is not enough to discipline a student who is disruptive, breaks a window, or is caught with marijuana. The Obama administration also demands that the school keep track of the race and gender of the offenders.) "The guidance says schools should also analyze the demographic data to assess the impact their discipline policies and practices are having on students—'especially students of color, students with disabilities, and students at risk for dropping out of school, trauma, social exclusion, or behavior incidents, to identify any unintended disparities and consequences.'" [53352]

DailyCaller.com later reports, "Education experts decried [the] memo from the Departments of Justice and Education that instructs public schools throughout the country to cease punishing disruptive students if they fall into certain racial categories, such as black or Hispanic. The letter... states that it is a violation of federal law for schools to punish certain races more than others, even if those punishments stem from completely neutral rules. For example, equal numbers of black students and white students should be punished for tardiness, even if black students are more often tardy than white students. ...Joy Pullmann, managing editor of School Reform News, told TheDC that any notion of equal racial discipline is obviously flawed. 'It's ridiculous to assign quotas for discipline based on race,' she said. 'If we did that, for one thing, we'd have to believe that Asian students are severely under-disciplined.' Andrew Coulson, director of the Center for Educational Freedom at the Cato Institute, said the letter's policies, if implemented, would actually harm black children, by making the classrooms they inhabit 'more chaotic.' 'The kinds [of kids] who just want to be free to learn in peace, who are not disruptive, have their education injured by the disruptive kids who remain in the classroom,' Coulson told TheDC. 'And since African American kids are more often assigned to schools like that, they'll be the ones most hurt.' ...Frederick Hess, director of education policy at the American Enterprise Institute, described the letter as 'troubling,' and an attempt to intimidate schools into initiating bad policy. 'As best I can tell, they are telling schools that even if you have policies that are clearly neutral, that are clearly evenhanded, that are clearly designed to create safe environments for students and educators, DOJ still might come down on you like a ton of bricks,' Hess told TheDC. ...Pullmann also worried about the effect on classrooms. She said she has spoken to teachers who experienced a breakdown in the classroom learning environment when policies like this were implemented. 'Kids of the favored race know they can get away with more, so they misbehave more, and the well-behaved kids lose out on instruction because the teacher is busy trying to manage unruly students she can't send to the principal's office,' said Pullmann." [53371]

The Associated Press reports, "Record-keeping snags could complicate the start of insurance coverage this month as people begin using policies they purchased under

...Obama's health care overhaul. Insurance companies are still trying to sort out cases of so-called health insurance orphans, customers for whom the government has a record that they enrolled, but the insurer does not. Government officials say the problem is real but under control, with orphan records being among the roughly 13,000 problem cases they are trying to resolve with insurers. But insurance companies are worried the process will grow more cumbersome as they deal with the flood of new customers who signed up in December as enrollment deadlines neared. More than 1 million people have signed up through the federal insurance market that serves 36 states. Officials contend the error rate for new signups is close to zero. Insurers, however, are less enthusiastic about the pace of the fixes. The companies also are seeing cases in which the government has assigned the same identification number to more than one person, as well as so-called 'ghost' files in which the insurer has an enrollment record but the government does not. But orphaned files—when the insurer has no record of enrollment—are particularly concerning because the companies have no automated way to identify the presumed policyholder. They say they have to manually compare the lists of enrollees the government sends them with their own records because the government never built an automated system that would do the work much faster.” [53354, 53355]

At the White House, Obama brings back a version of the late Congressman Jack Kemp's concept of “enterprise zones” to boost the economy in poor areas, but renaming them “promise zones.” CBSNews.com reports, “The five zones will be located in San Antonio, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Southeastern Kentucky and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. The administration aims to ultimately assist 20 such regions. ... The ‘promise zone’ plan... aims to cut red tape and streamline federal funding from multiple government agencies to these specific zones. The Department of Education, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Commerce Department, the Health and Human Services Department, the Justice Department, and the Department for Agriculture will all participate. The administration is designating ‘promise zones’ by looking for areas where local officials can make strategic, targeted investments. For instance, a ‘promise zone’ may be interested in reducing violent crime with increased Justice Department funding for local law enforcement. Alternatively, a region may want to leverage Housing and Urban Development grants to attract private real estate investors to high-poverty neighborhoods. [Obama's] plan also includes tax credits for hiring workers and tax write-offs for capital investments within the ‘promise zones.’” (Interestingly, Obama's plan does not include economically devastated areas of Chicago or Detroit. It also seems to rely more on federal grants to local communities, where Kemp's plan focused on targeted tax cuts to encourage businesses to locate in poor areas and hire local residents. Having more police officers in Los Angeles might make residents safer, but it would not provide them with jobs. Obama wants the government to spend more money in selected areas; Kemp wanted private businesses to spend money in those areas. The latter is preferable because it makes people dependent on themselves, not on the government. It is worth noting that southeastern Kentucky would be in less need of attention had Obama not caused the loss of jobs there with his war on coal.) [53357, 53363]

In an interview with *The Washington Post*, Robert Laszewski, president of Health Policy and Strategy Associates, comments on the status of ObamaCare: “HealthCare.gov on the front-end is in pretty good shape. It’s where it should’ve been at launch. The back-end is still highly problematic. Clearly the administration put its emphasis on the consumer side. Insurers are still seeing errors in probably five percent of the files coming through. That’s compounded by the issue of all the people enrolling in the last few weeks. That’s a huge surge that would create customer-service problems in the best of circumstances, So I think it’ll take until about the end of January till everyone is straightened out and where they should be. ...The other challenge now is getting people to pay for coverage. I was surprised today calling around to people to find only about 50 percent have paid. ...There’s a big misconception that this [making ObamaCare work] is about young people. That’s baloney. It’s about healthy people. A healthy 20-year-old might only pay a \$100 premium. You want healthy 40 and 50-year-olds [who pay higher premiums]. The big problem right now is really total enrollment. We only have about 10 percent of the uninsured in here. Insurers think you need more like 70 percent of a pool of people to sign up. ...I think we’re going to ultimately need about 20 million people for a sustainable pool. It doesn’t need to be this year. That’s what the transitional risk corridors are all about. But it needs to happen in the first few years. So when I hear people talk about the goal being seven million, I think, ‘time out.’ This needs to be 20 million people within three years. The problem with the enrollments today is that they’re so small, it’s less than 10 percent of the uninsured coming in, it really can’t be anything but sick people. So if it’s going to be sustainable you need loads of people coming in the door. So when I judge where Obamacare is on December 31st or March 31st, I want to have confidence that this thing is ramping up to 20 million. I want to see momentum.” [53415]

Laszewski continues, “I think the [individual] mandate is almost worthless because the word is getting around that they can’t really collect it. And by year three, it’s really a lot of money. I think there’ll be real pressure to just get rid of it. I don’t think you can force people to buy this insurance. If they don’t want it there’ll be a political groundswell to get rid of it. So in my mind the individual mandate is kind of irrelevant to this. ...The mandate will be effective for free riders. No one has a problem penalizing people who don’t pay their fair share. But if ObamaCare hasn’t been sold to the American people as something they should want then the mandate will just be rubbing salt in the wound and there’ll be enormous political pressure to get rid of it. So I think this gets back to whether the American people end up accepting ObamaCare or not. ...I do have a concern that people are looking at these plans and not finding value. Some people are looking at paying 10 percent of their income for plans with huge deductibles, and then you have politics of ObamaCare and the bad press of the launch and if you put all those things in a bag and mix them up, I am really concerned that the uninsured who are healthy are not finding ObamaCare the value they hoped it will be. That’s the real risk for ObamaCare. ...If an entrepreneur had crafted ObamaCare he would’ve gone to a middle class family. A family of four make \$54,000 a year has to pay \$400 in premiums net of subsidy and for that the standard silver plan has an average deductible around \$2,500 and a narrow network. They’re going to pay almost \$5,000 for that? So the entrepreneur would say I’ve got \$5,000 in premium and all this deductible, what do they want for that? And they probably would’ve said we want office visits and lab tests because the kids need to go in

occasionally and then we want catastrophic care. The problem with ObamaCare is it's product driven and not market driven. They didn't ask the customer what they wanted. And I think that's the fundamental problem with ObamaCare. It meets the needs of very poor people because you're giving them health insurance for free. But it doesn't really meet the needs of healthy people and middle-class people." [53415]

With Laszewski noting, "I think the [individual] mandate is almost worthless because the word is getting around that they can't really collect it," it is worth mentioning this text in the Affordable Care Act: "§18115. Freedom not to participate in Federal health insurance programs. No individual, company, business, nonprofit entity, or health insurance issuer offering group or individual health insurance coverage shall be required to participate in any Federal health insurance program created under this Act (or any amendments made by this Act), or in any Federal health insurance program expanded by this Act (or any such amendments), and there shall be no penalty or fine imposed upon any such issuer for choosing not to participate in such programs." (Pub. L. 111-148, title I, §1555, Mar. 23, 2010, 124 Stat. 260.) That is, ObamaCare itself states that no one can be forced to participate in the scheme. Additionally, the IRS has no way of collecting the penalty/tax that is imposed for not having insurance—beyond subtracting it from any refund due the taxpayer. As a result, if a worker simply adjusts his or her employer tax withholding via a W-4 form to ensure he or she does not overpay taxes, there will no refund for the IRS to reduce. [53416]

At WashingtonTimes.com Wesley Pruden writes, "Every night's going to be Halloween night for Hillary [Clinton]. The skeletons in her closet are signing up now for the conga line. They're impatient to put on their dancing shoes for the 2016 presidential campaign. Like it or not, it's just around the corner. Even when her friends try to raise their voices in Hillary's defense, what comes out is mostly static. The attempted whitewash by The New York Times of the hash she made of Benghazi only reminds everyone that she was asleep when the telephone rang at 3 o'clock in the morning. ...[I]f the [Democrat] party thinks Chris Christie's got structural problems, someone should review Hillary's colorfully checkered past. Gov. Christie might outlive the memory of a traffic jam, but surviving a stampede of skeletons will require luck as well as skill. ...The outlines of the Hillary defense are already clear. Her defenders, paid and otherwise, will borrow a page from Barack Obama's playbook. The Obama campaign enjoyed considerable success early on, painting anyone who noticed his imperfections as an irredeemable racist, a bigot and a zealot who probably trades slaves on the side. A similar strategy won't work for Hillary." [53375]

"...The trail of scandal is a long one, beginning when she was a bride in Arkansas and a lawyer at the Rose Law Firm in Little Rock... She outgrew Arkansas soon enough, and had hardly got to the White House before making mischief. She sacked seven loyal and hardworking employees in the White House travel office to make room for pals and cronies. She insisted that she knew nothing, and The Los Angeles Times discovered 'substantial evidence' that she lied under oath. ...Hillary's friends in high places in the media world will paint all criticism—all recollections of the past as prologue—as part of the 'war on women.' They're counting on the Republicans to let the canard go

unchallenged, as Mitt Romney, the nicest of the nice Republicans, did. The Hillary Democrats want equality for women, just not too much of it. They'll appeal to what the feminist writer Camille Paglia calls Bubba's [Bill Clinton's] 'nostalgic popularity' while insisting that criticism, demands that she account for her dreadful irresponsibility, is the work of sexist men and their doxies. But this time, it won't work. There's too much dreadful irresponsibility to account for. That conga line of skeletons is a long one, and they're eager to do the two-step." (*The Obama Timeline* believes a large number of Hillary Clinton supporters only want to see her husband back in the White House, believing he can somehow help restore the economy and create jobs—despite her being in charge. If his health fails before the 2016 election or he drops dead of a heart attack, she will instantly lose millions of votes.) [53375]

According to the Media Research Center, "In less than 24 hours, the three networks have devoted 17 times more coverage to a traffic scandal involving Chris Christie than they've allowed in the last six months to Barack Obama's Internal Revenue Service controversy. Since the story broke on Wednesday that aides to the New Jersey governor punished a local mayor's lack of endorsement with a massive traffic jam, ABC, CBS and NBC have responded with 34 minutes and 28 seconds of coverage. Since July 1, these same networks managed a scant two minutes and eight seconds for the IRS targeting of Tea Party groups." (It is clear that the mainstream media is in the tank for Hillary Clinton and is eager to destroy any possible Republican opponents. One reason is ideological: the mainstream media is largely leftist. Another factor is that, although they won't admit it, media leftists know Obama has been a disaster and some no doubt feel guilty about helping him defeat Clinton in 2008. As a result, some in the media now think they owe Clinton a favor—which is why they are pounding on Christie with such ferocity.) [53382]

Reuters reports, "More than half of U.S. senators support a bill to impose new sanctions on Iran should the Islamic Republic break an agreement to curb its nuclear program, aides said on Thursday, but there was no plan yet to debate the measure. The White House has threatened to veto the legislation, and Iran says last November's nuclear deal struck in Geneva would be dead if the U.S. Congress imposes new sanctions. The 'Nuclear Weapon Free Iran Act' is now supported by at least 54 senators in the 100-member chamber, according to a congressional record, with six senators joining on Wednesday. A Senate aide said two more joined on Thursday, bringing the total to 56. It is uncertain whether the bill will be introduced in the Senate and whether backers can win the two-thirds majority to overcome a veto by ...Obama. A senior Senate Democratic aide said there were no plans yet for advancing the bill to the Senate floor, despite the growing list of co-sponsors." [53390]

News.Xinhuanet.com reports, "Jordanian officials said this week that the country is closely following up the situation on borders with Iraq and Syria after radical groups took control of some of these areas. In a Lower House session on Tuesday, Jordan's Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour said his country is concerned about terrorism and is closely following up the developments in Iraq's Anbar province, where al-Qaida-linked groups took control of some areas bordering Jordan. ...The Islamic State of Iraq and Levant

(ISIL), which is an al- Qaida-linked faction, currently has control over Fallujah and parts of Ramadi in Iraq's western Anbar province, which borders Jordan.” [53418]

On *Special Report*, Charles Krauthammer comments on former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates' claim in his book, *Duty*, “Hillary [Clinton] told [Obama] that her opposition to the 2007 surge in Iraq had been political because she was facing him in the Iowa primary. [Obama] conceded vaguely that opposition to the Iraq surge had been political. To hear the two of them making these admissions and in front of me was as surprising as it was dismaying.” Krauthammer says the claim demonstrates “the utter ruthlessness and soullessness of a politician [Clinton] who would either approve or deny or object to a surge of the troops in a war that was in real difficulty purely as a reason to advance one's political career, that is a pretty serious charge. And it comes from a serious man; it's not a partisan here.” [53406]

On January 10 Obama has only one scheduled activity: a 10 a.m. daily briefing. [53364]

AtlasShrugs.com relocates to PamelaGeller.com. [53358]

The government reports that a mere 74,000 jobs were created in December—typically one of the highest employment months of the year—even though some economists predicted the number would be 196,000. (74,000 people would not even fill the Denver Broncos football stadium to capacity.) FoxBusiness.com reports, “The headline unemployment rate fell to 6.7%, the lowest level in five years. But the rate fell primarily because hundreds of thousands of people [535,000] left the workforce unable to find jobs, according to figures released Friday by the U.S. Department of Labor. ...[T]he labor force participation rate, which measures people actively looking for work, fell to 62.8%, a four-decade low.” (In other words, the unemployment rate would be 37.2 percent if *all* working age Americans who are not working—including people on welfare—were counted in the statistics. Roughly 91.8 million Americans of working age are not working. Some accounts place the number at 102.2 million.) In December 2008 there were 134,425 American workers; in December 2013 there were 136,877, for an increase of only 2,452 over five years—a period during which the population increased by far more than that number. In 2013 alone the population increased by about 2.395 million. [53373, 53379, 53386, 53387, 53391, 53392, 53397, 53398, 53400, 53401, 53402, 53430, 53432, 53433, 53484, 53578, 53647, 53835]

In the Senate, Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) continues to block efforts by Republicans to add amendments to proposed legislation to extend unemployment benefits. At HotAir.com Ed Morrissey writes, “Make no mistake about it: Harry Reid blew up any momentum that had developed on this bill. The act of blocking amendments is the main reason that Republicans have to resort to cloture fights, in order to get Reid to stop blocking minority input on legislation. It's the flip side of the filibuster fight, one that the media doesn't cover nearly as much as it does with the supposed abuse of the filibuster itself. ...[T]his move is nothing but crassly political. Any amendments filed would still have to pass on a floor vote, so if they are too radical for Democrats, they won't fly anyway. Why block them at all, then? In this case, Reid doesn't want this issue

to get resolved, because Democrats want to use it all year long in the run-up to the midterm elections. They are scared to death of what ObamaCare means for Senate control, and the surprise vote [60–37] that allowed debate on the UI [unemployment insurance] bill must have stunned Reid into thinking one of his alternate issues might end up defused long before they needed it to cast the GOP as uncaring about the chronically unemployed. The question Republicans should ask is this: what is Harry Reid afraid of in potential Republican amendments? That they might actually carry some Democrats, and demonstrate that Reid is an extremist?” (The only Democrat Senator to miss the vote is Alaska’s Mark Begich—who is busy making speeches and attending fundraisers in Hawaii.) [53389, 53431]

According to Conn Carroll at Townhall.com, one of the amendments Reid will not allow is sponsored by Senator Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), it would reverse cuts to military pensions and “simply require anyone who wanted to participate in the Additional Child Tax Credit program to supply a Social Security number before they were allowed to collect any checks from the government. According to the Treasury Department, illegal immigrants [illegally] collected \$4.2 billion ACTC funds in 2011 alone. According to Ayotte’s office, her amendment would save taxpayers more than \$20 billion over ten years. That is more than enough to pay for the UI [unemployment insurance] extension and undo some of the veteran benefits cuts made last year. Democrats vehemently oppose Ayotte’s amendment.” [53399, 53414]

Politico reports, “The White House on Friday announced that ...Obama intends to nominate Stanley Fischer, the former head of Israel’s central bank, to serve as the vice chairman of the Federal Reserve. [Obama] also intends to nominate Lael Brainard, the former Treasury undersecretary for international affairs, to the Fed board, and will nominate current Fed Governor Jerome Powell to serve a full, five-year term. ‘These three distinguished individuals have the proven experience, judgment and deep knowledge of the financial system to serve at the Federal Reserve during this important time for our economy,’ Obama said in a statement announcing the nominations.”

By a vote of 291–122, the House of Representatives passes the Health Exchange Security and Transparency Act, H.R. 3811. Defying the Obama administration, 67 Democrats vote for the bill, which requires that the government notify individuals if an ObamaCare security breaches involving their information. According to TheHill.com, “The one-sentence bill says that no later than two business days after any security breach on an ObamaCare [web] site is discovered, ‘the Secretary of Health and Human Services shall provide notice of such breach to each individual.’ Republicans said that under current law, the government is not required to notify people if their information is put at risk. ...Democrats said the GOP was trying to stir up fears about HealthCare.gov and the other enrollment sites by raising the idea that people’s personal information could be stolen. ...The White House, meanwhile, claimed the legislation would create costly new reporting requirements.” [53411, 53436]

CTMirror.org reports, “The head of Connecticut’s health insurance exchange said Friday that officials at Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield have acknowledged ‘administrative

challenges' in setting up coverage for people who signed up for plans that were supposed to begin Jan. 1. As of last Friday [presumably January 3], only 8 percent of customers slated to have coverage effective Jan. 1 had been recorded in Anthem's system as having paid their premiums, said Kevin Counihan, CEO of Access Health CT, the state's health exchange. That figure includes people who bought plans through the exchange and those who purchased them outside the exchange." (*The Obama Timeline* believes a problem is that many people who enrolled in ObamaCare mistakenly believe the coverage is free—and don't realize they have to write check for the coverage. Others possibly do not even have checking accounts and a way to pay the premiums.) [53464]

TheGatewayPundit.com reports on connections between the leftist activist group Code Pink, its co-founder, Jodie Evans, and a "human right" group sympathetic to terrorists called al Karama. "Mohammad Al Ahmady, the Yemen director for... Al Karama... also serves as a top official in an al Qaeda-linked Yemeni political party... Several Al Karama officials have faced terrorism allegations. Al Karama's founder and current president Abdul Rahman Naimi was designated as a terrorist and al Qaeda supporter by the U.S. Treasury Department in December, along with the group's Yemen representative Abdulwahab Al-Humayqani. Al Karama's legal director, Rachid Mesli, is currently wanted for terrorism charges in Algeria." [53410]

As noted previously in this *Timeline*, Jodie Evans is an Obama fundraiser and personally donated \$2,300 to his campaign in 2008. In a June 2008 interview, Evans said Osama bin Laden had a "valid argument" for the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Evans and Code Pink co-founder Medea Benjamin met with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in New York City in 2008. His appearance was coordinated by long-time Obama friend Rashid Khalidi, and possibly encouraged by Zbigniew Brzezinski, an anti-Semite and Obama foreign policy advisor who taught international relations at Columbia University. Evans, a friend of Viet Cong sympathizer Jane Fonda, has traveled to Afghanistan to meet with the Taliban. At a fundraiser, Evans personally presented Obama with a package containing photos, quotes, and thousands of signatures on a petition against more troops for Afghanistan. Benjamin presented Obama with a letter from the terrorist group Hamas. Evans also attempted to storm the stage during Sarah Palin's 2008 convention acceptance speech, after committing identity theft that enabled her to sneak past security. Code Pink has run ads on the Muslim Brotherhood web site www.ikhwaneb.com. Evans has publicly called for the kidnapping of former President Bush, his wife Laura, and other members of his administration in "citizens' arrests" for war crimes related to the September 11 terrorist attacks and the Iraq War. Despite the outrageousness—and perhaps illegality—of Evans' activities, Obama does not hesitate to associate with her and has appeared with her in public. [104, 215, 220, 355, 395, 6160, 6163, 6322, 6481, 6523, 6860, 6861, 6862, 6863, 6864, 6865, 7902, 7903, 7904, 7905,]

FoxNews.com reports, "The State Department on Friday for the first time blamed specific groups and militants for the 2012 Benghazi attack, designating them as terrorists—a move that further undermines initial claims the attack was spontaneous. The department announced that it was labeling Ansar al-Sharia in Benghazi and Ansar al-Sharia in Darnah as terror organizations, in part over their role in the Benghazi attack. It applied

the same label to Ansar al-Sharia in Tunisia, over a separate attack on Americans in Tunis. The State Department also labeled as terrorists Sufian bin Qumu, head of the Darnah branch and a former Guantanamo Bay detainee, and Ahmed Abu Khattalah, head of the Benghazi branch. Fox News previously reported that the two were suspected of playing a role in the attack. And despite State Department claims that Al Qaeda leadership was not involved and a recent news report echoing that assessment, Fox News has learned that bin Qumu has Al Qaeda ties.” (Some suggest that the release of the information by the State Department means Secretary of State John Kerry is “throwing Hillary Clinton under the bus” so that he can capture the 2016 Democrat presidential nomination. *The Obama Timeline* believes that is unlikely, partly because of Kerry’s advanced age—*unless* Kerry knows of specific information that will come out before 2016 that will destroy Clinton’s chances of becoming the party’s nominee.) [53395, 53642]

According to BeforeItsNews.com, “An actual Military & Intelligence sponsored restoration of the American Republic has already quietly begun. ...Get informed, get prepared, get involved. This is not a rumor, this is not another protest, there will be no petitions. This is the beginning of a very real, carefully coordinated, and constitutionally lawful reclamation of the government of the Republic, and takedown of known criminals. ...Should behind-the-scenes actions (already in progress) not reach their conclusion in the next few months—Operation American Spring, May 16th, will be a ‘last resort’ public showdown, in the spirit of Egypt’s successful Arab Spring removal of their corrupt government. Operation American Spring, May 16th, will be a permanent military/civilian occupation of Wash DC until all the criminals are removed—organized by Col. Harry Riley, Maj. Gen Paul Valley, Ex-CIA Jim Garrow, and many others.” [53405, 53439]

WashingtonTimes.com reports, “The Obama administration plans to replace the lead contractor on HealthCare.gov, the glitchy federal website that hindered the fall rollout of the new health care law, with another company. Officials plans to drop CGI Federal, after the company took a share of blame for its role in preparing a website that serves 36 states and needed extensive repairs after its Oct. 1 launch... A major consulting company, Accenture, will take its place. CGI’s contract runs out at the end of February, and Accenture had built the relatively well-functioning health exchange that California is using to enroll people in private plans or Medicaid under Obamacare...” (According to DailyCaller.com CGI still has five other contracts with the government’s Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.) [53412, 53413, 53461, 53558]

According to Judicial Watch, “The Al Qaeda terrorist—Osama Bin Laden’s bodyguard—determined to be ‘too dangerous to be released’ from Guantanamo just a few years ago will be freed from the military prison because ...Obama’s new parole board found he no longer poses a ‘significant threat to the United States.’ The shocking about-face comes on the heels of mainstream news reports disclosing that a former Guantanamo detainee, Sufian bin Qumu, participated in the 2012 Benghazi terrorist attack on the U.S. mission in Libya. Bin Qumu was released from the prison at the U.S. naval base in Cuba despite having historic ties to the Al Qaeda network and training at bin Laden’s Torkham camp, according to information obtained from his Gitmo file. That makes this week’s news that

bin Laden's former bodyguard, Mahmud Abd Al Aziz Al Mujahid, will soon be free, all the more outrageous. It was not that long ago—in 2010—that an Obama task force listed Mujahid as too dangerous to release from Gitmo. That put him on a special 'forever prisoner' list of 48 indefinite detainees. His Pentagon file says he's a high risk likely to pose a threat to the U.S., its interests and allies and that he is of high intelligence value." [53417]

NYTimes.com reports on some of the problems ObamaCare enrollees are having as they attempt to use the insurance they thought they had: "Paul D. Donahue and his wife, Angela, are among more than a million Americans who have signed up for health coverage through the federal insurance exchange. Mr. Donahue has a card in his wallet from his insurer to prove it. But when he tried to use it to get a flu shot and fill prescriptions this week, local pharmacies could not confirm his coverage, so he left without his medications. Similar problems are occurring daily in doctors' offices and drugstores around the country as consumers try to use insurance coverage that took effect on Jan. 1 under the Affordable Care Act. In addition to the difficulties many face in proving they have coverage, patients are also having a hard time figuring out whether particular doctors are affiliated with their health insurance plan. Doctors themselves often do not know if they are in the network of providers for plans sold on the exchange." (According to the *Times*, "The monthly premium for [Donahue] and his wife is \$1,062, but the federal government pays a subsidy of \$903. The couple pay the remainder, \$159 a month." That is, the taxpayers will be paying 85 percent of the family's premiums.) [53498]

"...But interviews with doctors, hospital executives, pharmacists and newly insured people around the country suggest that the biggest challenge so far has been verifying coverage. A surge of enrollments in late December, just before the deadline for coverage to take effect, created backlogs at many state and federal exchanges and insurance companies in processing applications. As a result, many of those who enrolled have yet to receive an insurance card, policy number or bill. Many are also having trouble reaching exchanges and insurance companies to confirm their enrollment or pay their first month's premium. Doctors' offices and pharmacies, too, are spending hours on the phone trying to verify patients' coverage, sometimes to no avail. ...In Los Angeles, Hilary Danailova, who is almost eight months pregnant, said she had to pay \$630 for an ultrasound on Thursday after failing to get an ID card or any confirmation of coverage from her new insurer, Anthem Blue Cross. Ms. Danailova, 38, said she signed up just before Christmas and sent her first month's premium of \$410 by overnight mail on Jan. 3. She has repeatedly tried to reach Anthem to see whether the company has processed her payment. ...In Langley, Wash., north of Seattle, Erin Waterman was able to see a primary care doctor on Jan. 3 with a temporary identification card printed from the website of her new insurer, LifeWise Health Plan of Washington. But when Ms. Waterman, 47, tried to fill a prescription for a new asthma inhaler, the pharmacy could not verify her coverage even though she had paid her first month's premium on Dec. 23. Ms. Waterman was given the option of paying full price—\$187, instead of the \$50 co-payment required under her new plan—and eventually being reimbursed. But she decided to wait, and hope that she does not have an asthma attack in the meantime. ...In some cases, the government has a record

of a person's enrollment but the insurer does not. Insurers said they had received inaccurate or incomplete information—or no information at all—for some people who signed up through the federal exchange.” [53498]

IJReview.com reports, “Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal is furious that the Department of Justice [DOJ] wants control of Louisiana's private school voucher program, and he's not afraid to let them know it. Why would the DOJ be critical of a program that helps poor and minority students get a better education? The [DOJ] argues that by giving minority students scholarships to attend private schools, the state is messing up the racial makeup of public schools and impeding the desegregation process. Now, in addition to calling for a 45-day review period of the program, the DOJ wants information on the racial makeup of the state's private schools and wants the option to veto each individual scholarship award. Jindal didn't hold anything back in his response to the move: ‘...Obama's Department of Justice has admitted it cannot prove that Louisiana school choice is violating desegregation efforts, yet it continues to seek the ability to tell a parent their child cannot escape a failing school because their child is not the ‘right’ race. The Department of Justice proposal reeks of federal government intrusion and proves the people in Washington running our federal government are more interested in skin color than they are in education.’ Jindal also criticized the federal government's attempt to ‘red-tape and regulate the Louisiana Scholarship Program to death,’ stating that the Obama administration ‘knows no bounds.’” [53442]

On *On the Record*, Congressman Trey Gowdy (R-SC) slams the State Department for its 16-month delay in naming the terrorist groups responsible for the Benghazi attack: “I think tomorrow [the State Department] is going to announce that we put a man on the moon, that the Berlin Wall fell, and that we discovered this neat little drug called penicillin. That's about how far behind the intelligence our State Department is. ...So I don't know why, after a year and a half, they're finally catching up with the rest of the world. ...I'm ready to send subpoenas to Hillary Clinton, [Former U.S. Ambassador] Susan Rice, [and State Department employees] Cheryl Mills and Patrick Kennedy. I'm ready to take their depositions. And I'm ready to send interrogatories to [Obama]. And I think some of my colleagues are about at their wits' end when it comes to this Benghazi investigation.” (The day after the attack it was known that Ansar al-Sharia and members of other groups were responsible.) [53435]

On January 11 Obama issues a “diplomatic-speak” statement in response to the death of Israeli retired general and former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon: “On behalf of the American people, Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to the family of former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and to the people of Israel on the loss of a leader who dedicated his life to the State of Israel. We reaffirm our unshakable commitment to Israel's security and our appreciation for the enduring friendship between our two countries and our two peoples. We continue to strive for lasting peace and security for the people of Israel, including through our commitment to the goal of two states living side-by-side in peace and security. As Israel says goodbye to Prime Minister Sharon, we join with the Israeli people in honoring his commitment to his country.” (WeaselZippers.us comments, “Notice how he snuck ‘two state solution’ in there?”) While Obama issues his

obligatory statement, Muslims cheer the death of Sharon (who dared to defeat the Arabs in the 1967 war), hand out sweets to children, and fire rockets into Israel from Gaza—land that had been given to them by Sharon in the pursuit of peace. (Obama will not attend Sharon’s funeral; he will send Vice President Joe Biden, possibly because he is perhaps the least anti-Semitic person in the White House.) [53420, 53421, 53424, 53425, 53426, 53427, 53428, 53453, 53454, 53458, 53491]

Smarmy Democrat political operative Terry McAuliffe is sworn in as Governor of Virginia (which just about guarantees that Hillary Clinton will win the state in 2016, with or without vote fraud). Attending the ceremony are Clinton, her Muslim girlfriend Huma Abedin, and her husband Bill Clinton. McAuliffe states, “My administration will work tirelessly to ensure that... opportunities are equal for all of Virginia’s children—no matter if you’re a girl or a boy, no matter what part of the Commonwealth you live in, your race or religion... no matter who you love.” [53429]

According to *The Telegraph*, al-Qaeda’s “new poster-boy for the global jihadist movement” is “Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the new leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq and Syria. ... Well-organised and utterly ruthless, the ex-preacher is the driving force behind al-Qaeda’s resurgence throughout Syria and Iraq, putting it at the forefront of the war to topple President Bashar al-Assad and starting a fresh campaign of mayhem against the Western-backed government in Baghdad. ... [L]ike bin Laden, whose death he has vowed to avenge, his ambitions go well beyond the Middle East. ‘You will see the mujahideen (holy warriors) at the heart of your country,’ he warned the US in an audio-taped statement. ‘Our war with you has only started now.’” [53443]

At TeaParty.org former Congressman Allen West (R-FL) writes that Obama “recently repeated former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi’s outrageous claim that ‘unemployment benefits stimulate our economy.’ There are economists—left-leaning—who will say people receiving unemployment benefits will go out and buy things and therefore boost the economy and job. If that’s the case, then why not just the government print money and gives us all a stipend to go out and spend it? Pure and simple, liberal progressives are advocating for wealth redistribution and trickle up poverty. They believe instead of having tax, regulatory, and monetary policies that enable a thriving free market system, we should expand the welfare nanny-state. It’s purely political, and not as ... Obama tries to persuade, moral. The goal is to create such a state of depravity and hopelessness for a broad swath of Americans who are forced into the desperate state of grateful dependency upon Obama and his ilk. It’s the textbook Alinsky tactic of demonizing the opposition as heartless, uncaring, mean and evil. And hapless Republicans fall for the scheme, as six Republicans in the Senate joined Democrats voting for cloture on the extension of benefits, instead of having a press conference immediately following [Obama’s] staged act and calling him out. Conservatives must demonstrate the “emotional” message of the liberal progressives is empty, It is a message aimed at enslavement of the indomitable American individual entrepreneurial spirit into a collective vision of shared misery. It is a failed message, not of empowerment but rather abject servitude to government. It punishes the productivity of hard working Americans

and redistributes their earnings in order to create and expand a dedicated voting electorate.” [53448]

“...Far more troubling is the liberals who don’t want to participate in these failed city and state disasters flee, but in migrating they take their failed ideology with them. Florida beware! Thus, like locusts, liberal progressives in their disingenuous nature and belief in spreading the wealth actually spread desolation, depravity, destruction, despondence, and eventually depression. Consider the recent piece in Rolling Stone advocating America’s young people support communism, social utopianism, and the idea that there should be guaranteed work for everybody, Social Security for all, universal land ownership and, a public bank in every state. Then why should anyone go to school and get an education? Just sit back and await your entitlement. There’s only once place where you find those five points—in the Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx, and promoted by progressive administrations in America. ...Obama is a front man, a well selected salesman for an ideology that has never been successful anywhere in the world. He’s just another in the long list of Marxist/socialist ‘cool’ sounding despots who have given us mass graves and national collapse. Progressive socialists are banking on the ignorance and despair of the people, and the inability of a coherent message from an opposition that fears demonization. I’ve said it before, and I’ll say it again, ...Barack Hussein Obama represents a clear and present danger to this Constitutional Republic we call America. And we have only two options as a nation: take a stand or perish.” [53448]

The Maricopa County, Arizona Republican Party votes 1,150–351 to censure Senator John McCain (R-AZ) for failing to stand behind party principles and voting too often with the Democrats. (Despite his age, McCain may run for reelection in 2016. He will then be 80 years old.) Meanwhile, McCain tells *The New Republic* that Fox News is “schizophrenic,” Hillary Clinton “did a fine job” as Secretary of State, and deciding between Clinton and Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) would be a “tough choice” if they are the presidential candidates in 2016. (Some conservatives will likely argue that it is time for McCain to retire—or switch political parties.) [53473, 53474, 53492]

On Facebook, Chuck Heath, Jr.—the brother of Sarah Palin—writes, “Coincidence? You decide. My father, who worked multiple jobs and faithfully and honestly paid his taxes for fifty years, had never heard a word from the IRS. In 2008, his daughter was tapped to run for vice president of the United States. Since that time, he has been, in his words ‘horribly harassed’ six times by the agency. They’ve tried to dig up something on him but he’s always operated above board. Government and politics are ugly. Kudos to the few that are trying to clean it up.” [53487, 53488, 53526, 53539, 53540]

On January 12 investigator Doug Hagmann comments on video filmed by a passenger on the small aircraft that survived a smooth water landing off the coast of Hawaii—a landing in which the only death was that of the head of Hawaii’s Department of Health. Hagmann asks, “What are the chances that the individual responsible for authenticating Barack Hussein Obama’s long form birth certificate, Loretta Fuddy, just happened to be the sole fatality out of nine on board a small plane that was forced to make an emergency water landing off the coast of Hawaii? What are the chances that the other passengers either

walked away virtually unscathed (according to eyewitness reports) or had only minor injuries while Loretta Fuddy died? ...What are the chances that the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), the federal agency in charge of investigating even the slightest incidents involving civil transportation, would not conduct a thorough, on-site investigation that involved a fatality, especially a fatality of a high-profile state employee? ...What are the chances that a passenger seated in the rear of the plane, publicly identified as Ferdinand Puentes (seen wearing a United States Federal Marshal cap) would not only have a GoPro video [camera] at the ready, but have the mental composure and clarity to record the ‘crash’ and aftermath considering the unexpected, life-threatening circumstances? ...Given her role in the authentication of the controversial document, Ms. Fuddy was named in two affidavits (one public, one sealed) filed in the U.S. District Court, Western District of Washington on October 18, 2013, by Douglas Vogt, citing twenty points of forgery that comprise misprision of treason and misprision of felony. Vogt, with researcher and document expert Paul Irey, investigated the intricacies of the [Obama birth certificate] forgery. Mr. Vogt’s affidavit and Ms. Fuddy’s involvement gained national attention when he was interviewed on The Haggmann & Haggmann Report on December 4, 2013, exactly one week to the day before her tragic death on December 11, 2013.” [53444, 55907]

“...Since her death, portions related to Loretta Fuddy in the sealed affidavit filed in U.S. Federal Court have been made public. Of particular interest are her financial reports detailing her income and expenses in 2011 and 2012. ...According to Mr. Vogt, a large and as yet unanswered income disparity was found between the two reports. In short, during her first year as Hawaii’s Director of Health, which is also the time she authenticated Obama’s COLB, Ms. Fuddy’s gross income was reportedly less than \$100,000. Nonetheless, her financials show that she apparently paid down her mortgage and decreased her liabilities by at least \$50,000 and perhaps as much as \$75,000 more than what she grossed that year. Where did that money come from? While there may well be a legitimate explanation for this disparity, it was not disclosed on the financial forms she filed with the Hawaii State Ethics Commission. ...Based on a review of the NTSB report (ID #WPR14FA068), no on-scene investigation was performed. The NTSB report pertaining to this incident was one of the most incomplete and un-sourced reports published when compared to other reports. Why?” [53444, 55907]

On *Meet the Press*, Republican National Committee chairman Reince Priebus contrasts New Jersey Governor Chris Christie’s handling of the “traffic study” scandal with Obama’s tactics. Priebus says, “[Christie] trusted people that [sic; who] lied to him, and he fired those people. [Obama] doubles down on [Attorney General] Eric Holder, he doubles down on [former Secretary of State] Hillary Clinton and [former IRS official] Lois Lerner and [former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations] Susan Rice. It’s the opposite effect.” Priebus notes Christie’s 111 minute press conference to address the traffic issue, and observes, “If Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton would give us 111 *seconds* of that, we’d find out some things we want to find out about Obamacare, Benghazi, the IRS.” Gregory attempts to defend Obama, claiming Priebus is changing the argument. Priebus responds, “...Chris Christie gave us almost two hours of open dialogue and cross-examination with the press. ...You can judge a person’s character. We had an

opportunity to do that. ... That's what Chris Christie offered, not only to the people of New Jersey, but to the people across the country. [Obama] never offered that open dialogue so that people could determine his character." [53462]

In a YouGov.com poll, Pope Francis is rated the most admired person. Obama comes in a distant second, followed by evangelist Billy Graham, former President George W. Bush, Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, the Dalai Lama, Bill Clinton, and Rush Limbaugh. Hillary Clinton takes 10th place, behind Limbaugh. [53445, 53477]

At AmericasFreedomFighters.com Judicial Watch and Freedom Watch founder Larry Klayman writes, "Much like Nixon—who used the CIA not only to break into the Watergate Office Complex to spy on the Democratic National Committee during the 1972 presidential campaign, as well as employed the spy agency, illegally, to conduct surveillance on and smear other political enemies—Obama is now using his NSA and CIA to spy on over 300 million American citizens. Indeed, while Nixon's constitutional violations were limited, Obama's are so widespread as to constitute the largest abuse of power in U.S. history. And while Nixon primarily subverted his Justice Department and FBI to create the appearance of a bona fide investigation of the Watergate scandal and thus cover it up, Obama not only uses his Justice Department and FBI to achieve the same ends, but also his enablers—both Democrat and Republican (such as Rep. Peter King [R-NY])—to run interference for him. One can only surmise what these enablers might be getting in exchange—Nixon style—for their largesse. When you layer the burgeoning NSA scandal with Obama's other scandals, from IRS-gate, to Benghazi-gate, to Extortion 17-gate, to Obamacare-gate, to Fast and Furious-gate to now Gates-gate over [Obama's] traitorous acts concerning our military, ironically [a] cartoon ... that says Nixon is not a crook by today's standards takes on an eerie reality. ... [I]t falls upon We the People to fashion appropriate non-violent civil disobedience to get rid of Obama. If Gandhi could cause the fall of the British Empire in India, if the masses in Egypt could rid themselves of the Muslim Brotherhood and if the Poles could cast off communism years ago, then we Americans can send Barack Hussein Obama... packing. The time has now come to put words to deeds and wage the Second American Revolution." [53446, 54716]

The Associated Press reports that the Spanish language version of Healthcare.gov (CuidadoDeSalud.gov) is "full of grammatical errors. ... And the translations were so clunky and full of grammatical mistakes that critics say they must have been computer-generated—the name of the site itself can literally be read 'for the caution of health.' 'When you get into the details of the plans, it's not all written in Spanish. It's written in Spanglish, so we end up having to translate it for them,' said Adrian Madriz, a health care navigator who helps with enrollment in Miami." [53456, 53469, 53508]

Financial consultant Dale Howard tells California's *Imperial Valley Press* that because of ObamaCare his monthly insurance premium will increase from \$1,100 to \$1,800. Unlike his prior plan, the new plan does not cover dental benefits, and his annual deductible increases from \$3,500 to \$4,500. Additionally, the plan only covers 60 percent of medical expenses—after the deductible has been met. "In my case or with other people I've talked

to,” says Howard, “costs have gone up 50 percent to 100 percent depending on what your health is. They are spending money on medical policies they didn’t have to pay before that could have gone to other things ...whatever it is, that money is not available to them now.” [53465]

At PJMedia.com David Steinberg points out that as of January 1, 2014 the Obama administration has eased requirements for enrolling in Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP), as well as ObamaCare, by mandating “that states accept applications completed entirely via telephone. Rather than require such applications be later accompanied by the electronic or mailed transmission of a signed document, HHS [Health and Human Services] instead requires states to accept a spoken assent on a telephone call as the equivalent of an actual signature. Says J. Christian Adams, PJ Media legal editor and former DOJ attorney: ‘Perjury prosecutions are impaired by telephone signups. Signing on a dotted line has been the core means of assent for hundreds of years, and even computerized signatures have a means of verifying that the person signing is real. This is the administration inviting fraud.’” [53470]

At Breitbart.com Christopher Whalen, managing director of residential real estate firm Carrington Holding Co., writes, “Last week’s job numbers suggest very strongly that the Obama Depression may be accelerating. Economists of all stripes are trying to pretend that the numbers were not as ugly as they well and truly are, but some of the realists are pointing out the obvious, namely that the US economy continues to shed jobs and workers. ...The continued attrition of 45-54-year-olds in the workforce is cause for concern by itself, but with the other deflationary factors at work in the US economy, alarm bells ought to be ringing in Washington DC. First, the velocity of money—the amount of times a dollar changes hands in a given year—continues to fall. Second, the banking and non-bank sectors continue to de-leverage, meaning that we are taking credit capacity out of the economy. Without more turnover in money and net growth in terms of credit, the outlook for growing jobs is small to none. Sadly, the policies being followed at the Fed and White House are stifling job creation even as they encourage moral hazard and the growth of new bubbles in the financial sector. The slew of new regulations put in place in Washington since 2008 makes it virtually impossible for more than half of all adult Americans to qualify for a home mortgage. The fact of a weak jobs market and a net exodus of adults from the workforce also implies a smaller market for homes—even with the continued growth in the overall population. ...The neo-Keynesian, demand-side mindset of [Federal Reserve Board] Chairman [Janet] Yellen and the rest of the FOMC [Federal Open Market Committee] does not allow them to see or accept that low rates are actually hurting employment, credit, and capital formation. Investors must be paid to take risk. The declining leverage within the US banking system... is a red flag that Congress ought to be discussing with Chairman Yellen on a weekly basis. Meanwhile moral hazard grows under QE, and Fed-induced bubbles proliferate in the equity and debt markets.” [53524]

According to TheDailyBeast.com, the Obama administration is “siding with the radical Islamist culprits” in Bangladesh, “who are fomenting the country’s latest political crisis.” (Pamela Geller comments, “Again Obama sides with savages. I have been reporting on

the vicious jihad Muslims are waging in Bangladesh. Just last week, Muslims were hacking their Hindu neighbors to death while looting and torching their homes. Just as Obama did in Egypt, Syria, Libya, Iran, Israel, and other hotspots in Africa, he has now added Bangladesh to his global jihad movement. Count Bangladesh in among those secular nations where Obama aided and abetted Islamic supremacist revolutions, violent jihad overthrows. The... article is from the notoriously left-wing Daily Beast, so it has a healthy dose of anti-Americanism, of course. But if the Beast is actually reporting it and blasting it ...then you know it's worse than that.") [53600, 53601]

On Iranian television, the country's top nuclear negotiator, Abbas Araghchi, states, "We can return again to 20 percent enrichment in less than one day and we can convert the [nuclear] material again. Therefore the structure of our nuclear program is preserved. Whenever we feel the other side [the United States] is not following through with its commitments, whenever we feel there are other motives involved, whenever—now, say, under pressure from Congress or something else—they take action against their commitments, say put in place new sanctions, we will immediately revert to the current status quo. And we will again continue our nuclear program in the form that it is today. I can say definitively that the structure of our nuclear program will be exactly preserved. Nothing will be put aside, dismantled or halted. Everything will continue, enrichment will continue." [53650, 53998]

On January 13 the U.S. Supreme Court hears oral arguments in *Noel Canning v. National Labor Relations Board*, a case involving Obama's "recess" appointments when the Senate was not, in fact, in recess. Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN) comments, "Three federal circuit courts of appeals have already ruled that the president violated the Constitution when he made so-called recess appointments while the Senate was in session, and now the U.S. Supreme Court has an opportunity to guard against the dangers of an imperial presidency." At WashingtonTimes.com Stephen Dinan writes, "The court has a few questions to answer: First, what vacancies can be filled by recess appointments? Second, what constitutes a recess for the purposes of using that power? And third, is it Congress or the president who determines when the Senate is meeting and when it is in recess? When the founders wrote the Constitution, they gave the president the power to nominate top officials but granted the Senate the duty to approve them. Accounting for long travel and expecting Congress to be in session only a few weeks or months of the year, the founders created a special exception—the recess appointment power—to let the president fill jobs, temporarily, when Congress wasn't in town. Now, with advancements in travel making it easy to return to Washington from anywhere in the country within a day, and with Congress almost always in session, the recess appointment power has become more of a way to bypass a reluctant Congress and fill key posts over the objections of senators." [53455, 53472, 53506]

"...A federal court of appeals sided with Noel Canning and issued a stunningly broad ruling that said Mr. Obama and presidents for nearly the past two centuries have misread the Constitution. Under the appeals court's ruling, the president can use his recess powers only after Congress has adjourned for the year, and then can use them to make appointments only to positions that become vacant during that break. If the ruling is

upheld, it would invalidate nearly all appointments that have been made.” (*The Obama Timeline* believes it is wrong for Congress to rely on the courts to block Obama’s abuses of the Constitution and should rely on its own ultimate power to stop them: the power of impeachment. That Congress does not have the courage to act should not be a reason to force the courts to act in their stead. In addition to impeachment, Congress also controls spending. If it does not support an Obama appointee, it can withdraw authorization for that person’s salary.) During the court session, Obama’s Solicitor General, Donald Verrilli, brazenly and incorrectly argues that the U.S. Constitution is ambiguous on the issue of recess appointment. Justice Antonin Scalia responds, “It’s been assumed to be ambiguous by self-interested presidents.” (*The Obama Timeline* doubts that the Supreme Court would grant the executive branch the power to determine whether the legislative branch is in session. That is a “separation of powers” line the Court is unlikely to cross. The Court may therefore rule against Obama and affirm the lower court’s decision. Townhall.com reports that only Justices Sonya Sotomayor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg appear sympathetic to the Obama viewpoint.) [53455, 53459, 53460, 53466, 53472]

At WeeklyStandard.com, Jeffrey H. Anderson reports that under ObamaCare, “...insurance companies won’t bear the cost of their own losses—at least not more than about a quarter of them. The other three-quarters will be borne by American taxpayers. For some reason, ...Obama hasn’t talked about this particular feature of his signature legislation. Indeed, it’s bad enough that Obamacare is projected by the Congressional Budget Office to funnel \$1,071,000,000,000.00 (that’s \$1.071 trillion) over the next decade (2014 to 2023) from American taxpayers, through Washington, to health insurance companies. It’s even worse that Obamacare is trying to coerce Americans into buying those same insurers’ product (although there are escape routes). It’s almost unbelievable that it will also subsidize those same insurers’ losses. But that’s exactly what it will do—unless Republicans take action. As [Health insurance consultant Robert] Laszewski explains, Obamacare contains a ‘Reinsurance Program that caps big claim costs for insurers (individual plans only).’ He writes that ‘in 2014, 80% of individual costs between \$45,000 and \$250,000 are paid by the government [read: by taxpayers], for example.’ In other words, insurance purchased through Obamacare’s government-run exchanges isn’t even full-fledged private insurance; rather, it’s a sort of private-public hybrid. Private insurance companies pay for costs below \$45,000, then taxpayers generously pick up the tab—a tab that their president hasn’t ever bothered to tell them he has opened up on their behalf—for four-fifths of the next \$200,000-plus worth of costs. In this way, and so many others, Obamacare takes a major step toward the government monopoly over American medicine (‘single payer’) that liberals drool about in their sleep.” [53463]

The Obama administration releases some ObamaCare demographic information—and it is not good. *The New York Times* reports, “Of those who signed up in the first three months, 55 percent are age 45 to 64, officials said. Only 24 percent of those choosing a health insurance plan are 18 to 34, a group that is usually healthier and needs fewer costly medical services.” (It has been estimated that ObamaCare needs about 40 percent of its enrollees to be young and healthy for the scheme to be financially viable.) “People 55 to 64—just below the age at which people qualify for Medicare—represented the largest

group, at 33 percent. ...Of those who signed up, about 54 percent are women and 46 percent are men. Nearly 80 percent of those who selected a plan qualified for federal subsidies to reduce their premiums, officials said.” (In other words, the taxpayers will be subsidizing the premiums of four out of five Americans who have enrolled in ObamaCare.) It is worth noting that when the media inquired about low ObamaCare enrollment numbers, the administration argued that the numbers were not as important, it was the demographics that were important. It will now be interesting to see how the administration spins the dismal demographic results. (Just one day later, on January 14, the Obama administration reduces its target for young enrollees from 38 to 30 percent, saying the higher number had been “overblown” and telling reporters, “From now on, the ultimate goal is to get as many people insured as possible.” Of course, if they are mostly older, sicker, and poorer than the general population, enrolling “as many people as possible” could prove to be a demographic disaster for ObamaCare.) [53467, 53468, 53485, 53494, 53511, 53512, 53513, 53617, 53618]

The Associated Press reports on the ObamaCare demographics: “But even if the age mix remains tilted toward older adults, ‘it’s nothing of the sort that would trigger instability in the system,’ said Larry Levitt, an insurance expert with the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation. Premiums would go up next year for the overhaul, along with taxpayer costs per enrollee, but not enough to push the system into a ‘death spiral’ in which rising premiums discourage healthy people from signing up.” (Why rising premiums and increasing taxpayer costs would *not* discourage healthy people from signing up is not explained.) Economist John Goodman, president and CEO of the National Center for Policy Analysis, later tells CNSNews.com, “I think there is a significant problem here. I think the insurers are worried. I think the administration is worried. Remember, everybody is facing the wrong price. And sick people are facing a price that’s well below the cost of their care. Young healthy people are being overcharged. And so they need lots of young healthy people to join so they can get the money to pay the bills for the sick people. And the younger people just aren’t buying it. ...Over half of all the people who enrolled are above the age of 45, and older people are more expensive [to insure]. We’re also seeing 20 percent of the people who are enrolling are going for the gold or platinum plans. Those people tend to be sick. They’re buying the more comprehensive plans because they plan to use a lot of health care. ...[T]here won’t be any neon signs that say ‘Death Spiral Underway,’ but what you’ll see is premiums keep rising, and if premiums keep rising, then fewer healthy people will buy in and we may get to a point where you need government subsidies to prop the whole thing up. By that I mean government subsidies to the insurance companies. ...[I]t turns out that 80 percent of all the people who signed up so far are getting subsidies. Well, they need lots of people who have higher incomes and who aren’t going to get subsidies. And if those people are unwilling to pay the high premiums that are being charged, then they’re in trouble. ...Everybody is worried, and no one’s keeping the fact that they’re worried a secret.” [53512, 53801]

Goodman adds, “Over the next three months, the federal government will end its risk pool and all the state governments will end theirs, and then all those people who are high-cost enrollees, they will go into the exchanges. And then there are cities and towns like Detroit, that have made promises of post-retirement care and they’re not funded, and so

Detroit's planning on sending all of its retirees to the exchange, and lots of other cities will do the same thing... And then the Obama administration's apparently going to allow hospitals and AIDS clinics to enroll people on the spot. So if a hospital had a patient who's having heart surgery, for example, that hospital is going to be able to get him enrolled in a private plan in the exchange to shift the cost over to that insurer. Apparently the hospital can actually pay the premium for the individual. You see, the premium is small compared to that hospital bill. So if we're talking about a \$50,000 hospital bill, they can afford to pay a \$10,000 premium and come out ahead. So insurers are sort of quite vulnerable at the moment. ...We have destroyed the individual market, and it's going to be very, very hard to move from where we are now to a real market, where people face real prices, which is what I think we have to do. Republicans who say we're just going to abolish Obamacare need to be aware of the fact that they can't just go back to the individual market, because it's being destroyed. We need to think carefully about how we can get out of the mess we're in, [because] just repealing the legislation isn't going to be enough." [53801]

Townhall.com political editor Guy Benson comments on the low percentage of young people who have enrolled in ObamaCare: "Twenty-four percent is below the 'worst case scenario' outside analysts had previously envisioned. If insufficient numbers of young Americans enroll in Obamacare's exchanges, insurers will be stuck with sicker, costlier risk pools. They'll compensate for projected losses by jacking up rates on other customers, which could send additional comparatively healthy consumers heading for the exits. To forestall this crumble, the administration may tee up taxpayer-funded bailouts for insurance companies. They could expand a provision within the law that was designed to offer targeted, small-scale bailouts if specific companies ended up getting caught with the short end of the adverse selection stick in certain markets. Republicans are seeking to block this bailout scheme, and I can't imagine the public is too excited about Democrats sending millions or billions to insurers because their trillion-dollar program has been a technological and demographic bust." [53498]

Disregarding the fact that ObamaCare will add more than \$1 trillion to the national debt over 10 years, California State Senator Ricardo Lara, a Democrat, calls for the health care program to also cover illegal immigrants. Lara states, "We've made enormous strides to reduce California's uninsured population with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act, but we won't have a truly healthy state until everyone has access to quality, affordable coverage. Immigration status shouldn't bar individuals from health coverage, especially since their taxes contribute to the growth of our economy." (Many illegal immigrants work for cash, do not report their income, and pay no income tax.) [53486]

At Townhall.com Heather Ginsberg writes, "As the number of staffers on Capitol Hill should roughly be split in party allegiance, you might think that half of them love Obamacare. Well, it seems that this isn't true. In a new survey put out by the Congressional Management Foundation 90% of staffers said they are worried about benefit changes under the new health care law. Hmmm. Maybe Democrats are changing their tunes on Obamacare? The survey also found that 86% are anxious about the financial hit from the Affordable Care Act, while 79% also cited worries about access

under the new rules. Obviously many of these staffers have bosses that are not concerned about their employees' concerns. Democrats continue to push Obamacare and praise it, even though their own staffers are worried about it. Perhaps it's time for them to work on reassuring their employees before going in front of the cameras to boost the law's image. And what's even more concerning is that only 35% of staffers actually felt they had a 'good understanding' of the changes to their health care plans under Obamacare." [53475, 53476]

At FoxNews.com James Rosen reports that recently declassified documents disclose that "Minutes after the American consulate in Benghazi came under assault on Sept. 11, 2012, the nation's top civilian and uniformed defense officials... were informed that the event was a 'terrorist attack...' The new evidence raises the question of why the top military men, one of whom [then-Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta] was a member of [Obama's] Cabinet, allowed him and other senior Obama administration officials to press a false narrative of the Benghazi attacks for two weeks afterward. Gen. Carter Ham, who at the time was head of AFRICOM, the Defense Department combatant command with jurisdiction over Libya, told the House in classified testimony last year that it was him [sic; he] who broke the news about the unfolding situation in Benghazi to ...Panetta and Gen. Martin Dempsey, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The tense briefing—in which it was already known that U.S. Ambassador to Libya Christopher Stevens had been targeted and had gone missing—occurred just before the two senior officials departed the Pentagon for their session with [Obama]. ...Ham's account of that fateful day was included in some 450 pages of testimony given by senior Pentagon officials in classified, closed-door hearings conducted last year by the Armed Services subcommittee. The testimony, given under 'Top Secret' clearance and only declassified this month, presents a rare glimpse into how information during a crisis travels at the top echelons of America's national security apparatus, all the way up to [Obama]." [53478, 53516]

HotAir.com's Ed Morrissey comments, "No one seriously thought it was a demonstration that had turned into a riot, despite the spin offered in the days after the attack left four Americans dead. And that leaves a lot of questions as to the lack of response... We have already known that [then-Secretary of Defense Leon] Panetta got briefed from the start that this was a terrorist attack, from Panetta's own lips. Presumably, that's what he then told Barack Obama. What happened in between to cause them to claim it was a demonstration that got out of control? One charitable possibility is that the State Department or CIA might have claimed otherwise based on faulty intel—it happens, especially in the fog of war—or it could be that someone concocted that story to give them political cover for the lack of preparedness that this event demonstrated. The Fox report also debunks the rumor that General Carter Ham received a stand-down order that night. As the classified testimony confirms, the American military was completely unprepared to deal with a terrorist attack in the region that night... This is mind-blowing. This wasn't just some random night; it occurred on the anniversary of the 9/11 attack. It took place in what Qaddafi's fall had turned into Terrorist Central in North Africa, in a city where escalating terrorist attacks against Western targets had forced every other Western nation but the US to retreat. As this [Fox report] also states, a visit by Panetta in

December 2011, ten months before the attack, led the DoD to offer a Marine unit for security, which State refused. Both agencies knew that Benghazi was a sitting duck, and yet the State Department did nothing to bolster security and the DoD did nothing to bolster readiness on the anniversary of 9/11. This is sheer incompetence stacked on more incompetence. *That's the scandal. Addendum:* Let's not forget that whatever Panetta told Obama about the attack, Obama didn't take enough of an interest to ask for a follow-up from his Secretary of Defense." (Morrissey is correct. Libya was a war zone, and the U.S. government had no business placing a diplomat and his staff in Benghazi without adequate—or even minimal—protection.) [53516, 53559]

Pamela Geller writes, "So it is even worse than we thought, and what we thought it was impeachable. And Hillary was culpable as well. She must be stopped in 2016. ...Did the NY Times know that this story was about to break? Is that why they peddled that piece of fiction claiming that al Qaeda had nothing to do with the jihadi attack on our people and our consulate? It was a stunning and unrecoverable blow to a compromised and dying institution. Not one week after the September 11th attacks on our consulate, Obama stood before the world at the UN and said, 'the future must not belong to those who slander the Prophet of Islam.' Obama said this knowing that the murder of our people and the attack on our consulate was in the cause of Muhammad. It is devastating. The day after the attacks, Obama schooled us on mandatory adherence to the sharia: Obama strode to the Rose Garden to comment on the loss, taking pains in his statement to say: 'We reject all efforts to denigrate the religious beliefs of others.' Off topic but related, the Obama administration targeted the reporter of this story. The Justice Department monitored and spied on James Rosen. The Washington Post reported the level of intensity: the Justice Department labeled Rosen a 'co-conspirator.' Imagine naming a reporter for doing his job. But Muslim Brotherhood groups named actual co-conspirators in the biggest terrorist funding trial in American history (like CAIR, ISNA, ICNA et al) remain at large, just like the Benghazi slaughterers." [53523]

FreeBeacon.com reports, "China's military last week conducted the first flight test of a new ultra-high speed missile vehicle aimed at delivering warheads through U.S. missile defenses, Pentagon officials said. The test of the new hypersonic glide vehicle was carried out Jan. 9 and the experimental weapon is being dubbed the WU-14 by the Pentagon, said officials who spoke on condition of anonymity. The hypersonic vehicle represents a major step forward in China's secretive strategic nuclear and conventional military and missile programs. The new hypersonic vehicle was detected traveling at extremely high speeds during the flight test over China, said officials who discussed some details of the test. The hypersonic craft appears designed to be launched atop one of China's intercontinental ballistic missiles, and then glides and maneuvers at speeds of up to 10 times the speed of sound from near space en route to its target, the officials said. Pentagon spokesman confirmed the test but declined to provide details." [53669]

Secretary of State John Kerry meets with Pope Francis at the Vatican and claims they have a "huge common interest in dealing with this issue of poverty, which in many cases is the root cause of terrorism or even the root cause of the disenfranchisement of millions of people on this planet." (Terrorism is not caused by poverty. If it were, there would be

Christian, Jewish, Hindu, and Buddhist terrorists as well as Islamist terrorists. Terrorism is caused by radical ideologies, such as Islam. Michelle Malkin writes, “This wasn’t a one-off. Kerry delivered a similar Kumbaya-style discourse at the Global Counterterrorism Forum last fall: ‘Getting this right isn’t just about taking terrorists off the street. It’s about providing more economic opportunities for marginalized youth at risk of recruitment.’ Naturally, the Foggy Bottom [State Department] apple doesn’t fall far from the Pennsylvania Avenue terror-excusing tree. ...Obama subscribes to the very same ‘midnight basketball’ theory of counterterrorism. In the immediate aftermath of 9/11, Obama asserted that jihad ‘grows out of a climate of poverty and ignorance, helplessness and despair.’ ...Thorough reviews of the empirical evidence shows, as the RAND Corporation reported, that ‘(t)errorists are not particularly impoverished, uneducated or afflicted by mental disease. Demographically, their most important characteristic is normalcy (within their environment). Terrorist leaders actually tend to come from relatively privileged backgrounds.’” As an example, Osama bin Laden was a multimillionaire. ...Memo to stupidly rich elitist John Kerry, richly stupid progressive Barack Obama and the administration’s bleeding-heart bureaucrats in a bubble: Financial bankruptcy is not, and has never been, the ‘root cause’ of Koran-inspired hatred and violence against nonbelievers. Lack of intellectual stimulation is not, and has never been, the ‘root cause’ of radical Islam’s centuries-old and never-ceasing imperative to establish a worldwide caliphate and conquer the West. The root cause of civilizational jihad is unmitigated evil and arrogance, not lack of compassion, understanding or social justice. Islamic terrorism never had such dutiful tools as the American fools who rationalize it.”) [53659, 53674]

Politico reports, “House-Senate negotiators rolled out a \$1.1 trillion spending bill Monday night—a giant package that fills in the blanks of the December budget agreement and promises to restore some order to government funding over the next year. Under pressure from Republicans, the measure keeps a tight rein on new funding for Wall Street regulators and effectively freezes appropriations for ...Obama’s healthcare program at the reduced, post-sequester level. But the White House retains the flexibility to find the financing it needs to implement the health exchanges and appears satisfied to have avoided the most contentious restrictions proposed by conservatives.” The bill reverses the cost-of-living-allowance cuts to wounded and disabled veterans, but leaves the cuts in place for the pensions of non-wounded veterans. The legislation gives federal employees a one percent pay raise and Head Start receives a 13 percent increase in funding—in spite of the fact that studies have shown the program to be ineffective. According to the Heritage Foundation, the legislation also includes at least \$1.5 billion in green energy handouts; a \$1.39 billion subsidy for Amtrak; \$562 million to the oil, coal, and natural gas industry; \$612 million in additional funds for Head Start; \$20 million for a trolley car in Kansas City, Missouri; \$16 million for a pedestrian mall in Fresno, California, and a \$10,000 grant for a theater program based on the comic book character Wonder Woman. [53515, 53525, 53557, 53561, 53670, 53776]

According to the Honolulu *Star-Advertiser*, Hawaii Department of Health director Loretta Fuddy “died of a cardiac arrhythmia because of stress following a December plane crash off Molokai...” [53479, 53480, 53708, 55907]

WSJ.com reports, “The Federal Bureau of Investigation doesn’t plan to file criminal charges over the Internal Revenue Service’s heightened scrutiny of conservative groups, according to law-enforcement officials, a move that likely will only intensify debate over the politically charged scandal. The officials said investigators didn’t find the kind of political bias or ‘enemy hunting’ that would amount to a violation of criminal law. Instead, what emerged during the probe was evidence of a mismanaged bureaucracy enforcing rules about tax-exemption applications it didn’t understand, according to the law-enforcement officials. While the case is still being investigated and could remain open for months, officials familiar with its progress said it is increasingly unlikely any criminal charges will result. That could change, the officials cautioned, if unexpected evidence is discovered that alters their thinking.” [53481, 53482]

Politico reports, “Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates shot back at members of the Obama administration who have criticized recently released excerpts from his memoir, saying they should take a look at their own ‘micromanaging’ tendencies. ‘Well, for a micromanaging White House, they should go look in the mirror,’ Gates told Yahoo News Global Anchor Katie Couric in an interview Monday. ‘Maybe they ought to think about how they do business. And I think it’s fair to say that the book is a lot more critical about the people around [Obama] than it is of [Obama].’ While discussing his memoir, ‘Duty: Memoirs of a Secretary at War,’ detailing his years as defense secretary under former President George W. Bush and ...Obama, Gates told Couric that Obama has created an atmosphere fraught with conflict and tension among administration officials. ‘At the end of the day, [Obama] controls what goes on inside the White House,’ he said. ‘The environment and the style of the White House is established by [Obama].’” [53483]

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) blocks a vote in legislation introduced by Senators Robert Menendez (D-NJ) and Mark Kirk (R-IL) that would re-impose sanctions on Iran if it violates the recent nuclear agreement. State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf tells reporters “no one should do anything that could possibly derail” the progress made so far. “This is the best chance we’ve had for a diplomatic resolution, uh, forever, to the Iranian nuclear program, and who knows when we’ll get this chance again? So we would tell Congress that they shouldn’t take any steps that could derail that process, uh, for any reason, uh, because it is a very delicate diplomatic situation and we need to give our experts the space to get this done.” (It is worth noting that both Menendez and Kirk receive significant campaign support from the American Israel Public Affairs Committee.) [53489, 53490, 53499, 53545, 53546]

Obama urges Congress not to pass the Menendez/Kirk Iran sanctions legislation, saying, “It’s going to be difficult, it’s going to be challenging, but ultimately this is how diplomacy should work. ...My preference is for peace and diplomacy, and this is one of the reasons why I’ve sent the message to Congress that now is not the time for us to impose new sanctions, now is the time for us to allow the diplomats and technical experts to do their work. What we want to do is give diplomacy a chance, and give peace a chance. ...Beginning January 20th, Iran will for the first time start eliminating its stockpile of higher levels of enriched uranium and dismantling some of the infrastructure

that makes such enrichment possible. ...In return, over the next six months the United States and our P5+1 partners—the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Russia, and China, as well as the European Union—will begin to implement modest relief so long as Iran fulfills its obligations and as we pursue a comprehensive solution to Iran’s nuclear program. Unprecedented sanctions and tough diplomacy helped to bring Iran to the negotiating table, and I’m grateful to our partners in Congress who share our goal of preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. Imposing additional sanctions now will only risk derailing our efforts to resolve this issue peacefully, and I will veto any legislation enacting new sanctions during the negotiation.” (The proposed legislation does not call for immediate sanctions on Iran. It calls for their imposition if Iran violates the terms of the recent nuclear agreement. The legislation stands a good chance of passage. At PJMedia.com Bridget Johnson notes, “Since [Secretary of State John] Kerry forged the agreement with Iran in November, [Senator Bob] Menendez [D-NJ] stressed, Iran has continued construction at the Arak heavy water reactor, has built additional centrifuges and admitted it has more than originally disclosed, and fired a rocket into space and showcased long-range ballistic missile capability. The Iranian parliament is also weighing a bill to increase uranium up to 60 percent, and the Iranian walkout from negotiations when the Treasury Department blacklisted 19 companies for evading sanctions last month demonstrated the regime’s ‘customary bluff-and-bluster techniques.’”

Menendez states, “Opponents of prospective sanctions against Iran argue that sanctions are like a spigot—easy to turn on and easy to turn off. But the story of sanctions, while effective, is more complicated. Passing anything in Congress takes time. Writing regulations and implementing sanctions takes even longer, and enforcement of sanctions is an ongoing process. The American public supports diplomacy. So do I. The American public doesn’t trust the Iranian regime. Neither do I. During this pivotal time, we have a responsibility to work together across parties and branches of government in the interest of achieving U.S. national security objectives.” Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL) states, “Beginning January 20th, the administration will give the world’s leading state sponsor of terrorism billions of dollars while allowing the mullahs to keep their illicit nuclear infrastructure in place. I am worried the administration’s policies will either lead to Iranian nuclear weapons or Israeli air strikes. The bipartisan proposal would ensure that any existing sanctions suspended under the interim step agreement would be immediately re-imposed should Iran cheat on its commitments, plan or conduct a terrorist attack against the United States, or launch a long-range ballistic missile during negotiations. It would also give Congress the ability to reject a final agreement that does not preclude Iran from being able to produce nuclear weapons in the future.” [53519]

FreeBeacon.com reports, “Iran will be permitted to continue advanced research and development work on its nuclear program under the interim nuclear deal reached over the weekend, according to senior Obama administration officials. Nuclear talks were reported to have broken down late last year over the issue of whether Iran would be permitted to continue critical research and development in the nuclear arena. The White House confirmed on Monday that Iran would be permitted to continue developing advanced nuclear centrifuges that will enable it to more quickly enrich uranium, the key component

in a nuclear weapon. Asked by a reporter on a conference call if the deal stops ‘Iran from designing new types of centrifuges,’ a senior administration official admitted that the deal does not prohibit this activity.” (In other words, Senators Menendez and Kirk have good reason to be worried about the ineffectiveness of the Iran agreement. Pamela Geller comments, “Benghazi, now this. Another bold-faced lie exposed. Is this how far Obama had to go just to get Iran’s President to pick up the phone and talk to him? To what end? The whole point of the talks was to stop Iran from building its nuclear weapons program. Obama is playing for the other team. Now we wait for the worst. Most Americans don’t understand the implications of a nuclear Iran, because the voluntary state-run media is in the business of propagandizing for [Obama]. In the nuclear arms race with the Soviets, at least we had the ‘safety net’ of mutually assured destruction. But under Islamic rule, death is a desired goal. And of course, there is more that we don’t know. The LA Times is reporting that Iran is claiming that Obama made a ‘secret deal’ with them. According to reports, ‘Key elements of a new nuclear agreement between Iran and six world powers are contained in an informal, 30-page text not yet publicly acknowledged by Western officials, Iran’s chief negotiator said Monday. When officials from Iran and the world powers announced that they had completed the implementing agreement, they didn’t release the text of the deal, nor did they acknowledge the existence of an informal addendum.’”) [53520, 53521, 53522]

TribTown.com reports that Senator Kay “What he said: If you like your plan you can keep it” Hagan (D-NC) will not be present when Obama delivers a speech in Raleigh on January 15. “Republicans seeking to unseat Hagan in November are sure to point out her expected absence. The Greensboro lawmaker has been attempting to thread the needle politically by supporting [Obama] while criticizing the administration on the health care law rollout.” North Carolina Republican Party Chairman Claude Pope says, “With her political career on the line, Kay Hagan is suddenly too embarrassed to be seen with ...Obama in North Carolina. North Carolinians know that despite Kay Hagan’s efforts to hide from ...Obama, she voted with his liberal agenda 96 percent of the time, enthusiastically endorsed him for re-election, and has been one of the strongest supporters of the ObamaCare disaster.” [53500, 53501, 53530, 54065]

Meanwhile, Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ) runs an ad claiming she “blew the whistle on the disastrous healthcare web site, calling it stunning ineptitude...” (Kirkpatrick—who barely won reelection in 2013—voted *for* the ObamaCare legislation in 2010. HotAir.com points out that Kirkpatrick’s “whistle blowing” was nothing more than a press release on November 15—six weeks *after* almost everyone knew the web site was a disaster. “No one needed Kirkpatrick to ‘blow the whistle,’ and in any case, this was less a case of whistle blowing than an exercise in ass-covering.”) [53614, 53687]

At AmericanThinker.com Jack Cashill questions Obama’s accounts of an alleged third trip to Kenya in 1994 or 1995 for “further research” for his book, *Dreams From My Father*. Cashill notes, “According to all accounts, Obama made only two trips to Africa before his election to the Senate in 2004: the first one in 1988 recounted in *Dreams* and the second one with Michelle in 1992.” Cashill suggests that Obama “lied. about making a return trip to Kenya... Instead of going to Africa, Obama—or his writing partner

[probably William Ayers]—may have contented himself with going to the local library and pillaging the memoirs of longtime Kenya resident Kuki Gallmann. This is the thesis proposed by Shawn Glasco, a tireless researcher into all things Obama. Obama’s evasions about his Kenya research trip make Glasco’s theory all the more credible.” Obama’s *Dreams* and Gallman’s *African Nights* share a surprising number of descriptions: “On the fashion front, both books have young women ‘wrapped’ in their kangas and ‘dressed’ in ‘rags.’ The women in both books wear shukas, head shawls, head scarves, goatskins, and balance baskets on heads graced with ‘laughing smiles.’ On the animal front, men in both books spearfish in ‘ink-black’ waters and hunt by torchlight. Elephants are seen ‘fanning’ themselves, birds ‘trill,’ insects ‘buzz,’ weaver birds ‘nest,’ and monkeys ‘mesmerize.’ ...The landscape, occasionally ‘barren,’ is rich in ‘undulating hills’ whose ‘grazing lands’ are dotted with the occasional ‘watering hole.’ The ‘mud and dung’ houses feature ‘thatched roofs’ ‘verandas,’ and ‘vegetable gardens.’ People seem to be carrying ‘straw mats’ everywhere. The stars ‘glint’ and people ‘waltz’ underneath them. Eyes ‘glimmer’ in the light of ‘campfires.’ Children sing in ‘high-pitched’ rhythms, and girls endure ‘barbaric’ circumcisions. Obama, like Gallmann, travels to the Great Rift Valley and stands at its edge. Both visit the small trading town of Narok.” (After more than 10,000 hours of Obama-related research, The Obama Timeline can state without hesitation that there is simply no way Obama would have come up with the phrase “mesmerizing monkeys” or “monkeys that mesmerize.” It is simply not in him to write that; there is not a creative, artistic, or theatrical bone in Obama’s body. He is merely a parrot of Vladimir Lenin, Karl Marx, Saul Alinsky, Malcolm X, Frantz Fanon, James Baldwin, Langston Hughes, Ralph Ellison, and W.E.B. DuBois.) [53493]

The Alaskan Supreme Court hears oral arguments in *Lamb v. Obama*, filed by Alaska resident Thomas A. Lamb in October 2012. According to BirthReport.com, “Lamb believes that precedent created by a 2004 California case instigated by Obama insiders requiring Illinois US Senate candidate Jack Ryan’s divorce records to be made public, and a 2010 Alaska case requiring personnel files for Alaska US Senate Candidate Joe Miller to be released, constitute grounds for further public disclosure of private documents for both major party’s presidential candidates.” (In 2004 Obama torpedoed U.S. Senate opponent Jack Ryan’s candidacy by persuading a judge to release Ryan’s previously sealed divorce documents, claiming the public had a right to know about the candidate’s past. That arguably set a precedent, and Lamb has called for information regarding claims that Obama committed fraud to obtain financial assistance as a foreign student. If Obama did apply for such student aid, it was either because he properly claimed Kenyan or Indonesian citizenship—in which case he certainly could not legally serve as president—or he improperly claimed such citizenship—in which case he committed fraud. *The Obama Timeline* believes registration as a foreign student is the reason Obama has worked to keep his college records secret.) [53709, 53710, 53711, 53712]

According to CongressFoundation.org, “A survey of senior managers in Congress indicates that cuts in congressional office budgets and transitioning staff to a new healthcare benefit structure could lead to a significant number of staff departures. Also, nearly four in ten senior staff said they plan to look for a job in the next 12 months...

House and Senate Chiefs of Staff, House District Directors and Senate State Directors were asked: ‘Given the past and potential changes in budgets and benefits, how likely do you think the following could contribute to staffers leaving your office?’ ‘Salary freezes’ was identified by 82% of the respondents as likely or very likely to lead to staff departures, and 79% identified ‘Changes to health care benefits’ as likely or very likely.’ (Some might argue that ObamaCare must be quite bad if it would encourage 79 percent of Congressional staffers to leave cushy public service jobs to find “real jobs” in the private sector.) [53514, 53531, 53532]

Even CNN finds fault with Obama administration claims that “More than 6 million Americans have now either signed up for a private health insurance plan through the [ObamaCare] Marketplace or for Medicaid coverage.” CNN.com writes, “But the numbers are somewhat misleading. Here are the figures: 2.1 million Americans signed up for private health insurance through the federal and state exchanges through the end of December. 3.9 million people learned they’re eligible for Medicaid or the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) in October and November. The squishiness lies in the Medicaid number. The 3.9 million figure includes people who were already on Medicaid and are just renewing... So not all of these folks have coverage due to Obamacare.” Additionally, almost six million people have had their insurance policies canceled because of ObamaCare. It is almost a certainty that many of them are among the 2.1 million who have enrolled in ObamaCare. The administration can hardly brag that those 2.1 million have now gained coverage because of ObamaCare when many, if not most, of them wouldn’t have had to enroll in the federal plan had it not caused them to lose their private plan. (Obama may as well sign legislation outlawing automobiles and then brag about a subsequent increase in bicycle sales.) *The Washington Post* later gives the Obama administration “three Pinocchios” for its claim that 3.9 million people signed up for Medicaid because of ObamaCare. Additionally, the *Washington Post* fact checker, Glenn Kessler, eventually gives *himself* three Pinocchios for pushing the 3.9 million figure: “Bottom line: This number tells you almost nothing about how the Affordable Care Act is affecting Medicaid enrollment. Reporters need to stop using it.” [53593, 53634, 53638, 53680, 53737, 53825]

BusinessInsider.com reports, “An investigation by El Universal found that between the years 2000 and 2012, the U.S. government had an arrangement with Mexico’s Sinaloa drug cartel that allowed the organization to smuggle billions of dollars of drugs while Sinaloa provided information on rival cartels. Sinaloa, led by Joaquin ‘El Chapo’ Guzman, supplies 80% of the drugs entering the Chicago area and has a presence in cities across the U.S. There have long been allegations that Guzman, considered to be ‘the world’s most powerful drug trafficker,’ coordinates with American authorities. But the El Universal investigation is the first to publish court documents that include corroborating testimony from a DEA agent and a Justice Department official. The written statements were made to the U.S. District Court in Chicago in relation to the arrest of Jesus Vicente Zambada-Niebla, the son of Sinaloa leader Ismael ‘El Mayo’ Zambada and allegedly the Sinaloa cartel’s ‘logistics coordinator.’” At PJMedia.com Bryan Preston explains, “[T]he US government has had a relationship with Mexico’s Sinaloa drug cartel since the Clinton administration. That relationship/alliance was used to damage Mexico’s other

drug cartels, but at a great price: Sinaloa alone imports about 80% of the illegal drugs that make their way to Chicago. The alleged deal allowed the cartel to import drugs virtually without fear of capture or punishment by the US government. While the relationship predates the Obama administration, El Universal reports that one part of it does not. The information came out after the arrest of a Sinaloa capo... '[Sinaloa cartel officer Vincente] Zambada-Niebla also alleged that Operation Fast and Furious was part of an agreement to finance and arm the cartel in exchange for information used to take down its rivals. (If true, that re-raises the issue regarding what Attorney General Eric Holder knew about the gun-running arrangements.) A Mexican foreign service officer told Stratfor in April 2010 that the U.S. seemed to have sided with the Sinaloa cartel in an attempt to limit the violence in Mexico.' The story reports that DEA agents met with high-level Sinaloa officials more than 50 times since 2000. The DEA has not commented on the story. At the very least, this story should re-open what had become a dormant investigation into Fast and Furious." [53517, 53518]

At WashingtonPost.com Ed Rogers writes, "Members of [Obama's] own team have made it clear that [Obama] does not like to be in a challenging environment and that he is generally bored. [Former Obama advisor] David Axelrod labeled [him] 'no-drama Obama' during the 2008 campaign, and [Obama advisor] Valerie Jarrett infamously said that Barack Obama has been 'bored to death his whole life.' And now, in an interview with CBS News, former defense secretary Robert Gates—arguably ...Obama's most experienced Cabinet officer—tells us that he saw in [Obama] an 'absence of passion ...absence of a conviction of the importance of success.' A blasé, no-drama attitude, boredom, a lack of conviction and an absence of passion can all be seen as factors contributing to Obamacare's failure, a bewilderingly weak foreign policy, and a piecemeal, eleventh-hour approach to dealing with Congress on domestic issues, including the budget and our national debt. Obama is a bystander... who shrugs as events unfold and yawns as our problems get worse. As I have said in the past, I believe that for Obama, being [in the Oval Office] is all about having the job, not doing the job. However, the administration has a lot of good people in the mix who are firmly committed to taking action, engaging Congress and the bureaucracy and leading the country. The problem is that [Obama] is not one of those people. It is obvious that when he is not campaigning, Obama lacks purpose and energy. All we get from him are occasional speeches and perfunctory meetings that look and sound okay but are not connected to robust, spirited organizational efforts by the White House or other executive agencies. ...As Obama's second term drags on, we'll see if the indifference from the top, coupled with a string of failures—on foreign policy, Obamacare, a stagnant economy and other domestic issues—will weigh on the Democrats in 2014. It will be interesting to watch the final weeks of candidate recruitment and the critical upcoming fundraising season to see if there is an Obama malaise developing in the Democratic Party." [53537]

On January 14 Congressman Bill Owens (D-NY) announces he will not run for reelection. (Owens won a special election in 2009 to fill a vacancy created by an Obama appointment after liberal Republican Dede Scozzafava, bitter about falling behind to Conservative Party candidate Doug Hoffman, endorsed Owens—effectively giving the seat to the Democrat. Scozzafava is hardly a typical Republican. She is married to a

leftist union official, and she is pro-abortion, pro-gay marriage, pro-card check legislation, pro-high tax, and pro-ACORN. Some observers suspected “foul play” after Obama advisor Valerie Jarrett appeared on ABC’s *This Week* to say that the Democrats would “love” to have Scozzafava back Owens. According to Michelle Malkin, Obama’s then-political advisor Patrick Gaspard, who was known as ACORN’s man in the White House, “...intervened in the race to convince Scozzafava to endorse the Democratic candidate Bill Owens after she dropped out.” Additionally, there was speculation that the Democrats helped Scozzafava pay off campaign debt and personal debts in exchange for her endorsement of Owens. During the campaign Owens told voters he was opposed to the pending health care legislation, but then voted for it.) [5681, 5778, 5779, 5784, 5785, 5786, 5791, 5814, 5815, 5818, 5826, 5830, 5859, 5860, 5878, 5879, 5881, 5884, 5967, 6030, 6034, 6035, 6036, 53497]

Former presidential candidate Alan Keyes launches a “Pledge to Impeach” Facebook campaign, to “end the dictatorial reign of the imposter and usurper in the White House, Barack Hussein Obama.” [54489]

Addressing the U.S. Institute of Peace in Washington, D.C., Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Saleh Mutlaq says, “I think you have a legal and moral responsibility to Iraq. You came to remove the Saddam regime and in fact, instead of doing that, you destroyed a country, not only the regime.” [53811, 53812]

At Townhall.com Hugh Hewitt comments on the 1,582-page, \$1.1 trillion spending agreement: “It is an obscene deal, one made worse by a patently cynical attempt to hide the blow to the military by ‘restoring’ cuts to the pensions of wounded veterans. A vote for this betrayal of the military will haunt every Republican who supports it. ...The *only* serious cut in the entire deal is aimed at active duty and retired career military, with a small change made... to assist disabled veterans supposed to serve as cover for the Members of Congress who vote for this. This looks like a slick, cynical attempt to hide the huge impact of the bill on the career military, thus using the disabled veterans as cover for their friends and colleagues of two decades who emerged from the wars not disabled or wounded. This deeply cynical move makes disgust with the ‘deal’ deeper, not less. ...[S]upport for a spending bill that blows through agreed upon sequester caps and slops out great new mounds of spending of borrowed dollars on all sorts of hands-out to special interests while cutting the retirement benefits of 20+ year career military is shameful. ...Senate Democrats who vote for this bill can rightly expect the issue to haunt them throughout 2014 as the families of the warriors they had screwed show up at their rallies and the retired veterans speak up at town halls. ...House Republicans who break faith with the soldiers, sailors airmen and Marines—really, \$45 billion in new spending but the career military had to take a \$6 billion dollar cut?—will run into the same fierce anger and rightly so. They are supposed to be the party of defense, not the party of throwing the military under the bus first.” [53496, 53504, 53505]

The Heritage Foundation reports that, according to the Index of Economic Freedom, the United States has fallen from 6th to 12th place since Obama took office. “Over the 20-year history of the Index, the U.S.’s economic freedom has fluctuated significantly.

During the first 10 years, its score rose gradually, and it joined the ranks of the economically ‘free’ in 2006. Since then, it has suffered a dramatic decline of almost 6 points, with particularly large losses in property rights, freedom from corruption, and control of government spending. The U.S. is the only country to have recorded a loss of economic freedom each of the past seven years. ...Substantial expansion in the size and scope of government, including through new and costly regulations in areas like finance and health care, has contributed significantly to the erosion of U.S. economic freedom.” (The top 12 countries for economic freedom are Hong Kong, Singapore, Australia, Switzerland, New Zealand, Canada, Chile, Mauritius, Ireland, Denmark, Estonia, and the United States. At the bottom are North Korea, Cuba, Zimbabwe, Venezuela, Eritrea, and Iran.) [53502, 53503, 53576, 53604]

Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) comments on the rankings: “You have given up your freedom of choice. ...The government takeover of health care is a significant loss to freedom. In fact, I would argue that ObamaCare involves the largest loss of freedom of choice in 50 years. Not only are you prevented from keeping your doctor if you like them [sic; him or her], you’re also prevented from choosing your insurance plan. ... You have given up your freedom to choose your insurance company—your freedom to choose your doctor. All you have to do is get on the ObamaCare website and realize you have poor choices now. But it’s not just about health care. It’s light bulbs. It’s toilets. It’s cars. You name it, your freedom of choice is gone. For a party that says they are [sic; it is] the pro-choice party, this is the most anti-choice administration we’ve seen in a lifetime. ...A smaller percentage of adults now work than have ever before been in our economy. If we want America to prosper again, we must reflect upon why we continue to fall in the Economic Freedom Index. Until we understand that freedom and prosperity go hand-in-hand, our future remains clouded. Our kids need worry if America will continue to be the land of the free and the economic engine of the world.” [53502, 53503, 53576, 53604]

The Washington Post calls Michelle Obama “A First Lady for the ages.” [53527]

DebbieSchlussel.com reports, “The Obama Administration is seeking to bring 30,000 ‘vulnerable’ Syrian refugees to the United States by the end of 2014 and will waive counterterrorism laws and allow those Syrians who aided and abetted Islamic terrorists, including Al-Qaeda, into the country. And these ‘vulnerable’ Hezbollah- and Al-Qaeda-supporting Syrians will be permanently resettled here, as in green card, citizenship, billions in entitlements, and the whole *tisa* [Arabic for ‘nine’] yards.” [53741, 53742]

In a rare meeting with his full Cabinet, Obama describes how he plans to get around Congress if it does not pass the legislation he wants: “Uh, I’ve got a pen and I’ve got a phone. Uh, and I can use that pen to sign executive orders and take executive actions and administrative actions that move the ball forward, uh... and I’ve got a phone that allows me to convene, uh, Americans from every walk of life—nonprofits, businesses, uh, the private sector, uh, universities, uh—to try to bring more and more Americans together around what I think is a unifying theme: Making sure that, uh, this is a country where, if you work hard, you can make it.” (Rush Limbaugh comments, “This is just absurd. He’s basically bragging about the fact that he can [issue] executive orders to make things fair.

He can [issue] executive orders and executive actions to get rid of the unfairness. He's gonna make this lousy country finally fair! Never mind [that] he's been running it for five years. Never mind the fact that his entire economic policy has undermined the old saw about work hard and you can make it. Because not only can you not work hard, you can't work [because there are no jobs]. ... 'To hell with it! I'm gonna finally make everything fair.' Now, he might have a pen, and he might have a phone, but what he does not have is the constitutional power to run this country like a dictator, and yet that's exactly what it sounds like." Twitter user Robert Johnson observes, "[Obama] vows to bypass congress and said, 'I've got a pen and a phone.' He forgot to mention the hammer & sickle.") [53528, 53529, 53530, 53534, 53541, 53572, 53608, 53820]

Author and radio talk show host Mark Levin comments that Obama has "just announced that he is going to assume law-making powers. He's just announced that he is going to assume law-making powers. He does not recognize the [Republican Party] majority in the House of Representatives. I don't know how much more clearly he can say it. You know what this is, folks? You know what this is? This is a gradual, quiet coup. That's what's taking place. It's gradual. It's quiet in the sense that it's non-violent. But it's a coup. ... This is the common parlance of the dictator: assuming that he represents all Americans, that he's a unifying figure, that we just need to concentrate more power in his hands. He will decide what laws are good, what laws are bad. He will use executive orders to pass laws that Congress won't pass. And he will ignore laws he doesn't like, and he'll re-write laws that he wants to re-write like Obamacare and so forth. This is the mindset and the language that dictators have." [53631]

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) responds to Obama's remark: "...Obama says he has a pen and a phone he can use to bypass Congress. Pens and phones are nice, but we have the Constitution..." [53673]

According to WashingtonTimes.com, Obama "will meet with Senate Democrats privately Wednesday night to discuss political strategy ahead of his State of the Union address on Jan. 28." (In addition to "income equality," Obama's speech will also focus on "global warming"—on a day when the weather forecast calls for a low temperature of about seven degrees for the nation's capitol.) [53530, 54025]

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani sends a Twitter message: "Our relationship w/ the world is based on Iranian nation's interests. In Geneva agreement world powers surrendered to Iranian nation's will." [53533]

MSNBC's race-driven commentator Toure Neblett tweets, "Many in poverty are working... two jobs. So 'jobs' in an ineffective anti poverty program." [53665]

Senate Democrats—unwilling to cut spending elsewhere to pay for it—block a proposal to extend unemployment insurance through November 2014. [53535, 53560]

According to Breitbart.com, the \$1.1 trillion “omnibus spending bill before Congress continues to fund U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) advertising programs for food stamps in foreign countries like Mexico...” [53591]

The Obama administration calls for Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to disavow comments made by his nation’s defense minister. Moshe Yaalon (also spelled Ya’alon) stated, “I live and breathe the conflict with the Palestinians, I know what they think, what they want and what they really mean. The American plan for security arrangements that was shown to us isn’t worth the paper it was written on. It contains neither security nor peace. Only our continued presence in Judea and Samaria and the Jordan River will guarantee that Ben Gurion Airport and [the city of] Netanya do not become targets for missiles from every direction. Secretary of State John Kerry—who arrived here determined, and who operates from an incomprehensible obsession and a sense of messianism—can’t teach me anything about the conflict with the Palestinians. ...In fact, throughout the recent months, there is no negotiation between us and the Palestinians—but rather, between us and the Americans. The only thing that might save us is if John Kerry wins the Nobel Prize and leaves us be.” (Kerry’s “plan” includes the absurd demand that Israel return to its indefensible pre-1967 borders—which are known as the “Auschwitz borders” for good reason. At Spectator.org Jed Babbin points out, “The pre-1967 borders would leave the terrorist Assad regime (or whichever jihadist group is running Syria if and when Assad falls) control of the Golan Heights and pretty much the entire West Bank area up through Jerusalem, Israel’s capital. Israelis would have to get Palestinian government permission to go to their capital city.” Obama and Kerry apparently believe Jews should need Muslim permission to enter Jerusalem.) [26110, 26113, 26152, 26162, 26163, 26178, 26259, 26313, 53543, 53544, 53565, 53717, 54021]

Yaalon, noting that the Palestinians continue to refuse to accept Israel as the state of the Jewish people, stated, “If that does not change, then there is no meaning to the satellites and the sensors that the Americans are offering. The five-year-old boy with the explosive belt will continue to try and hurt us when he grows up.” (In November 2011, during the G-20 economic summit, French President Nicolas Sarkozy told Obama, “I cannot stand him [Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu]. He is a liar.” Obama responded, “*You’re fed up with him, but I have to deal with him every day.*” Congresswoman Michele Bachman (R-MN) called on Obama “to immediately apologize to Prime Minister Netanyahu and... demonstrate leadership and demand that the French President Sarkozy do the same.” Israeli politician Danny Danon told the *Jerusalem Post*, “Obama’s true face was revealed, as are his cold and disrespectful policies toward Israel and Prime Minister Netanyahu. Anyone who had doubts about the way Obama treats Israel doesn’t have them anymore. Obama is bad for Israel.” Neither Obama nor Sarkozy apologized—but Obama now expects an apology from Yaalon.) [26110, 26113, 26152, 26162, 26163, 26178, 26259, 26313, 53543, 53544, 53565, 53717, 54021]

White House press secretary Jay Carney says, “The remarks of the Israeli defense minister, if accurate, are offensive and inappropriate, especially in light of everything that the United States is doing to support Israel’s security needs. [In other words, “Jews are

ingrates.”] Secretary Kerry and his team have been working nonstop in their efforts to promote a secure peace for Israel because of the deep concern the United States has and the deep commitment the United States has for and to Israel’s future and the Israeli people. To question Secretary Kerry’s motives and distort his proposals is not something we would expect from the defense minister of a close ally.” (Yaalon’s statements were arguably accurate, and the Obama administration has done more to harm Israel than defend it. Kerry, in fact, desperately does want a Nobel Peace Prize, and neither he nor Obama care about the future of Israel. They just want a Palestinian state—at any cost.) Yaalon later responds, “The United States are our most important friends and allies. When there are disagreements between us, we discuss them in private. I will continue to be responsible and firmly maintain the security of the Israeli people.” (Pamela Geller comments, “How can any of our allies do business with the United States? Our word is not worth the paper it is written on. We lie. We aid and abet the worst state sponsors of terror. We have radicals, anti-American demagogues, in key administration positions. Would you trust the US as an ally? The Obama years mark the end of the American era. One only hopes that we can salvage something in 2016. If Hillary gets in—all is lost. You cannot have a ‘peace process’ when those waging war are committed to your destruction. Giving away precious land and security concessions will not win the peace. It will fuel the war. It rewards terror and Jew-hatred.”) [53543, 53544, 53565, 53717, 54021]

While Carney defends Kerry’s naïveté, the terrorist group Hamas celebrates the graduation of 13,000 children from paramilitary “pioneers of liberation” training camps in Gaza. According to *The Times of Israel*, “The corps of instructors consists mainly of active members of Hamas’s security forces, and the curriculum includes weapons training, first aid, self defense, marching exercises and ‘security awareness’ classes on identifying Israeli spies.” Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh warns Israel: “Beware [of] this generation. This is a generation which knows no fear. It is the generation of the missile, the tunnel and the suicide operations.” Female trainers are reportedly on the staff “to oversee the training of the young women to follow in the footsteps of the female suicide operatives.” [53602, 53603]

CNN’s Brianna Keilar—referring to the fact that Senator Kay Hagan (D-NC) will not be present when Obama addresses a North Carolina audience the next day—asks Carney if Obama is “worried that he is a drag on some vulnerable Democrats in this key election year?” Carney responds, “Brianna, I think Senator Hagan’s offices addressed that. I think she’s here [in Washington, D.C.] working on important business. [Obama] looks forward to his visit to North Carolina... [W]e’re certainly not looking at a visit designed to highlight the need to continue the progress we’ve made with advanced manufacturing as an issue of electoral politics. The fact is, thanks to the grit and determination of the American people, thanks to the quality of the American workforce, and thanks to the policies pursued by this administration, we have seen a rebound in manufacturing in the United States. Many people and experts viewed the decline in manufacturing in this country that we had experienced over a number of years to be something that was irreversible, but this nation has proved and the American people have proved otherwise. And the fact is we’ve created more than 500,000 new manufacturing jobs. And the more of them that are created in the advanced manufacturing space, the more high-paying those

jobs are, the more those jobs bring economic security and stability to middle-class families across the country. So that's what [Obama] wants to highlight tomorrow.” [53635]

NYTimes.com reports, “The National Security Agency has implanted software in nearly 100,000 computers around the world that allows the United States to conduct surveillance on those machines and can also create a digital highway for launching cyberattacks. While most of the software is inserted by gaining access to computer networks, the N.S.A. has increasingly made use of a secret technology that enables it to enter and alter data in computers even if they are not connected to the Internet, according to N.S.A. documents, computer experts and American officials. The technology, which the agency has used since at least 2008, relies on a covert channel of radio waves that can be transmitted from tiny circuit boards and USB cards inserted surreptitiously into the computers. In some cases, they are sent to a briefcase-size relay station that intelligence agencies can set up miles away from the target.” [53542, 53564]

Former Congressman Allen West comments on the Obama administration's “new federal guidance from the departments of Justice and Education encouraging (i.e. threatening) schools to adopt disciplinary policies” to reverse the statistics that show minority students are disciplined in greater percentages than their populations. “And of course the American Civil Liberties union (ACLU) is thrilled with this policy. The ACLU offered research showing that black students make up 36 percent of those expelled, though they represent only 15 percent of students. ...I taught high school for one year in Deerfield Beach, Fla and in the end, it was such an enjoyable experience breaking up fights daily, that I decided to return to the combat zone of Afghanistan. ...Yes, this violence on campus was perpetrated 8 out of 10 times by black students, male and female, but it had nothing to do with racial disparity. It had everything to do with a lack of discipline and control. When a young man took a swing at me while I broke up a beat down that he and three others were giving a young man already on the ground, it had nothing to do with civil rights. It had everything to do with a criminal behavior which does not belong in a learning environment—and he was expelled. Now imagine under these new guidelines and rules, DoJ and DoEd would initiate an investigation. Liberal progressives don't want to tackle the problem they created, the decimation of the black family. Fifty years ago only six percent of births in America were out of wedlock Today the number is 72 percent in the black community.” [53547, 53548, 53549]

“...Common core [federal education standards]—now this—the progressive socialist dream of state-run education is coming to fruition. But what is even more heinous is the message being sent that race is an excuse for bad behavior in our kids, an acceptable excuse at that. It means the death spiral for education in the black community will increase as we overlook or reward the most abhorrent conduct. Perhaps this is why [Attorney General Eric] Holder and Obama want Debo Adegbile as the Assistant Attorney General for the Civil Rights Division considering his defense of Black Panther and cop killer Mumia Abu-Jamal, when he was leader of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund. There is no doubt that someone skilled enough to defend Abu-Jamal would be perfect to institute this policy of racial protectionism of juvenile criminal behavior. This

is my clear and succinct message to white Americans. How long will it be before ‘you people’ realize you have elevated someone... who abjectly despises you—not to mention his henchman Holder. Combined they are the most vile and disgusting racists—not you.” (With regard to “Common Core,” Hillsdale College professor Terrance Moore notes, “In the margin of the teachers edition, the teacher is instructed to explain the term ‘fascist’ to the students and to point out that the term ‘fascist’ is now applied to all right-wing extremist groups.” That is, tax dollars are being used by the federal government to produce political propaganda for the public schools that suggests conservatives are fascists.) [53547, 53548, 53549, 53762, 53804, 54201]

Dailycaller.com reports, “Leaders of the charitable coalition the United Way swarmed Capitol Hill Tuesday to lobby against the Obama administration’s proposed cap on the charitable deduction in the federal tax code. Lowering the charitable deduction has long been an Obama policy objective. ...Obama proposed a cap on charitable deductions in his 2014 budget proposal in April, and it is currently being debated in Congress. The proposal would cap charitable deductions with a 28 percent limit, down from its current 39.6 percent limit on high earners. Obama has tried every year since taking office to set a 28 percent cap. ...Liberal antipathy toward private giving in favor of increased taxing and spending seems to apply as well at the level of personal behavior. Analyses of tax data have consistently shown both that religious conservatives give higher percentages of their income to charity than secular liberals and that residents of Republican-leaning states are more charitable than residents of Democratic-leaning states. The United Way said Obama’s cap would reduce charitable giving and negatively impact poor families who benefit from it.” (Ostensibly, Obama’s proposal is intended to increase tax revenue. But the hidden goal is to make people less dependent on private charities and more dependent on government.) [53563]

Apparently because they have done all they can to create jobs and cut federal spending and have nothing better to so, Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) and three other Democrat colleagues send a letter to the Hollywood Foreign Press Association and NBCUniversal to whine about celebrities being shown using electronic cigarettes during the Golden Globe Awards telecast. (Some Democrats seem to have no trouble legalizing the use of marijuana—but electronic cigarettes require immediate threats of action. On January 15 the Chicago City Council votes 45–4 to ban the use of electronic cigarettes in restaurants, bars and most other indoor public places—even though they do not produce anything that would harm nearby non-“smokers.”) [53550, 53551, 53583, 53584]

Congressman John Mica (R-FL) states that he plans to introduce legislation calling “one way or the other” for the privatization of TSA airport screeners. “If you come to Orlando airport or Sanford airport, what is going on is almost criminal to American citizens, the way they are treated. This is the mess we’ve created.” The anger over the TSA is bipartisan. Congressman Gerald Connolly (D-VA) states, “When we mistreat [travelers] by barking orders at them as if they are cattle, not people, we actually diminish spirit of cooperation. I’ve had it, and I think a lot of the public has had it. There is no excuse for it.” [53598]

Bridget Johnson reports at PJMedia.com, “A House Natural Resources Committee investigation has found that ...Obama’s Office of Management and Budget ordered that sequestration cuts be applied retroactively to funding for rural schools over the opposition of the Agriculture Department. The committee’s report released today, ‘A Less Secure Future for Rural Schools: An Investigation into the Obama Administration’s Questionable Application of the Sequester to the Secure Rural Schools Program,’ detailed how last February the USDA had determined 2013 sequestration wouldn’t apply to 2012 funds that had already been distributed in the program. The White House stepped in and overruled the USDA...” (That is, the Obama administration pushed to make sequestration spending cuts “as painful as possible” for rural schools.) [53577, 53621]

According to the Media Research Center, “Between Monday’s *Nightly News* and Tuesday’s *Today*, NBC devoted ten minutes and forty-four seconds to coverage of the now six-day-old controversy surrounding New Jersey Governor Chris Christie. Meanwhile, poor ObamaCare enrollment numbers just released Monday afternoon garnered only forty-one seconds of air time on *Today* and were completely ignored on *Nightly News*.” “The journalists at *CBS This Morning* on Tuesday hyperventilated over the latest ‘fashion milestone’ for Michelle Obama, donating four minutes to the First Lady’s second inaugural dress appearing at the Smithsonian. In contrast, the latest setback for ObamaCare warranted only a minute and 19 seconds.” [53569, 53570, 53571]

According to HawaiiReporter.com, “The number of small businesses that have signed up for health care through Hawaii’s [ObamaCare] exchange network is decidedly miniscule. Of Hawaii’s 30,000 small businesses, 296 registered for insurance through the Hawaii Health Connector by the Dec. 25 deadline, according to the exchange. ...Betty Fackler, a physical therapist who owns South Kona Physical Therapy, said she was thrilled when the Obamacare exchange was launched. She thought she could get more affordable insurance for her employees, as well as federal tax credits and subsidies. She was wrong. ...‘I told my old insurance company we had to leave them for lower rates that were to be available in a larger risk pool and the federal tax credit, only available if I purchased through the connector,’ Fackler said. Instead, she said she was ‘shocked’ by what happened next. Website glitches and bureaucratic red tape kept her from obtaining insurance and tax credits, and Fackler’s business lost its health insurance coverage altogether. ...‘You can imagine how surprised I was to find each staff member premium was priced substantially higher than they would have been on the individual charts, especially my 62-year-old male employee. I was sure there was an error and perhaps discounts hadn’t been applied. Maybe it was because they thought my employees were smokers and they had penalty-added pricing,’ Fackler said, noting her employees also were wrongly listed on the bill as responsible for their own dental coverage. ...‘I called my old insurance company and begged them to take back our little pool of three [employees]. They renewed our previous plan that is, incidentally or ironically, \$7 per month less than the comparable HMSA plan on the connector,’ Fackler said.” [53568]

At WSJ.com James Taranto warns of “...a little-noted ObamaCare statistic that is also a sign of adverse selection: the sex ratio. One of the selling points of ObamaCare was that it was a feminist triumph. ...Just as no one can be denied insurance or charged more

because of a pre-existing condition, a woman and a man of the same age must be charged the same premium, and their policies must cover the same conditions—including maternity care for unmarried men (and women past childbearing age). What it also means, however, is that women, like persons with pre-existing conditions, are more expensive to insure. The ban on what is called ‘gender rating’ drives men’s premiums up as well as women’s down. (That doesn’t mean, by the way, that women pay less under ObamaCare than before. It may be that premiums rise for both sexes but the increase is steeper for men.) It means, further, that if ObamaCare enrollees are disproportionately female—just as if they are disproportionately older—premiums will tend to go up for everybody. And lo and behold, they are: The Department of Health and Human Services reports that of the 2.2 million people who have ‘selected a Marketplace plan,’ 54% are female. ‘By comparison,’ the HHS report helpfully notes, ‘males account for half (50 percent) of the total non-elderly population in the United States (ages 0 to 64).’ ...A 54% to 46% enrollment difference means that only 85.2 males are enrolled in ObamaCare for every 100 females. ...At any rate, our main reason for bringing this up is not to complain that ObamaCare is in part a scheme for redistributing wealth from men to women, although it is that...Rather, our point is that this is another way in which the incentive structure created by ObamaCare’s price controls runs counter to the proclaimed goal of achieving universal or near-universal coverage.” [53645]

CNSNews.com reports, “Planned Parenthood’s net revenue increased 5% to [a] total of \$1.21 billion in its organizational fiscal year ending on June 30, 2013, according to its new Annual Report 2012-2013, and about 45% of that revenue—\$540.6 million—was provided by taxpayer-funded government health services grants. In the same report, Planned Parenthood said that in the year that ended on Sept. 30, 2012 it did 327,166 abortions.” (Planned Parenthood, the nation’s number one abortion mill, therefore essentially received \$1,652 per abortion from the federal government.) [53575]

Meanwhile, ChristianPost.com reports, “A study across the Texas Panhandle, using government statistics from 16 counties, found that the teen pregnancy rates among 13-17-year olds from 1994 through 2010 showed dramatic declines even as Planned Parenthood Federation of America facilities in the region shut down—dwindling from 19 family planning facilities to zero. ...The study analyzed data obtained from the Texas Department of State Health Services, Vital Statistics Annual Report, Table 14B, for the years 1994 through 2010: ‘In 1996, the year before opposition to Planned Parenthood began, the average teen pregnancy rate in the 16 counties where Planned Parenthood operated facilities was 43.6 per 1,000 girls aged 13 to 17. By 2002, the rate had dropped to 28.6. In 2008, the year the last two Planned Parenthood facilities disaffiliated from PPFSA, the teen pregnancy rate was 27.2. And in 2010, two years after the Texas Panhandle became Planned Parenthood-free, the teen pregnancy rate had fallen to 24.1.’” (Some might draw the conclusion that teen-agers perhaps act more responsibly when they do not have a federally-funded “way out” from their immoral actions.) [54052, 54053]

The White House announces that Obama will meet Pope Francis, but does not provide a date for an Obama trip to the Vatican. (At Townhall.com Daniel Doherty observes, “Evidently, [Obama] is ‘hugely impressed’ with Pope Francis as a religious leader; it’s

seemingly only the Church—and its moral teachings—that he disdains. No matter. Pope Francis is one of the few world leaders that is genuinely popular across the board, so this historic meeting—wherever it’s held—is bound to bring him some favorable press. And he could use some right about now. Perhaps that’s why he waited so long to finally meet him.”) [53589]

WashingtonExaminer.com reports, “Brookings Institution scholars, inspired by baseball statistics, conducted an analysis of the 113th Congress that points rather directly at the Democrat-controlled Senate as a the locus of congressional gridlock. The analysis opens with the observation that the House, contrary to expectation, passed twice as many bills as the Senate in 2013. Why? Because of the Senate committee process. ‘When we look at this category, then, we begin to understand where the problem lies: even in the traditionally collegial Senate, 87 percent of bills die in committee,’ Molly Jackman and Saul Jackman, of Brookings, and Brian Boessenecker write in Politico. ‘While the filibuster may grab all the headlines, committees are a far deadlier weapon.’ That observation undermines the conventional wisdom about Republican opposition to President Obama causing gridlock. ... Filibusters are the weapon of last resort for a Senate minority, in terms of procedural maneuvers they can use to block a bill’s passage. Committees, on the other hand, are run by the majority party. The chairman’s gavel is a hammer that Democrats can use to kill Republican proposals. One countervailing point against the idea that the committees account for the gridlock: Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-NV, has the authority to bypass the committee process and bring legislation to the Senate floor for a vote—which he does on controversial issues, such as the unemployment insurance extension. That may sound more efficient, but it’s also likely to inspire more filibusters from a minority that didn’t get the opportunity to shape the bill at the committee level. The drafting process is replaced by floor amendments, which may be substantive or may just be partisan messaging votes. (And, given the likelihood of messaging amendments, Reid routinely refuses to allow most amendments to receive a vote.)” (In other words, the minority is sometimes forced to engage in filibusters because Reid and the Senate committees often do not allow Republicans any input as the legislation proceeds.) [53599]

On *Special Report* George Will comments, “ObamaCare always has counted on the mass irrationality of young people. Now, normally that’s a good bet. But in this case [relying on young people to enroll in ObamaCare in huge numbers], it’s not so. For two reasons. ... First, the youth today... are the principle sufferers from the Obama economy. They’re just not feeling prosperous. Second, ‘RomneyCare’ [in Massachusetts] did not instantly become a byword for incompetence, as this [ObamaCare] has done. So, young people who are, (a) suffering economically and (b) recoiling from what they see as people who can’t run a web site are not going to come in and save them.” [53556]

On MSNBC leftist Ed Schultz says, “I was visiting with some lawmakers last night in Washington and obviously we talked a lot about health care when I was visiting with them and I asked them, er, uh, ‘Do you have a problem running on it?’ There does seem to be, for some reason, a reluctance by Democrats to run home and talk about how positive this health care law is. And, uh, I, I find that very interesting. The moral aspect

of this, the, the moral component to this—and when you talk to them about voting to take something away from another American, it does resonate with people. If you're doing statistics, you, you know, you're not gonna win that battle, but if you talk about people's lives, if you talk about the moral component, who can argue with it? Uh, if there is gonna be—it's almost like there's a lack of confidence, is [sic] they're not really sure if this is the right thing to do in front of constituents.” (If Schultz cannot understand why Democrat politicians are running away from ObamaCare he should ask Senator Kay Hagan (D-NC). As far as the “moral component” goes, Schultz, like many leftists, only sees the benefit of “giving someone something for nothing” and concludes that is morally justified. He fails to see the other side of the equation: taking something away from those who earned it before it can be given to someone else. “Taking money from person X and giving it to person Y” is, to a leftist, considered the utmost of morality, and Person Y would no doubt agree. But the Democrat politicians also have to face Person X.) [53566]

In Arkansas, Republican John Cooper wins a state senate seat by a margin of 57–43, despite being outspent three-to-one by his Democrat opponent in an area that, according to Townhall.com's Guy Benson, “has not elected a Republican to the State Senate since reconstruction. Paging Senator [Mark] Pryor...” DailyCaller.com notes, “[T]he 21st district is a heavily Democratic-aligned district. In 2010 it went 68 percent for Democrat Governor Mike Beebe. In fact, the Jonesboro-based senate seat hasn't been held by a Republican in nearly 150 years. Cooper's victory begs the question, what happened, and what does it all mean? John Cooper, a retired AT&T employee, wouldn't strike most seasoned political observers as the kind of guy you'd want to run for office in what was thought of as a Democrat district. His campaign focused on his opposition to tax hikes... and his opposition to Obamacare—specifically the bipartisan, Republican leadership-backed Arkansas Private Option (Medicaid expansion). In short, Cooper ran as the conservative's conservative. Cooper's opponent was Sam Rockwell. Rockwell was a local small-business owner and attempted to paint himself as a Democrat centrist—much like Arkansas's U.S. Senator Mark Pryor and gubernatorial candidate—and former-Congressman—Mike Ross. The ‘centrist with community roots’ shtick didn't work out too well for Rockwell, and that should strike fear into the hearts of both Pryor and Ross in their 2014 contests. Moreover, it should sound alarm bells for a retreating Arkansas Democratic Party and Democratic Senate candidates across the nation. ...On a national level, the election of John Cooper serves as a dire warning for Mark Pryor.” (Largely because he voted for ObamaCare, U.S. Senator Mark Pryor (D-AR) faces a tough reelection contest against Congressman Tom Cotton (R-AR). In November 2010 Pryor's former Senate colleague, Blanche Lincoln (D-AR), was beaten by more than 20 points—principally because of her vote for ObamaCare.) [53614, 53713, 54013]

Late night television comedian ridicules ObamaCare and the low level of enrollments by young Americans: “They expect young people to buy insurance at the same time the Playstation 4 comes out? You know, if you want young people to sign up maybe you shouldn't have made the law so you can stay on your parents' plan until you turn 26. I mean, what kid is gonna say, ‘No thanks, mom and dad, I've got the premiums covered?’” Kimmel then presents a fake ad in which an older couple thanks young ObamaCare enrollees for paying for the health care of senior citizens. (HotAir.com observes, “It's not

the novelty of a late-night show goofing on ObamaCare. That's not novel; [Jay] Leno does it every day. The novelty lies in a show aimed at younger adults emphasizing that Democratic welfare programs do in fact have winners and losers, and more often than not Kimmel's audience is on the wrong side. Obscuring the reality of winners and losers was the whole reason for the 'if you like your plan' lie and a big part of the reason why Obama tends to decorate his redistribution arguments with references to Warren Buffett and other extreme cases. The success of the liberal agenda depends upon convincing people that someone else will pay for it. The Kimmel skit... strikes at the heart of that.") [53627, 54022]

On January 15 Congressmen Jim Moran (D-VA), George Miller (D-CA), and Buck McKeon (R-CA) announce they will not seek reelection. (Moran will almost certainly be replaced by another liberal Democrat—but perhaps one whose wife has not had to make domestic violence calls to the police.) Delusional House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) says the Democrat retirements “do not relate in any way to our prospects for winning [back the House].” [53585, 53626, 53697]

The \$1.1 trillion spending package passes the House by a vote of 359–67. (Asked if he read the 1,582-page bill, Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) is honest enough to answer, “Nobody did.” To the same question, Congressman Gerald Connolly (D-VA) says, “I’m not going to dignify that question with an answer,” meaning, “Of course not.” Congressman Mark Meadows (R-NC) says, “We actually—personally, no, I did not read all those pages. Actually, we pulled out probably eight or nine sections of it, and I went through that in detail. And the reason for my no vote, was, there was [sic] a couple of things in those sections that I had read, that I had issues with. And so, we didn't need to go any further, because we knew we were going to vote no. But yes, we went through it. Our staff went through it from front to back.” Both Blumenauer and Connolly voted for the legislation.) [53552, 53690, 53691, 53692]

The Albertsons supermarket chain announces it will close 26 stores by February 20. (In August, the Stater Brothers chain announced it had earned a mere “\$10 million net profit on \$968 million in sales in its most recent quarterly report,” according to Bill Sardi at LewRockwell.com. “That is a 1% profit margin or only about \$60,000 per store per quarter, (\$240,000/year). That is profit of only about \$657/day. That means just this store chain in teetering and is just 1% away from insolvency or having to borrow to have a future. ...Safeway, owner of the Chicago-based Dominick's store chain, couldn't find a buyer for this chain of 72 stores and closed them, resulting in 6000 lost jobs.” [54039, 54040, 54041]

According to *The New York Times*, the Department of Justice “will significantly expand its definition of racial profiling to prohibit federal agents from considering religion, national origin, gender and sexual orientation in their investigations, a government official said Wednesday. The move addresses a decade of criticism from civil rights groups that say federal authorities have in particular singled out Muslims in counterterrorism investigations and Latinos for immigration investigations. ... Since taking office, Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr. has been under pressure from

Democrats in Congress to eliminate those provisions. ‘These exceptions are a license to profile American Muslims and Hispanic-Americans,’ Senator Richard J. Durbin, Democrat of Illinois, said in 2012.” At PJMedia.com Timothy Furnish writes, “Obama and Holder are transforming the U.S. into a dhimmi nation: one that cowers before Islamic law and demands that its non-Muslim citizens—especially its 240 million Christians—meekly accept their second-class status and never broach the glaringly obvious fact of Islamic violence, even if this means making all non-Muslims less safe. The question for those of us in the majority, then: just how long will we put up with such a dangerous policy?” (It remains to be seen how the government will be able to safeguard the nation from terrorist attacks launched by foreign Muslim men if agents are prohibited from paying attention to national origin, gender, or religion. In fact, the “no profiling” prohibition may simply mean the government will more eagerly consider *every* American a target of surveillance.) [53636, 53637, 53653, 53654, 54118, 54168]

During an appearance in North Carolina in which he pushed an extension of unemployment insurance, Obama tells the audience, “Your senator, Kay Hagan, couldn’t be here. But I wanted to thank her publicly for the great work she’s doing.” (It’s not that she couldn’t be there; Hagan did not want to be seen at a public appearance with Obama—whose “If you like your plan you can keep it” promise was repeated by her and threatens to put an end to her Senate career. Obama’s remark can be seen as a swipe at Hagan, and will likely be used by her opponent in an ad.) [53553, 53554, 53588, 53639]

The Obama administration changes yet another ObamaCare deadline, delaying from January 31 to March 15 the latest date for enrolling in the Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Plan (PCIP). (The deadline had already been extended from December 31 to January 31.) [53555, 53567, 53582, 53620]

DailyCaller.com reports, “The Obama administration’s proposal to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour could result in as many 1,084,000 jobs eliminated from the work force, according to a new study conducted by the Employment Policies Institute (EPI) ‘No amount of denial by [Obama] and his political allies—and no number of ‘studies’ published by biased researchers—can change the fact that minimum wage hikes eliminate jobs for low-skill and entry-level employees. Non-partisan economists have agreed on this consensus for decades, and the laws of economics haven’t changed,’ Michael Saltsman, research director at EPI, said in a statement. ...The number of job losses would be the most dramatic in large states, such as California and Texas. Economists found that California could lose as many as 100,016 jobs and Texas could see up to 128,617 jobs disappear from its economy.” [53562]

The Senate Intelligence Committee releases a “Review of the Terrorist Attacks on U.S. Facilities in Benghazi, Libya, September 11-12, 2012.” The bipartisan report concludes that al- Qaeda-related groups were, in fact, involved in the attack, criticizes the Obama administration for failing to bring the attackers to justice, and criticizes the State Department for not beefing up security at the Benghazi facility even after receiving requests to do so. According to FoxNews.com, “[T]he report said the intelligence community provided ‘ample strategic warning’ that security in eastern Libya was

deteriorating and U.S. personnel ‘were at risk.’ The report said multiple ‘tripwires’ were crossed signaling security problems, and the State Department should have increased its security posture in response.” (It is still not clear who concocted the phony “It was a YouTube video” narrative.) According to *USA Today*, the report “also says 15 people in Libya who have tried to help the FBI investigate the murders have been killed. ... ‘The attacks were preventable, based on extensive intelligence reporting on the terrorist activity in Libya—to include prior threats and attacks against Western targets—and given the known security shortfalls at the U.S. Mission,’ the committee said in a statement.” Congressman Jason Chaffetz (R-UT) states, “The bottom line is Hillary Clinton wanted the appearance of normalization. Security was not driving these decisions. Politics was.” (In a logical and sane world, Clinton’s political career would be over. But she is counting on the mainstream media to carry her through her 2016 presidential election campaign.) The report makes it clear that virtually everyone knew from the beginning that the Benghazi event was a terrorist attack, yet it does not identify the person or persons who came up with the “anti-Islam YouTube video” cover story. [53573, 53574, 53581, 53586, 53595, 53596, 53597, 53633, 53671, 53781]

The report states, “In the months before the attacks on September 11, 2012, the IC [intelligence community] provided ample strategic warning that the security situation in eastern Libya was deteriorating and the U.S. facilities and personnel were at risk in Benghazi. ...The IC produced hundreds of analytic reports in the months preceding the September 11-12, 2012, attacks, providing strategic warning that militias and terrorist and affiliated groups had the capability and intent to strike the U.S. and Western facilities and personnel in Libya. ...Given these developments and the available intelligence at the time, the committee believes the State Department should have recognized the need to increase security to a level commensurate with the threat, or suspend operations in Benghazi. ...In finished reports after September 11, 2012, intelligence analysts inaccurately referred to the presence of a protest at the Mission facility before the attack based on open source information and limited intelligence, but without sufficient intelligence or eyewitness statements to corroborate that assertion. The IC took too long to correct these erroneous reports, which caused confusion and influenced the public statements of policymakers.” Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) comments, “A broken system overseen by senior leadership contributed to the vulnerability of U.S. diplomats... in one of the most dangerous cities in the world, and yet the secretary of state has not held anyone responsible for the system’s failings.” (Clinton probably could not hold anyone responsible without that person charging that they were only doing what she told them to do, or that they relayed warnings to her that resulted in no action. She cannot hold anyone responsible without directing blame at herself. As a result, no one was held accountable.) [53781]

MrConservative.com comments on the deaths of the 15 independent Benghazi investigators working with the FBI: “This is leaving several people wondering if it is strictly coincidental, or if Obama is ordering the hits of anyone that gets too close to the truth. As many have learned though, there is no such thing as coincidence.” (As noted previously in this *Timeline*, some have speculated that the Benghazi attack was a kidnapping plan gone wrong, and that the scheme involved Obama exchanging an

abducted ambassador Christopher Stevens for the “Blind Sheikh,” Omar Abdel-Rahman. In one of the videos taken during the Benghazi attack a gunman can be overhead saying, in Arabic, “Don’t Shoot us! We were sent by [then-Egyptian President Mohammed] Morsi!” Obama would certainly be willing to risk anything in order to prevent evidence of such a plan if it existed—because it would not only mean his impeachment, it would mean a possible treason trial.) [39292, 39293, 39294, 39295, 39305, 52659, 52661, 53738]

At a Chicago Teachers union event, Obama’s former pastor, Reverend Jeremiah Wright, says that while Martin Luther King, Jr. famously said, “I have a dream,” Obama’s legacy will be “I have a drone.” [53592, 53646]

The Supreme Court hears oral arguments in *McCullen v. Coakley*, which challenges a Massachusetts law requiring demonstrators to maintain a certain minimum distance from abortion clinics they are protesting. (Protester Eleanor McCullen raised the ire of pro-abortionists by persuading as many as 80 women not to abort their babies.) [53587]

At HumanEvents.com Ann Coulter writes, “I agree with MSNBC. I find it hard to believe that Gov. Chris Christie knew nothing about his staff’s plotting a massive traffic jam on the ramp to the George Washington Bridge for political retribution. On the other hand, I also find it hard to believe that Obama didn’t know his own IRS was auditing his political enemies. And I find it hard to believe that Obama didn’t know you wouldn’t be able to keep your doctor under Obamacare. But most of all, I find it hard to believe that MSNBC host Al Sharpton didn’t know Tawana Brawley was lying when she claimed to have been gang-raped by rogue cops on the Wappingers Falls, N.Y., police force.” [53590]

JC Penney announces it will close 33 stores and fire 2,000 employees. [53594]

In an interview with USAWatchdog.org’s Greg Hunter, real estate expert Fabian Calvo says, “After the mid-term election, you’re going to see no-money-down loans just really roar back. It’s all part of the pump and dump I’ve been telling you about for well over a year. ...[The] Bottom line is we are still in a situation where half of every mortgaged home in America is completely underwater, and the Fed[eral Reserve] is going to have to print money for a very long time before those values return. It’s just a matter of fact. Now, worst of all, they are beginning to securitize so they can bring in even more capital. A third of all real estate in America is rental properties. You are going to have Wall Street being the biggest landlord in America. It’s subprime 2.0. ...They’ve securitized the rental properties, which are now making the net effect of a collapse in values in the market much more devastating for the economy. The next leg down in the real estate market will be much, much larger... Homeowners, who may have a little bit of equity in their home, should be very cautious right now.” Calvo suggests that 2014 will “pretty much see a repeat of 2013,” but says to watch when hedge funds start selling their real estate holdings. “I think that will be around 2015. That will be the handwriting on the wall that the collapse in housing prices will be coming. ...I think the next leg down in the real estate market won’t be centered around the housing collapse. It will be centered around the multi-bubble collapse of the dollar, the bonds, the government debt, all

collapsing simultaneously. ...This next collapse will make 2008 look like a dress rehearsal for the really big multi-bubble collapse we will be seeing. ...A year ago, a third of the room would say buying gold and silver was just kind of crazy. Today, you have half of the room investing much more than 10 or 15% of their portfolio into physical gold and silver. To me, that is a big signal.” But until the collapse occurs, Calvo predicts “spectacular sales, spectacular deals, way more than you saw back in 2008.” [53607, 54001]

Joe Saunders writes at BizPacReview.com, “Michelle Obama’s acolytes in the media have been pushing her as an icon of liberated womanhood since she pouted about how ‘downright mean’ she thinks the country that made her a cosseted millionaire really is. But in an interview with the [sarcasm alert] hard-hitting investigative magazine People due out Friday, the first lady’s 50th birthday, Obama acknowledges she’s open to the idea of plastic surgery to improve her looks in the years ahead. Apparently fielding a bare-knuckle question about whether she would consider Botox treatments or going under the knife to improve her looks—this is a People magazine interview—Obama hemmed, hawed and hedged. ‘Women should have the freedom to do whatever they need to do to feel good about themselves,’ she said, according to previews released by the magazine. ‘Right now, I don’t imagine that I would go that route, but I’ve also learned to never say never.’ Experienced Obama watchers can read that answer like skywriting. ...That means she’s going to get doctored up at some point. It probably means she’s got the appointment scheduled. It might even mean [Obama’s] already told her, ‘If I like your face, you can keep it.’” (More than a few observers of her eyes, eyebrows, and forehead believe Michelle Obama has already had Botox injections. Still others believe that her extended Hawaiian vacation was to have and recuperate from plastic surgery, liposuction, or other “work.”) [53622, 53623]

TheDailyBeast.com reports, “Sir Hew Strachan, an expert on the history of war [and a senior advisor to the British military], says that [Obama’s] strategic failures in Afghanistan and Syria have crippled America’s position in the world. ...Obama is ‘chronically incapable’ of military strategy and falls far short of his predecessor George W. Bush, according to one of Britain’s most senior military advisors. Sir Hew Strachan, an advisor to the Chief of the Defense Staff, told The Daily Beast that the United States and Britain were guilty of total strategic failure in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Obama’s attempts to intervene on behalf of the Syrian rebels ‘has left them in a far worse position than they were before.’ ...Strachan, a current member of the Chief of the Defense Staff’s Strategic Advisory Panel, cited the ‘crazy’ handling of the Syrian crisis as the most egregious example of a fundamental collapse in military planning that began in the aftermath of 9/11. ‘If anything it’s gone backwards instead of forwards, Obama seems to be almost chronically incapable of doing this. Bush may have had totally fanciful political objectives in terms of trying to fight a global War on Terror, which was inherently astrategic, but at least he had a clear sense of what he wanted to do in the world. Obama has no sense of what he wants to do in the world,’ he said. The dithering over intervention against President Bashar al-Assad has empowered the Syrian ruler, undermined America’s military reputation and destabilized the Middle East, said Strachan. ‘What he’s done in talking about Red Lines in relation to Syria has actually

devalued the deterrent effect of American military capability and it seems to me that creates an unstable situation, because if he were [to] act it would surprise everybody,' he said. 'I think the other issue is that in starting and stopping with Assad, he's left those who might be his natural allies in Syria with nowhere to go. He's increased the likelihood that if there is a change of regime in Syria that it will be an Islamic fundamentalist one.'" (*The Obama Timeline* suggests that is precisely what Obama seeks.) [53625, 53640, 53657, 53685]

National Review's Rich Lowry writes at Politico, "Memo to Chris Christie: They hate you. If you don't know who 'they' are, you haven't been watching the news or reading the papers. Usually, it takes winning the GOP presidential nomination for a Republican media darling to experience such an onslaught of gleefully negative press coverage. John McCain was the straight-talking maverick right up until the moment he effectively clinched the nomination in 2008—immediately triggering a thinly sourced New York Times report insinuating an affair with a lobbyist. New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie has gotten his disillusioning out of the way early, if he needed it. An occupational hazard of a certain kind of Republican is wanting to be loved by the wrong people. If the past week hasn't cured Christie of that tendency, nothing will." (Lowry is correct. Any Republican who ever receives good press from the mainstream media should consider it only temporary and with an ulterior motive attached. Media leftists went into high gear with their criticism of Christie and the "traffic study scandal" because polls showed him more popular than Hillary Clinton. Not wanting to take the chance of delaying their attacks on Christie until 2016, they started their war earlier than many expected. If they succeed in destroying Christie, they will move on to the next likely Clinton challenger.) [53628]

On *On the Record*, Senator Saxby Chambliss (R-GA) tells Greta Van Susteren, "I can tell you that within hours, [I], as the vice chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, knew that it was a terrorist attack [in Benghazi]. And within 24 hours knew that there was a suspected al Qaeda leader involved and maybe even more than one individual involved with an al Qaeda affiliate involved. So as to what the White House knew, surely they knew more than I did, quicker than I did. ...Look, I talked to my intelligence community folks and they say, 'This is a terrorist attack, and we are going to respond to it in a very strong way.' He [Obama] didn't do that. In fact, we haven't responded yet. We still haven't held anybody accountable, but the [anti-Islam YouTube] video in and of itself really played no role in this, according to everything from our intelligence community. ...[Obama] knew for weeks and months in advance of September 11th, 2012, that Benghazi was a dangerous place, it was a violent place, that there were about 20 attacks that had been well-documented against western interests, including this particular mission complex. They had a bomb thrown over the wall. They had had an IED blow a big 30-foot hole in the wall. So, this was nothing new. ...[Hillary Clinton] did not testify before our committee. We don't have jurisdiction over the State Department. We pounded on the State Department for documents as well as interviews with individuals and we kind of hit a stonewall with them on that. ...I don't want to accuse them [the White House] of something that I don't know for sure is the case. But, if they really wanted to get to all the answers and, remember, Greta, this was an American ambassador that was killed. That just does not happen every day in the world. It happens about every 50 to 60 years, and it

was that serious and yet this didn't seem that the White House really wanted to get to the bottom of it to explain to these families what happened." [53630, 53633]

On January 16 Ed Gillespie, former head of the Republican National Committee, announces he will run for the U.S. Senate from Virginia—challenging Senator Mark Warner (D-VA). (Although many might believe Warner is a shoe-in for reelection, Marc Thiessen writes at WashingtonPost.com, “Despite his ample war chest and approval ratings, only 50 percent of Virginians say Warner should get a second term. And independents, by a margin of 49 to 43 percent, say they would rather have someone new in Virginia’s Senate seat. Moreover, Warner will have to defend his deciding vote for Obamacare during a midterm election that will likely be driven by voter anger over Obamacare. Virginians upset about ...Obama’s false promise that ‘If you like your health plan, you can keep your health plan’ will be surprised to discover that Warner made the same false pledge, declaring ‘I’m not going to support a health-care reform plan that’s going to take away the health care you’ve got right now or a health-care plan that you like.’ He did.”) Matt Canter, spokesman for the Democrat Senatorial Campaign Committee. reacts, “When Virginians get to know Ed Gillespie, they won’t like what they see. The last thing Virginians need in Washington is a career lobbyist with a partisan history of slash-and-burn politics that divides Virginians.” (“Said the party that just elected *Terry McAuliffe* governor, quips Mary Katherine Ham at HotAir.com.) Gillespie is most certainly an “establishment” Republican, someone far more likely to please Karl Rove than any Virginia conservative. Gillespie’s only advantage over Warner is that he did not vote for ObamaCare. Warner will probably win reelection. [53609, 53610, 53611, 53641, 53649, 53683, 53689]

According to the Media Research Center, “Not only did NBC allow their special anchor Maria Shriver to promote her own report on ‘Nightly News,’ they did it without disclosing that it was made in partnership with a group that liberal billionaire George Soros gave \$7.3 million to. In ‘The Shriver Report: A Woman’s Nation Pushes Back From the Brink,’ which was published on Jan. 11, an outspokenly liberal nun, Sister Joan Chittister, took aim at religious attitudes in America that ‘devalue’ and marginalize women. Shriver was invited to the White House on Jan. 14 to present her report to ...Obama, whom she promoted as being ‘sympathetic’ to working mothers. On NBC ‘Nightly News’ that same night, Shriver contrasted a supportive Obama against a Congress that is supposedly dragging its feet on the matter. ‘While ...Obama has pledged to fix the problem, Congress has been slow to respond,’ Shriver said. According to The Shriver Report’s official website, the report was ‘produced in partnership with the Center for American Progress.’ CAP is a liberal activist group, and the parent organization for the liberal Think Progress media outlet. It is also well-connected to liberal politicians. Neera Tanden, who has worked for both Obama and Hillary Clinton, currently runs CAP. Obama recently hired CAP founder and former president John Podesta as his new counselor for 2014. Podesta also co-chaired Obama’s transition team. The Heritage Foundation called Shriver’s main statistic about a wage gap ‘misleading’ and noted that multiple variables factor into the issue including choices of occupations and child care. However, NBC failed to include any experts who disagreed with Shriver’s report.” (While there is no doubt that there is some gender discrimination in the workplace, the

most significant factor in wage-gender differences is choice of career. Women, in general, tend to enter lower-paying fields than men. Additionally, of course, women frequently leave the workforce to have children. Paying a woman less than a man when they are both equally qualified, experienced, and talented is, of course, *not* the same as paying a female kindergarten teacher less than the male CEO of a huge corporation. It is worth noting that the CEO of General Motors is a woman—Mary Berra. Berra is certainly paid a greater salary than male executives who report to her, but that does not mean those men are being discriminated against. It is simply absurd to argue that the average pay of all women in the workplace should be no less and no greater than the average pay of all men in the workforce—yet that is exactly what many leftists argue should be the case.) [53797, 53943]

David Kennedy, head of the computer security consulting firm TrustedSec LLC, warns the House Science, Space and Technology Committee that “HealthCare.gov is [still] not secure today. ...I don’t understand how we’re still discussing whether the website is insecure or not. It is insecure—100 percent.” Kevin Johnson, chief executive of Secure Ideas and a teacher at the SANS Institute—which trains and certifies cyber security professionals—states, “The site is fundamentally flawed in ways that make it dangerous to people who use it.” According to Townhall.com’s Guy Benson, Johnson “whipped up a rudimentary program in five minutes, let it run, and collected 70,000 records in the span of *four minutes*. But the government tells us everything is just fine.” (The Obama administration insists Healthcare.gov’s security has not been breached—but it also said, “If you like your plan, you can keep it. Period.”) [53612, 53613, 53660, 53686, 53783]

Kennedy later tells *On the Record’s* Greta Van Susteren, “They had a whole bunch of guys behind the keyboards programming really fast to keep the site up and stable. So what they did was to introduce new code, new vulnerabilities, new exposures.” The vulnerable information includes “first name, last name, email address, Social Security number, as well as the integration into the IRS and DHS [Department of Homeland Security], which contains all of your tax information, all of your personal information, as well as all of whatever DHS has on you.” [53672]

During a Senate Environment and Public Works Committee hearing, Senator James Inhofe (R-OK) tells EPA head Gina McCarthy that recent Obama claims about global warming false. “On multiple occasions, and most recently on May 30th of last year, ...Obama has said, and this is a quote he has used several times, he said that ‘the temperature around the globe is increasing faster than was predicted even ten years ago’ and that ‘the climate is warming faster than anybody anticipated five or ten years ago.’ Both statements are false, and through letters to you, Ms. McCarthy, and on the record in this Committee, we’ve asked the EPA to provide us with the data backing up these two statements, the two statements made by [Obama], but they don’t have any data and referred us to the UN IPCC. And, their scientists, apparently, the EPA thought they were the source of this. Well, we went there and they had nothing to back it up, so apparently [Obama] just made that up. And, I think that’s very important because, when you get statements that are made, they’re supposed to be logic and on truth, you have to check them out. Last week’s record cold temperature brought the global warming debate back

to the public's attention, but that's only important to the extent that it's bringing more awareness to the uncertainty of the science around the debate. The truth completely contradicts [Obama's] statements. ... When you go back and look at the temperature projections from climate models and compare them to actual temperatures, two that two things are readily evident: first, temperatures have flat-lined over the last fifteen years; and second, an average of over 100 climate models from the last decade shows that the scientific community did not predict this would happen. And to my knowledge, not a single climate model ever predicted that a pause in global warming would ever occur. ... The truth completely contradicts [Obama's] statements and begs the question why he and the EPA not only continue to deny the truth but why it has raced to stop this information from disseminating into the scientific record." [53779, 53832]

While Obama and Senate Democrats push an increase in the minimum wage, Milwaukee County—and reality—may soon demonstrate the negative side effects of such an action. According to the Wisconsin Reporter, “nearly 1,200 employees at Supportive Homecare Options Inc. could be out of work soon if a costly, Big Labor-boosting living wage [\$12.45 per hour] proposal passes...” Sally Sprenger, president of the home health care company, states, “This living wage would definitely put my contract at jeopardy with the county because we would be priced out of being economical and cost-effective.” (It is worth noting that virtually all of the Senators and Congressmen who support raising the minimum wage have unpaid interns working in their offices.) [53615, 53616, 54098]

The Senate votes 72–26 to approve the \$1.1 trillion spending bill—ignoring the fact that the government doesn't have \$1.1 trillion lying around to pay for it. (The Heritage Foundation notes that even if a person earned the \$30.5 million annual salary of NBA star Kobe Bryant, “to pay for this year's \$1 trillion federal spending spree you would have to work for 32,837 years.”) [53619, 53693]

The Obama administration calls in retired NBA player Magic Johnson to encourage young Americans to buy ObamaCare coverage. In one video, Johnson says, “So I'm glad that I had good health insurance, a good plan. And also, too, you never know when you're going to need it. It's very important. Young people, they think they're Superman, like nothing's ever gonna [sic] happen to them.” (Johnson, whose unbridled sexual promiscuity led to an HIV diagnosis in 1991, is arguably not the best choice for ObamaCare pitchman. With his fortune, Johnson does not need health insurance, and young people certainly need not be “Superman” to evade his illness; they need only avoid irresponsible and immoral behavior.) [53624, 54022]

At a Congressional hearing, an ObamaCare official admits that the administration has no idea how many people who enrolled in the system have actually paid insurance premiums and are entitled to coverage. The information is not even being collected because the programming to do that has not been added to Healthcare.gov. [53663, 53678, 53684]

DailyCaller.com reports that in 2013 nearly 42,000 Canadians “left their homeland to avoid long wait times and inferior care that plagues their centralized health system. [A] report from the free-market Fraser Institute found that 41,838 Canadians became

‘medical tourists’ in 2013 and sought care outside of their hockey-loving country. ... ‘Canadians may leave for a number of reasons including a lack of available resources or appropriate technology, a desire to return more quickly to their lives, to seek out superior quality care, or perhaps to save their own lives or avoid the risk of disability,’ Nadeem Ismail, director of health policy studies at the Fraser Institute, told The Daily Caller News Foundation. ‘That a considerable number of Canadians traveled and paid to escape the well-known failings of the Canadian health care system speaks volumes about how well the system is working for them,’ Ismail added.” [53699]

Asked by a reporter for the Obama administration’s reaction to China’s test of a “hypersonic missile delivery vehicle,” State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf replies, “What exactly is... that’s interesting... hypersonic delivery... I don’t know that is...” The reporter responds, “You’ll find out,” and laughs. (The test was conducted on January 9 and reported by FreeBeacon.com on January 13.) [53666, 53667, 53668, 53669]

At Breitbart.com Wynton Hall reports, “The government watchdog group that revealed that ...Obama failed to attend over half of his daily intelligence briefings (known officially as the Presidential Daily Brief, or PDB) released a devastating Benghazi timeline Wednesday [January 15]. It reveals Obama’s schedule in the week leading up to the terrorist attacks that claimed the lives of four Americans, including U.S. Ambassador Christopher Stevens. Release of the Government Accountability Institute (GAI) Benghazi timeline comes as a new Senate report published Wednesday concluded that ‘the attacks were preventable.’ As the GAI timeline reveals, Obama failed to attend his daily intelligence briefing for the five consecutive days leading up to the September 11, 2012 attack of the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi. The Benghazi timeline catalogues Obama’s continuous campaigning even as terrorist forces vowed Libyan attacks and State Department officials were warned of security threats. The day following the deadly attacks, Obama departed for a Las Vegas campaign rally.” [53632, 53633, 53718]

At FoxNewsInsider.com’s “Greta Wire, Greta Van Susteren writes, “After Benghazi on 9/11/2012, the Obama administration tried very hard to discourage Fox News Channel from reporting on it. The effort was obstruction—pure and simple. They tried to prevent the truth from coming out and the Administration tried just about everything to discourage Fox from investigating and reporting. ...In the early days after Benghazi, the State Department omitted only Fox News Channel from its conference call to all the media when it claimed to be answering questions about Benghazi for the media. Our friends in other media outlets were scandalized that Fox was not included and told us all about it. They were suspicious of State Department forgetting us/Fox and courageous to tip us off. The State Department claimed it was accident[al] and not intentional. And then shortly thereafter, there was the CIA briefing about Benghazi at the CIA for all the networks—except one: Fox News Channel. The CIA would not let Fox News Channel attend. Then we had to listen to all the silliness about a video... what was with that? Did anyone ever really think that was legitimate? ...And then as I was sitting at my desk thinking about the reporting since September 2012, I thought about the weirdest of all and the worst of all for me personally! I remembered a disturbing phone call from a good

friend in the Obama Administration. I have known this friend for years. The call was a short time after 9/11 (maybe Oct. 2012?)” [53828, 53829, 53830, 53845, 53864, 53929]

“In the call,” continues Van Susteren, “my friend told me that my colleague Jennifer Griffin, who was aggressively reporting on Benghazi, was wrong and that, as a favor to me, my friend in the Administration was telling me so that I could tell Jennifer so that she did not ruin her career. My friend was telling me to tell Jennifer to stop her reporting. Ruin her career? In 20 plus years, I have never received a call to try and shut down a colleague—not that I even could—this was a first. Here is what I know: Jennifer is a class act... experienced... and a very responsible journalist. One of the absolute best in the business—no axe to grind, she just wants the facts. I told my friend before I [went] to Jennifer telling her she is wrong, I need proof she is wrong, strong proof and you need to be specific—what are you saying she is getting wrong? We went around and around—including the statement again that this was just a call as a favor to Jennifer and me to save Jennifer’s career from reporting incorrect information. I got no proof. Zero. I smelled a rat. Favor to me? Hardly. My friend was trying to use me. I feel bad that a friend did that to me, tried to use me for a dirty reason. I knew then—and it is now confirmed by [the] BIPARTISAN Senate Intelligence Committee—Jennifer was getting her facts right. I think it is really low for the Administration to stoop this low.” (Pamela Geller comments, “The hallmark of a thug regime. Bloody history is riddled with them. And the enemedia that does the regime’s bidding says nothing. This is a pattern. Following the attempted prosecution of respected reporter James Rosen, the imperial White House photo policy: ‘arbitrary restraint and unwarranted interference in legitimate news-gathering activities’—and now this. O America. Wherefore art thou, America? As for Greta, why is she telling us now? Why didn’t she spill before the election?”) [53828, 53829, 53830, 53845, 53864, 53929]

Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) announces he will not serve his full term because of health problems. [53644, 53651, 53661, 53675, 53681]

According to NationalEnquirer.com, “Only weeks after Obama publicly humiliated the first lady by snapping a ‘selfie’ with a dishy blonde foreign leader, the first couple’s shaky 21-year marriage has collapsed following a disastrous holiday trip, sources say. The two locked horns in a series of ugly fights during their recent Hawaiian getaway, but sources say the death blow came when Michelle learned that the Secret Service has covered up Obama’s cheating—twice. After a ‘mole’ exposed [Obama’s] betrayal, a furious Michelle ripped into him during a bitter blow-out and raged: ‘I want out!’ Then, in a shocking show of de-fiance, she refused to return to Washington, D.C., with Obama and their daughters when their 15-day vacation ended.” (*The Obama Timeline* cannot vouch for the story and is no fan of the National Enquirer, but despite its sensationalist nature its stories have sometimes proven to be accurate.) [53695]

The Times of Israel reports, “Two top Obama administration officials urged Jewish groups not to back new Iran sanctions, calling them ‘dangerous.’ The officials—from the White House national security team and the Treasury Department—spoke Wednesday with Jewish leaders in a call convened by the Conference of Presidents of Major

American Jewish Organizations. ...A number of the Jewish participants pressed the government officials on why the Obama administration opposes new sanctions under consideration in Congress, noting that the sanctions would only go into effect should Iran renege. The officials said that even with the precaution, the legislation would be perceived by Iran and US partners negotiating the deal as creating new sanctions, which would violate the terms of the interim agreement and lead to the collapse of the international coalition that has drawn Iran to talks through existing sanctions. The officials called the new sanctions ‘dangerous.’ ...The officials walked back previous statements by Obama administration officials that called on supporters of sanctions to admit they would lead to war, saying that both sides are acting in good faith, but also urging those opposing the sanctions to defer to the judgment of negotiators.” (Pamela Geller writes, ‘Hitler urges Jews to support Zyklon B.’ The only difference between then and now is timing. ...It is striking how little Obama thinks of Jewish leadership. What quislings he must think they are—cowardly, and so will just go along. This reminds me of the Gestapo urging the Jews to go quietly onto the trains. And the Third Reich demanded and received close cooperation from Jewish leadership—the Jewish Councils (Kapos). Don’t misunderstand me: I am sure they could have done little that might have made a difference, but even so—*resist*. Obama has consistently snubbed AIPAC... instead giving the Muslim-funded J Street the respect that AIPAC had earned and enjoyed for decades. J Street, an anti-Israel organization masquerading as a pro-Jewish group, was formed by antisemites like George Soros in order to weaken AIPAC.”) [53655, 53656]

FreeBeacon.com reports, “Boeing lost out on a \$4.5 billion contract with the Brazilian Air Force in what industry insiders consider to be part of the ongoing fallout from revelations of NSA snooping on foreign governments revealed by the traitor Edward Snowden. The heads of some of the largest tech firms in the world met in the White House with ...Obama late last month to warn him that the ongoing leaks were creating image problems for their companies in international markets and hurting their foreign sales campaigns. ...U.S. aerospace company Boeing lost a \$4.5 billion contract just one day after Obama’s meeting with tech firm heads. ...Boeing had been one of three contenders bidding for a \$4.5 billion order of 36 fighter aircraft from the Brazilian Air Force (FAB). Its F/A-18E/F Super Hornet had been competing alongside the Rafale fighter from France’s Dassault Aviation SA and the single-engine JAS-39E/F from Saab Aerospace in Sweden. Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff declared in a surprise announcement on Dec.18 that the Swedish aircraft was the winner of the long-running competition. ...‘The NSA problem ruined [it] for the Americans,’ said one Brazilian official who requested anonymity. His observations echoed those of U.S. defense industry executives who had been in Brazil several months earlier when the revelations about NSA wiretapping of President Rousseff’s personal mobile phone and spying on the operations of Brazil’s national energy giant, Petrobras, were first made public by Snowden. ‘I had been in this country less than 12 hours and all I heard about since I arrived are how much NSA spying is going to hurt our program’s chances,’ said one U.S. industry executive who had been in Brazil to support the F/A-18E/F bid in Brazil.” [53766]

At DailyCaller.com Jamie Weinstein writes, “If we’re starting negotiations to eliminate Iran’s nuclear program cowering in fear that Iran will walk away from the table, we’re probably not negotiating from a position of strength. ... There is good reason to be skeptical that Iran would ever negotiate away its nuclear weapons program—which it denies even having—but given the Obama administration’s claim that sanctions brought Iran to the table, wouldn’t the prospect of more sanctions if a deal does not materialize provide even greater incentive for Iran to capitulate? You would think so, but ... Obama is adamantly opposed to a Senate bill co-sponsored by Republican Sen. Mark Kirk [R-IL] and Democratic Sen. Bob Menendez [D-NJ] that would impose further sanctions on Iran if the Islamic Republic doesn’t come to an acceptable agreement with the U.S. on its nuclear program. The bill, so far backed by 59 Senate Republicans and Democrats, has sent the Obama administration into a tizzy. [Obama] has pledged to veto it. ... The administration’s desire to not hurt Iran’s feelings can be contrasted with the Iranian leadership’s complete disregard for America’s feelings. ... The administration is so mindful about not hurting the feelings of Iran’s leadership, but how about demanding the Islamic Republic’s leadership act similarly? Shouldn’t Iran be worried that the world’s only superpower might walk away from the table? They certainly don’t seem to be, perhaps because they believe ... Obama is desperate to get any nuclear deal, no matter how bad, so he can pretend to have solved the issue to the American public. ... If the U.S. wants to succeed diplomatically, ... Obama should privately make clear to the Iranian leadership that they are more than free to walk away from the negotiation table if they want. But peacefully or less-than-peacefully, we intend to see the Iranian nuclear issue resolved to our satisfaction. This is how a country as strong as the United States should act in the face of such a threat from a country like Iran. But it is almost certainly not how a country led by Barack Obama will act.” [53677]

On his radio talk show, Mark Levin says, “Here’s what should happen at the State of the Union speech. Since these men and women will not use the Constitution to defend this nation; since they will not use the Constitution to confront a lawless [Obama]. Worse yet, since they’re funding his activities, these omnibus bills filled with all kinds of crap, what the Republicans should do is boycott the State of the Union [address]. They should boycott the State of the Union so half of the House floor... is empty. Then they should get together and present their own case on the State of the Union and explain in an articulate and concise way what the State of the Union is, and how [Obama] threatens this republic. They need to do something bold that will get the attention of some of our fellow citizens, and which the media—which will attack it but cannot ignore it. If they’re not going to take a stand constitutionally and legally, they should at least take a stand on the steps of the Capitol or somewhere. Together. Shoulder to shoulder. And say we have a lawless [Obama] doing lawless things and make their case to the American people. It would be historic. It would be profound. That finally the opposition party demonstrates that it opposes not just the Democrat Party, but the destruction of this republic by [Obama] and his willing dupes in Congress. Obama does what he needs to do. [Senate Majority Leader] Harry Reid [D-NV] does what he needs to do. God knows [House Minority Leader Nancy] Pelosi [D-CA] did the same thing. We’re not talking about civil disobedience here, we’re not talking about doing anything lawless. Boycott the State of

the Union speech. Stand shoulder to shoulder. Give the American people a choice between liberty and tyranny.” [53648]

According to CNN, Michelle Obama—who just returned to Washington, D.C. after a 24-day stay in Hawaii—is looking forward to leaving the White House after 2016 so she can travel more. [53679]

On MSNBC’s *Hardball*, leftist host Chris Matthews says the Senate report on Benghazi “must have been particularly good and gratifying news for National Security Advisor Susan Rice... Somebody out there on the right tonight owes Miss Rice an apology. Don’t you think, don’t you think?” Matthews is referring to the fact that, according to the Senate report, the CIA removed the words “al-Qaeda” and “terrorist” from her talking points for the five Sunday talk shows on which she appeared after the September 11, 2012 terrorist attack. But that hardly exonerates Rice, who still knowingly lied on all five programs, claiming the attacks were nothing more than an out-of-control response by a mob that was upset about an anti-Islam YouTube video. Matthews, like most media leftists, seems totally uninterested in who concocted the phony YouTube video story, and why.) [53763, 53767]

On January 17 John Ransom writes at Townhall.com, “So Benghazi finally claims another victim. The knife sticking out of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s back was stuck there slowly by fellow pantsuiter, Sen. Diane Feinstein... [D-CA] who chairs the Senate Intelligence committee for the gentleman’s club also known as the United States Senate. That knife means that Hillary is probably dead. At least as a presidential candidate. Oh, yes, the New York Times won’t give it up quite yet. But for Hillary, it’s o-v-e-r. The Senate report on Benghazi released by Feinstein’s office is largely a compendium of what you, I and everyone outside of the Obama administration already knows: Benghazi was a terror attack, as acknowledged from the very beginning, and was largely preventable. The preventer should have been the Secretary of State. Obama and the White House escape responsibility. Seriously. They should too. They can’t even build a website. The intelligence process is waaaay past them. ...It’s all the State Department’s fault. And that’s what difference it makes, Hillary. ...I suspect that none of this is over, yet, but there is a strange reticence amongst military leaders, the intelligence community and the GOP in Congress to get to the bottom of the Benghazi scandal. And it makes me sick. Even if the knife in Hillary’s back makes me smile a bit.” [53662]

On CNBC, stock market analyst Rick Santelli says, “Governments can’t keep spending like it’s 1999. ...[T]he main issue is, after five years, it’s pretty hard to call these [government] programs ‘emergency spending programs,’ and if we’re going to extend the amount of benefits you get with regard to unemployment insurance into an entitlement, we need to be more honest about it. ...If what [Obama] said [extending unemployment benefits helps the economy] is true, [if] just throwing money at this [unemployment problem] is good for the economy, then I challenge him to look at the extreme viewpoint in this regard from Francois Hollande, the president of France, a socialist, who has tried everything [Obama] is talking about and now is throwing up the white flag [of surrender]. ...Here’s what President Francois Hollande said: ‘How can we run a country if

entrepreneurs don't hire? And how can we redistribute wealth if there is no wealth?" [53733]

DailyCaller.com reports, "One of former President Bill Clinton's favorite restaurants has eliminated its Friday buffet due to Obamacare. 'We regret we had to make this decision but unfortunately we face new expenses as a result of the Healthcare reform and the Friday Buffet, though wonderful, was not profitable and required extra staff which we can no longer sustain,' a notice at the Georgetown Italian restaurant's website reads. The Friday Lunch Buffet ended on Jan. 1." [53676]

According to TheLocal.se, "One in ten Swedes now has private health insurance, often through their employers, with some recipients stating it makes business sense to be seen quickly rather than languish in national health care queues. More than half a million Swedes now have private health insurance, showed a new review from industry organization Swedish Insurance (Svensk Försäkring). In eight out of ten cases, the person's employer had offered them the private insurance deal. 'It's quicker to get a colleague back to work if you have an operation in two weeks' time rather than having to wait for a year,' privately insured Anna Norlander told Sveriges Radio on Friday. 'It's terrible that I, as a young person, don't feel I can trust the health care system to take care of me.'" (Americans who envy those Europeans who have "single payer" health care systems are typically unaware of two things: It is certainly not free, as it is paid for through high taxes; and wait times for doctor visits and surgery can be extraordinarily lengthy.) [53843]

Barack "just trust me" Obama announces minor changes to the NSA spy program that collects telephone "metadata" information on Americans, saying he "will order a transition that will end the Section 215 telephone metadata program as it currently exists, and move to a program that preserves the needed capabilities without the government holding this data." Laughably, Obama says, "I've made clear to the intelligence community that unless there is a compelling national security purpose, we will not monitor the communications of heads of state and government of our close friends and allies." (Obama's proposed changes do not relate to *whether* the NSA will continue gathering information on Americans, but to *how* it stores that information. He apparently expects Americans to willingly accept federal surveillance employees intercepting their emails, even though they would certainly not accept that same employee opening and reading their mail before the Post Office delivers it.) HotAir.com's Ed Morrissey writes, "The bottom line appears to be that the metadata collection will continue, the NSA will continue to get access to it, and that the only change will be an extra lawyer in the request process and a change of address for the data. For a program that hasn't done much to discover terrorist plots, the leaks so far don't seem to add up to major reform.") Obama announces that John Podesta, his newest White House advisor and the former head of the far left Center for American Politics, will "lead a comprehensive review of big data and privacy" as he evaluates possible changes to the NSA's spying programs. (Breitbart.com points out, "When he joined the White House last month, Podesta's focus was said to be 'climate change.'" Podesta has no experience in the intelligence community or with constitutional law.) [53682, 53694, 53698, 53702, 53726, 53731, 53777, 53930]

It is worth noting that during the 2008 campaign Obama said, “I will provide our intelligence and law enforcement agencies with the tools they need to track and take out the terrorists without undermining our Constitution and our freedom. That means no more illegal wiretapping of American citizens. No more national security letters to spy on citizens who are not suspected of a crime. No more tracking citizens who do nothing more than protest a misguided war. No more ignoring the law when it is inconvenient. That is not who we are.” [53743]

Breitbart.com’s Joel B. Pollak writes that Obama’s speech “contained little news. It was a classic Obama set-piece, designed to demonstrate that he understands both sides of a complex argument, while delegating responsibility to third parties and taking steps that reinforce the interests and goals of the hard left. In this instance, Obama left final decisions about where to store NSA data to Congress, while making sure that Podesta is in charge of the consultative process as a whole. To be fair, there are few clear answers, even in the wake of stunning revelations about the NSA, as to where the line between security and privacy ought to be drawn. ...Democrats are no more united [than the Republicans on the NSA issue]. Their primary concern, like Obama’s, is to make the issue go away. Obama has an additional goal: to restore an image of competence. He knows that his speech will not assuage the concerns of privacy advocates, and could lead to confrontation with intelligence agencies. ‘But I want the American people to know that the work has begun,’ he said. Under Podesta, of course—a detail Obama left for the end. It was telling that [Obama] chose to deliver his speech at the Department of Justice, which is something of a political haven for him. Earlier this week, Attorney General Eric Holder announced that the administration would extend rules against racial profiling to include religious groups, a move sought by Muslim organizations that are upset about the federal government’s (limited) surveillance in mosques and Muslim neighborhoods. It is difficult to see how the U.S. will prevent attacks by religiously-motivated terrorists if it cannot identify them by their religious affiliation. The new policy suggests that early protests by conservatives against hiring former terrorist defense lawyers in the department were justified. In the context of Obama’s NSA speech, the ban on religious profiling is a reminder that for this administration, political interests often trump national security.” [53702]

Freedom Watch founder Larry Klayman comments on Obama’s announcement: “Without what [NSA whistleblower Edward] Snowden has done, without the court decision, he wouldn’t have been standing at the podium [sic; lectern].” Klayman claims that Obama “doesn’t have the authority” to make the changes he is proposing. “It has to come from Congress.” Obama is “spewing smoke... to make himself look good. ...If you believe he was serious about investigating the IRS, investigating Benghazi, telling the truth about Obamacare... then you can believe what he said today. He doesn’t mean it.” [53694]

Fox News White House correspondent Ed Henry quips that Obama “stressed he’s heard all sides of the debate before deciding he’s not ready to decide.” Syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer calls Obama’s performance “the best use of Obama’s rhetorical

powers of dazzling with very little content since the '08 campaign” and says it was “90 percent smoke and mirrors.” [53743]

A cynical Senator Rand Paul tells CNN’s Wolf Blitzer, “I think what I heard was, ‘If you like your privacy you can keep it.’ ...[But] I didn’t hear any lessening of the spying on Americans or collecting records on Americans. I heard... ‘Trust me, I’m gonna out some more safeguards in place, but I’m gonna keep right on collecting every American’s records.’ This is something that’s gonna have to be decided by the Supreme Court. I think there’s a real fundamental question, whether one general warrant can apply to millions of people’s records, and I think it’s incorrectly being done and the Supreme Court is gonna ultimately have to decide on this. ...I don’t want them collecting the information. It’s not about who holds it. ...Really, [Obama is] not gonna fundamentally change any of us. Many of us think it’s an invasion of our privacy to have our text messages collected, our emails collected, our phone records collected, and likely our credit card statements collected. We think that’s an invasion of privacy—simply the collection, unless you get a warrant from a judge for a specific person that there’s probable cause to think that they’ve committed a crime. That’s the way our country was set up, and so what he’s talking about is a different kind of country than our founding fathers envisioned. ...[Obama] mentioned Paul Revere, but Paul Revere was warning us of the British coming. He wasn’t warning us the Americans are coming. The thing is, the lesson from the American Revolution that [Obama] I think misunderstands is that we were upset about British soldiers writing their own general warrants—like national security letters—that allowed them to go into the colonials’ house and look at their papers. We didn’t like that so we wrote the Fourth Amendment to say the warrants have to be individualized ...we didn’t want a dragnet.” [53696, 53726]

Rush Limbaugh comments on Obama’s NSA address: “Did you happen to see the size of those flags behind Obama at the National Security Agency speech? Those flags are getting bigger and bigger and bigger every speech he makes.” (At LewRockwell.com Daniel McAdams calls it “a set that could have been designed by [Hitler propagandist] Leni Riefenstahl.”) “And, you know, that’s what dictators do. As our liberties and our freedoms shrink, the symbols get bigger and bigger and bigger. It happens all over the Third World. You can see it. ...The NSA speech that Obama gave today, I don’t know if it’s a favorite BS line, but it has to rank at the top. Obama, in addressing whatever he was saying—by the way, it was the Limbaugh Theorem on display. He showed up today [paraphrasing], ‘I don’t know what they’re doing over there, but I’m gonna get to the bottom of it, and I’m gonna make sure that we don’t spy on you as much. I’m not sure what they’ve been doing, but I’m going to get to the bottom of it.’ It was the Limbaugh Theorem on display, and he said, ‘Throughout this evolution,’ in surveillance technology, ‘we benefited from both our Constitution and traditions of limited government.’ Now, the reason there are jokefests about Obama being a dictator is because he’s ignoring the Constitution, but yet here he is talking about his reverence for it. And then, after speaking of his reverence for the Constitution, then he lauds our traditions of limited government, which he’s also blowing to smithereens. ...I’m telling you, Obama going out and talking about this NSA scandal? I guarantee you, it is to distract people away from all these scandals. You got [sic] Obamacare. You got [sic] Benghazi. What else? You got [sic] the

IRS and the Tea Party. I mean, folks, it is incredible the number of scandals or the improprieties that are taking place from government down, against and to the people. ...[I]t seems that Obama wants to give control over the NSA's phone data collection to a third party, but he doesn't know who. Maybe a blue ribbon panel will be appointed to find out who is gonna be in charge of vacuuming up all the phone data." [53703, 53777]

Limbaugh continues, "This is another piece of BS that Obama said today in his speech on the NSA. Because he doesn't believe this. In fact, he's thwarting this. He said, 'Our system of government is built on the premise that our liberty cannot depend on the good intentions of those in power; it depends upon the law to constrain those in power.' I'm telling you, this is the Limbaugh Theorem, back at it, a hundred percent. He is the one who is lawless. He is the one who is behaving outside the Constitution. He's the one issuing executive orders. He's the one changing Obamacare willy-nilly. And he's the one and his party, by the way, which seeks to be judged on their good intentions and not their achievements. ...So, I mean, this is 180 degrees out of phase. This is Obama describing exactly who he is not. This is Obama praising behavior he never engages in. 'Our system of government is built on the premise that our liberty cannot depend on the good intentions of those in power.' I'm sorry. That is all the left has going for it. That's all the left has to recommend it, is their good intentions. They are abysmal failures. They do not improve life. They do not improve standards of living. They do not improve the economy. They don't fix roads or bridges or any of that. Liberalism is destructive. It tears things down. It rips things apart, all the while claiming to help. Ergo, their good intentions." [53703]

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) states, "The House will review any legislative reforms [of the NSA] proposed by the administration, but we will not erode the operational integrity of critical programs that have helped keep America safe. ...Our national security programs exist to root out terrorist threats and save American lives—and they have. Because [Obama] has failed to adequately explain the necessity of these programs, the privacy concerns of some Americans are understandable. When considering any reforms, however, keeping Americans safe must remain our top priority. When lives are at stake, [Obama] must not allow politics to cloud his judgment. I look forward to learning more about how the new procedure for accessing data will not put Americans at greater risk." [53883]

The Ulsterman Report writes, "Word is percolating though that this NSA issue is more than the sum of its parts, and some aspect of the program, directly related or not, has the White House very concerned. My source at Capitol Hill has indicated Democrats are hinting that "there's more there, and the White House is worried. Worried enough it would seem, to send [Obama] out with yet another teleprompted speech to try and get in front of what might be, a very significant emerging story. Readers will likely recall how dismissive Barack Obama was toward Edward Snowden when that scandal initially broke, dismissing Snowden as a mere 'hacker' not worthy of his attention. My oh my, how much has changed. Regardless of what you think about Edward Snowden's motivations, be they noble or not, it now seems clear he is part of something that is pushing the Obama White House to the point of panic. If true, then the already whispered

about government deal offered to Snowden will likely soon emerge, as this White House is no longer trying to hide their hope to keep that young man quiet. Keep an eye on this NSA issue folks. There is clearly some 'there' there..." [54064]

The Associated Press reports, "A federal appeals court ruled Friday that bloggers and the public have the same First Amendment protections as journalists when sued for defamation: If the issue is of public concern, plaintiffs have to prove negligence to win damages." The unanimous Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruling states, "The protections of the First Amendment do not turn on whether the defendant was a trained journalist, formally affiliated with traditional news entities, engaged in conflict-of-interest disclosure, went beyond just assembling others' writings, or tried to get both sides of a story. As the Supreme Court has accurately warned, a First Amendment distinction between the institutional press and other speakers is unworkable." (What is shameful is that the case in question even had to go as far as an appeals court.) [53706, 53728, 53746]

According to WOODTV.com, "A new report... by Grand Valley State University found that there are at least 1,000 fewer jobs in West Michigan as a result of the Affordable Care Act, more commonly referred to as Obamacare. ...The 1,000 jobs lost does not include the number of workers in West Michigan that have lost hours to ensure that they are kept as part-time employees. Nearly one-third of companies [surveyed] said they have cut employees' hours. ...The study found lower-skilled jobs tend to be suffering the most. ...Firms are also making changes to the health insurance programs they offer employees by increasing the share cost with employees, using a high-deductible plan and changing prescription drug coverage. ...In fact, the study found 37% of companies shifted costs by using a higher-deductible plan, 30% changed their prescription drug coverage and 49% increased how much their employees are paying for healthcare." [53707, 53755]

A judge in Pennsylvania strikes down the state's photo ID law for voting. The case will likely proceed to the State Supreme Court. The Democrat judge argues that because there is no widespread proof of voter fraud there is no need for a law to prevent it—which is as absurd as saying that a peaceful nation should not have laws prohibiting murder. Additionally, of course, absent a photo ID requirement considerable fraud could occur without being detected. (HotAir.com comments, "If the ruling held up in the state supreme court I'm sure a lot of folks would like to see it go to the [Supreme Court], but I'm not sure how that story ends either. The court still seems to have a track record of trying to duck out of the really tough, controversial issues, and this one might prove no exception. It's entirely possible that they could conclude that the individual states have the right to set their own election laws, providing they meet a few minimum standards, and take a pass on issuing any sort of sweeping ruling for the entire nation. But even if that's the case—as we've already seen in Pennsylvania—most courts will probably be willing to entertain the concept as not being flatly unconstitutional.") [53729, 53730]

Meanwhile, the groups Judicial Watch and True the Vote announce an "historic settlement" in an election-related lawsuit in Ohio. BizPacReview.com reports, "The 2012 ...lawsuit charged Ohio election officials with failing to take reasonable steps to

maintain clean voter registration lists as required by Section 8 of the National Voter Registration Act,' Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton wrote in a press release." Under the terms of the settlement, the state of Ohio agrees to take nine actions to help insure the integrity of voter registration lists, such as removing the names of dead people and people who have moved out of state, based on interstate information sharing systems. BizPacReview.com adds, "In an email, Fitton said the Obama Justice Department 'has zero interest in enforcing laws to ensure clean elections,' which is why groups like Judicial Watch and True the Vote have made election fraud a top priority. Fitton said the groups continue to watch election officials, particularly in battleground states, and are working to ensure clean voter rolls across the country." [53732]

Fitton states, "Judicial Watch notified a dozen states that they must clean up their voter registration lists or face lawsuits. Judicial Watch and True the Vote subsequently filed lawsuits against election officials in Indiana and Ohio, and prompted the state of Florida and other states, without litigation, to remove thousands of ineligible voters from state registration lists. According to independent research published by Pew Charitable Trusts in February 2012, approximately 24 million active voter registrations throughout the United States—or one out of every eight registrations—are either no longer valid or are significantly inaccurate. Stay tuned. The forces on the Left are not going to be pleased with this turn of events because it hampers their ability to steal elections. So you can expect leftists groups like Project Vote and the various ACORN spinoffs (with help from the Obama Justice Department) to continue to wreak havoc in the electoral process. We must remain vigilant if we are to counter these efforts effectively. And we will. In fact, we have active litigation over clean election rolls in Indiana and are seeking to defend North Carolina clean election laws from a coordinated assault by [Attorney General] Eric Holder and fronts for Al Sharpton and other radicals." [53732]

In Manaplan, New Jersey, a Muslim man is found stuck in a 20-inch pipe at a water treatment plant. According to Examiner.com, "The facility, which is operated by United Water, supplies drinking water to about 40,000 customers. The man has been identified as 26-year-old Asaf Mohammed. ...The plant is surrounded by barbed wire fencing and workers are still trying to determine how the man was able to gain access to the facility without detection. Mohammed has been charged with fourth-degree criminal trespassing. In May 2013, seven Muslims from Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Singapore were arrested in the middle of the night at the Quabbin Reservoir which supplies drinking water to the city of Boston as well as dozens of other Massachusetts communities. The group of two women and five men told the state trooper who discovered them, that they were all chemical engineers and simply wanted to check out the facility. Three locks had been cut to gain access to the reservoir. Despite the fact that this incident occurred only a month after the Boston Marathon bombing, and the serious threat that could have been posed to a drinking water facility, no charges were ever filed against the group of trespassers. The Massachusetts State Police appealed the decision, but to no avail. The names of the 'chemical engineers' were never released to the public, and their whereabouts are currently unknown." [53734, 53739, 53740]

On CNN, Wikileaks founder Julian Assange comments on Obama's NSA speech: "I think it's embarrassing for a head of state to go on like that for 45 minutes and say almost nothing. Unfortunately, one has to deconstruct a little of what is being said in the points that you [the Obama-supporting host] have raised. First of all, let's look for some positive in what has come out of here. Well, it's clear that [Obama] would not be speaking today, were it not for the actions of Edward Snowden and whistleblowers before him like Frank Drake, and Binney. Although those national whistleblowers have forced this debate, [Obama] has been dragged, kicking and screaming to today's address. He's been very reluctant to make any concrete reforms. And unfortunately today we also see very few concrete reforms. What we see is kicking off the ball into the Congressional grasps, kicking it off into panels of lawyers that he will report—that he will instruct to report back at some stage in the future. My greatest concern, I think, looking at this broader package, is what was *not* said. There was no restriction on secret law. The FISA [Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act] court, which he named as the court that will review some of this process, is known to be the most secret captive court in the United States that's producing secret judge-made law. There was a law, section 215, that was designed to protect American citizens from these invasive searches and seizures. The FISA court and the DOJ secretly reinterpreted that law to make it apply to the entire country." [53714]

"Look," continues Assange, "the FISA court itself was originally set up following recommendations from the [Frank] Church Committee in the '70s. And over time, it was quickly corrupted. So [for Obama to propose] a public advocate constantly in the FISA court in a secret manner is unlikely to produce a decent result. That said, of course, it is a small advance. We have to see whether it will be implemented, who would be this public advocate. Presumably they have to be security cleared, which means the NSA will have to approve of them in some way. There are still issues [that have] to do with the appointment of FISA court judges. But the big problem with the FISA court is the creation of secret judge-made law that is capable of reinterpreting anything that Congress passes in order to make it acceptable for the NSA to engage in bulk collection activity. What we didn't hear from [Obama] was any meaningful protection of U.S. business. And, you know, I've been involved in tech industry for a long time. I know my friends in the U.S. really are hurting as a result of the NSA—what has happened in the NSA. As far as the outside world is concerned, the United States has become an archipelago of coercion, where any person you are dealing with in business at Facebook, Google or Yahoo, or any telecommunications company, might have become secretly an agent of the National Security Agency, because they're ordered to do so by the FISA court and they're forced to keep that secret. All through the mechanism of national security." [53714]

"Well, we heard a lot of lies here in this speech by Obama. He said, for example... that the National Security Agency has never abused what it has done. When the FISA court has found—even the FISA court—has found again and again that it has done just that. So if the National Security Agency is interpreting what national security means, the secret court, FISA is interpreting what national security means, of course, these are ambiguous, moving terms. And in a secret institution, they gradually become corrupted over time. That's precisely how we ended up in this process. ... You can say we're not going to spy

on [German Chancellor] Angela Merkel or [British Prime Minister] David Cameron, or the Australian prime minister. Sure, but you don't spy on them you just spy on everyone else they talk to. It doesn't mean anything to not spy on world leaders. Maybe you can save a bit of PR flack if another Edward Snowden comes along. I don't think actually the spying on world leaders would cause PR problems. I don't see that to me as a real concern. The real concern is that when you have an organization as powerful as National Security Agency has become and its Five Eyes allies [the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, and New Zealand] and the cost of engaging in mass surveillance is decreasing about 50 percent every two years because of the cheapness of computers and the cheapness of bandwidth, that is a threat to constitutional government in the United States. And also in other countries. What I wanted to see today was a mechanism that would retard that tendency, of reducing a long-term threat to constitutional government. I don't see that. I don't see that individuals are protected from those surveillance abuses. I don't see any prosecutions. You know government is serious when it starts talking about someone is going to be prosecuted. It's going to prosecute Edward Snowden, but I didn't see talk of prosecution of [Director of National Intelligence] James Clapper [for lying under oath to Congress], investigation of anyone, anyone being fired, the National Security Agency being split apart into its functions, decreases in budgets, or any meaningful protection..." [52166, 53714]

The Binney to whom Assange refers is William Binney, who *The Washington Post* notes, "created the agency's mass surveillance program for digital information. A 32-year NSA veteran widely regarded as a 'legend' within the agency, Binney was the senior technical director within the agency and managed thousands of NSA employees. ... Last year, Binney held his thumb and forefinger close together, and said: 'We are, like, that far from a turnkey totalitarian state.'" Binney now says the United States has become that police state. According to the *Post*, "By way of background, the government is spying on virtually everything we do. All of the information gained by the NSA through spying is then shared with federal, state and local agencies, and they are using that information to prosecute petty crimes such as drugs and taxes. The agencies are instructed to intentionally 'launder' the information gained through spying, i.e. to pretend that they got the information in a more legitimate way ... and to hide that from defense attorneys and judges. This is a bigger deal than you may realize, as legal experts say that there are so many federal and state laws in the United States, that no one can keep track of them all ... and *everyone* violates laws every day without even knowing it. The NSA also ships Americans' most confidential, sensitive information to foreign countries like Israel, the UK and other countries ... so they can 'unmask' the information and give it back to the NSA ... or use it for their own purposes." (Binney resigned from the NSA on October 31, 2001. Binney has stated that U.S. surveillance activities are "better than anything that the KGB, the Stasi, or the Gestapo and SS ever had.") [53719, 53720, 53721, 53722, 53723, 53724, 53725]

ABCNews.com, apparently having a slow news day—and wanting to reassure its readers that it still supports Obama, even if it is forced to occasionally report bad news about ObamaCare—posts a list of "50 Ways to Celebrate Michelle Obama's Birthday." The list includes, "Eat your vegetables," "Make the cover of Vogue," "Get bangs," "Grab a

burger at Five Guys,” “Hang out with your friend, Oprah,” “Shop at Target,” “Make your husband stop smoking,” “Travel the world on Air Force One,” “Say ‘never say never’ to Botox,” and “Just keep on dancing.” (The list arguably suggests Mrs. Obama is an incredibly superficial person, which was no doubt not ABC’s intent.) [53727, 54383]

Three Americans are among the 21 people killed in a Taliban attack on a restaurant in Kabul, Afghanistan. U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan James Cunningham calls it a “shameful act” and states, “The Taliban target those who have hope in, and work for, this country’s success. With such criminal acts the Taliban only destroy, they cannot build. The United States remains firm in our commitment to a peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan where Afghans and their partners can live and work together free from the threat of violence.” (That is, until the last U.S. troops are withdrawn from the country.) [53748, 53775]

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo says, “conservatives who are right-to-life, pro-assault-weapon, anti-gay... have no place in the state of New York, because that’s not who New Yorkers are.” Dennis Poust, spokesman for the state Catholic Conference, tweets, “My governor thinks there’s no place in NY for people like me. Can I get a state grant to relocate?” (At NewsDay.com Dan Janison writes, “Just imagine for a moment if [Mississippi Governor] Haley Barbour or [Texas Governor] Rick Perry said: ‘Do you support abortion rights? Do you support same-sex marriage? Do you support gun control? Then, you have no place in this state because that’s not who we are.’”) [53753, 53754, 53761, 53792, 53815, 53821, 53827, 53840, 53858, 53866]

In response to Cuomo’s insult, conservative radio host Sean Hannity tells his listeners, “I want to tell you something. Now, I was born and raised in New York. I want you to know that and I can’t wait to get out of here. I really can’t. I don’t want to pay their 10 percent state tax anymore. I live in the second highest property taxed county in the entire country, in Nassau County. I can’t wait to sell my house to somebody that wants it. I can’t wait to pay *no* state income tax down in Florida or Texas. I haven’t decided yet, but I’m leaning Florida because I like the water and I like to fish. ...Governor Cuomo, I’m going to leave and I’m taking all of my money with me—every single solitary penny. And by the way governor, because I work here—there’s a whole bunch of people that work for me and benefit because I do two shows. And I guess maybe some of them will be out of work, governor. I’m sure you’ll take care of them.” Conservative radio host Glenn Beck sends an open letter to Cuomo in which he states, “We don’t see things as left and right. We see things as right and wrong. Our organization creates jobs for hundreds of people in your state, and provides news, opinion, entertainment and a helping hand for millions of people across this country. Are our contributions, tax dollars, and genuine goodness as citizens not welcome here? We respectfully request an answer on whether there are two classes of citizens.” (Cuomo later claims the *New York Post* distorted his words—not an easy thing to do inasmuch as they were recorded in a radio interview.) [53753, 53754, 53761, 53792, 53815, 53821, 53827, 53840, 53858, 53866]

It is worth noting that New York is one of the three states (along with California and Hawaii) where the combined federal and state income tax adds up to more than 50

percent for those in the top income bracket. The top federal income tax rate is 39.6 percent. Additionally, personal and itemized deductions are phased out for those who earn more than \$250,000, and ObamaCare imposes a new 0.9 percent Medicare tax on incomes of \$200,000 or more. California's top state income tax rate is 13.3 percent. High-wage New Yorkers face a combined federal and state income tax rate of 50.3 percent—and that does not include Social Security taxes, property taxes, or capital gains and dividends taxes. No one should be surprised that residents of high tax states are fleeing to states like Texas and Florida.) [54076, 54077]

FreeBeacon.com reports, “A Catholic Navy chaplain barred from practicing his religion during the recent government shutdown is now the target of retaliation by the federal government, according to an amended complaint filed by his attorneys. Rev. Ray Leonard filed a lawsuit in October against the Department of Defense and the Navy after he was threatened with arrest if he performed mass, administered the sacraments, or entered the chapel at the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base in Georgia during the shutdown. Three DOJ [Department of Justice] attorneys contacted Erin Mersino, his attorney at the Thomas More Law Center (TMLC), which is handling the case, a day after the suit was filed and indicated Leonard could resume all religious duties and the chapel would be reopened for Catholic services. A week later, on Oct. 21, he was told his DOD contract would no longer be considered valid. The government has withheld the priest's pay ever since and it is also asking Leonard to sign another contract with additional pages that include ‘onerous terms,’ according to the TMLC. His original contract serving as Navy chaplain is valid from October 2013 through September 2014, and it was signed and agreed upon by both parties. ...Leonard serves approximately 300 Catholics on the base who were also shut out from practicing their faith. Services of other Christian denominations on the base were allowed to continue during the shutdown. ...Leonard offered to work without pay during the shutdown on a volunteer basis but was told he would face arrest if he attempted to enter the chapel. ‘For Father Leonard, the lawsuit is very much about religious liberty,’ Mersino said. Mersino said that due to the timing of the government's actions, ‘all signs point to Father Leonard being singled out and subjected to unlawful retaliation for bringing the government's practices to light. All of a sudden, the government is now saying his contract is not valid. All of a sudden the government is withholding his pay,’ she said. ‘He wanted to volunteer during the shutdown,’ she said. ‘It seems very much a punishment for bringing the lawsuit.’ The DOJ did not respond to a request for comment.” [53764, 53765]

On *Special Report*, Charles Krauthammer comments on the Senate's Benghazi report: “I think what's wrong—the weakness of the Senate report is this: it blames buildings, the State Department, it blames the CIA, it blames the military, these bureaucracies. In the end, nobody, nobody is—no individual, no human has been held accountable, and on either side of the attack. Remember how [Obama] solemnly said, ‘Make no mistake, those who did this will be held responsible?’ Well, nobody has been arrested. In fact, on the contrary, 15 people in Libya who cooperated with us are now dead.” (The key people in the Benghazi scandal, of course, have never been questioned under oath about the attack itself or the subsequent “YouTube video” cover story. That includes Obama, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, former ambassador to the U.N. Susan Rice, or

close Obama advisor Valerie Jarrett—who many believe was the “key decision maker” the night of the attack, and the individual who ordered the military not to initiate action.) [53760, 54051]

CNN’s Piers Morgan does his best to shift blame for the four American deaths in Benghazi away from former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, telling Senator John McCain (R-AZ), “When you actually get into the weeds of this pretty lengthy [Senate] report, it also is very clear that one of the people who may be most to blame for not reacting to the threat and for increasing security despite being urged to repeatedly was the ambassador himself [Christopher Stevens]. And obviously, you know, you don’t want to speak ill of a man who was killed in such appalling circumstances, but is it fair to also say that he as the ambassador should have done more to react to direct warnings that he was given on numerous occasions?” McCain responds, “Well, I think it’s important to point out that he had asked for additional assistance. What he turned down was additional military assistance. But he certainly sounded a number of warnings about the deteriorating situation, including ten terrorist organizations, outfits, that were right there in Benghazi. So I think that Christopher Stevens, Chris was very aware of the threat. He did make the State Department aware of that. And the only time he really turned down help was when it was uniform military assistance that was offered.” (State Department diplomat—and Benghazi whistleblower—Gregory Hicks disputes Morgan’s charge, writing in *The Wall Street Journal*, “Some have been suggesting that the blame for this tragedy lies at least partly with Ambassador Chris Stevens, who was killed in the attack. This is untrue: The blame lies entirely with Washington. ...Chris Stevens was not responsible for the reduction in security personnel. His requests for additional security were denied or ignored. Officials at the State and Defense Departments in Washington made the decisions that resulted in reduced security. Sen. Lindsey Graham [R-SC] stated on the Senate floor last week that Chris ‘was in Benghazi because that is where he was supposed to be doing what America wanted him to do: Try to hold Libya together.’ He added, ‘Quit blaming the dead guy.’”) [53757, 53763, 53971, 53972, 53973]

On January 18 *The Times of Israel* reports, “The State Department had refused to co-sponsor a UNESCO exhibit, detailing the Jewish people’s 3,000-year relationship to the land of Israel, which UNESCO cancelled this week under pressure from Arab countries. The exhibit—created by the Simon Wiesenthal Center, co-organized with UNESCO, and co-sponsored by Israel, Canada, and Montenegro—was to have opened next Tuesday in Paris. But UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova decided to cancel the exhibit, entitled ‘The People, the Book, the Land—3,500 years of ties between the Jewish people and the Land of Israel,’ after Arab states in UNESCO protested, arguing it would harm the peace process. ...The State Department said Friday it was outraged at the cancellation of the exhibit. ...Notwithstanding this professed outrage, however, the State Department had just last week itself declined to co-sponsor the exhibit — in part because of the very reason that Bokova cited for its cancellation: the peace process. Kelly Siekman, the State Department’s director of UNESCO affairs, wrote to the Wiesenthal Center to this effect on January 9: ‘At this sensitive juncture in the ongoing Middle East peace process, and after thoughtful consideration with review at the highest levels, we have made the decision that the United States will not be able to co-sponsor the current exhibit during its

display at UNESCO headquarters. As a rule, the United States does not co-sponsor exhibits at UNESCO without oversight of content development from conception to final production.” (In other words, the Obama administration refused to support the exhibit because it did not want to offend Muslims, and then expressed faux outrage over its cancellation in order to avoid offending Jews. Pamela Geller comments, “Yesterday UNESCO canceled an exhibit detailing the Jewish people’s historic 3,500-year relationship to the land of Israel because of pressure from Muslim countries. If there is anything that the Muslim world cannot tolerate, it’s historical accuracy.”) [53715, 53716]

At TheHill.com Julian Hattem writes, “...Obama’s proposals for reforming the nation’s surveillance programs are easier said than done. The ideas he put forward Friday for changing the National Security Agency (NSA) depend in large part on cooperation from Congress and other branches of the administration, including the intelligence community. Success is far from assured. Lawmakers are divided on what intelligence reforms are needed, and privacy advocates expect turf-conscious spy agencies to resist change. ‘In a lot of ways [Obama’s] speech was a conversation starter. It was short on specifics and long on future actions that require either congressional approval or implementation by intelligence officials,’ said Greg Nojeim, head of the Center for Democracy and Technology’s freedom, security and technology project. ‘We’re at the beginning of the process; we’re not near the end.’” (It is a conversation Obama never wanted started in the first place, but NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden forced him to at least pretend he would take some action to make Americans think their rights were not being routinely violated.) [53735]

In the Gallup poll, Obama’s approval/disapproval rating stands at 39/53 percent. [5373]

Michelle Obama celebrates her 50th birthday (one day late) with a party at the White House. (According to a vomit-inducing article in *The New York Times*, the party will be filled “with dancing and sweets throughout the state floor of the White House, drawing the nation’s attention away from her husband, at least for an evening. Guests will sip fine American wines, consume delicate macarons and be entertained—the expectation is by Beyonce [Knowles].” The *Times*’ in-depth reporting reveals that “She has perfected a mean forehand, is working on her yoga poses, dishes with girlfriends over brussels sprouts and dirty martinis (one olive) at the Mediterranean hotspot Zaytinya, pushes her two daughters to play two sports—one of her choosing and one of theirs—and said this week that the wonders of modern dermatology, like Botox, are in the realm of possibility for her. Michelle Obama is in many ways the embodiment of the contemporary, urban, well-heeled middle-aged American woman. ...One thing Mrs. Obama [who just returned from three weeks in Hawaii] tends not to do as much as previous first ladies is travel. There is still time.”) [53743, 53744, 53745, 53831]

FoxNews.com reports, “The majority of the more than 2 million Americans who signed up for health insurance under ObamaCare through the end of December were already enrolled in employer-sponsored plans or had previously bought their own coverage... Early data from insurers, brokers and consultants suggest that the marketplaces are popular with consumers who were previously covered elsewhere, raising questions about

a law intended to expand coverage to millions of healthy, uninsured Americans to help offset costs. A survey by management consulting firm McKinsey & Co. found that only 11 percent of consumers who purchased new coverage under ObamaCare were previously uninsured. The survey was based on a sampling of 4,563 consumers between November and January, according to The Wall Street Journal.” At Breitbart.com John Nolte writes that the “new study proves that ObamaCare is not decreasing the number of America's uninsured. What we really have here is a ridiculously expensive taxpayer-funded shell game that allows ObamaCare to cancel your insurance, make it more expensive, re-enroll you through the ObamaCare exchanges, and then claim the program is a success and here to stay. Naturally, our pathetic media plays right along.” [53747, 53768, 53912]

GunsSaveLives.net reports that the January 14–17 Shooting, Hunting, and Outdoor Trade Show (Shot Show) had a record-breaking 67,000 attendees. National Shooting Sports Foundation president Steve Sanetti comments, “Perhaps the best news of all is that, despite tremendous increases in these numbers, violent crime with firearms has decreased dramatically during the last five years, to early 1960s levels.” (Obama, Attorney General Eric Holder, and former New York City mayor Michael Bloomberg have no comment.) [53749, 53756, 53810, 54002]

In an interview conducted at the Shot Show, rock legend and gun enthusiast Ted Nugent says, “I have obviously failed to galvanize and prod, if not shame enough Americans to be ever vigilant not to let a Chicago communist raised, communist educated, communist nurtured, subhuman mongrel like the ACORN community organizer gangster Barack Hussein Obama to weasel his way into the top office of authority in the United States of America. I am heartbroken but I am not giving up. I think America will be America again when Barack Obama, [Attorney General] Eric Holder, Hillary Clinton, [Senator] Dick Durbin [D-IL], [former New York City Mayor] Michael Bloomberg, and all of the liberal Democrats are in jail facing the just due punishment that their treasonous acts are clearly apparent.” Asked if he considers his statements inflammatory, Nugent responds, “Well, I would call it inflammatory speech when it’s your job to protect Americans and you look into the television camera and say, ‘What difference does it make that I failed in my job to provide security and we have four dead Americans. What difference does that make?’ Not to a chimpanzee or Hillary Clinton, I guess it doesn’t matter.” Nugent criticizes the Republican establishment, saying the GOP is “so busy adjusting their tie, they wouldn’t know how to sell a blanket to a naked man in a blizzard. ...Our politicians check their scrotum in at the door. Even Hillary. But obviously she has spare scrotums.” [53874]

In his weekly radio/Internet address, Obama says, “We are primed to bring back more of the good jobs claimed by the recession and lost to overseas competition in recent decades. But that requires a year of action. And I want to work with Congress this year on proven ways to create jobs, like building infrastructure and fixing our broken immigration system. When Congress isn’t acting, I’ll act on my own to put opportunity within reach for anyone who’s willing to work for it.” (In other words, “If Congress doesn’t pass the laws I want, I will violate the U.S. Constitution and issue questionable

executive orders that the Republicans will not have the guts to challenge with threats of impeachment.”) [53750]

WashingtonTimes.com reports, “A federal commission rejected three states’ requests to ask voters for proof of citizenship, issuing a complex decision Friday that said it’s up to the national government, not the states, to decide what to include on registration forms. Under the motor-voter law, federal officials distribute voter-registration forms in all of the states. Arizona, Kansas and Georgia all asked that those forms request proof of citizenship, but the federal Election Assistance Commission [EAC] rejected that in a 46-page ruling. The EAC said states can check driver’s license databases or ask federal immigration authorities for information, but they cannot tell the federal government what to include on federal forms. ‘The EAC finds that granting the States’ requests would likely hinder eligible citizens from registering to vote in federal elections, undermining a core purpose of the NVRA,’ the commission said in its ruling, referring to the National Voter Registration Act, or motor-voter law.” (Asking for proof of citizenship may hinder a few eligible citizens from registering to vote, but it helps prevent illegal immigrants from illegally registering go vote.) “Arizona, Georgia and Kansas all have... state requirements that those trying to register prove at some point in the process that they are in the country legally, and are citizens. The commission also said that because Congress specifically considered then rejected requiring proof of citizenship when it debated the motor-voter law, the states can’t now go and impose that requirement. But Kris Kobach, secretary of state in Kansas, said the commission doesn’t have the power to second-guess the states, and it doesn’t matter what Congress thought of proof-of-citizenship requests during its debate. ‘Congress does not have the authority to prevent a state from requiring proof of citizenship, according to Article I of the Constitution. And Congress cannot create an agency to exercise a power that Congress itself is constitutionally prevented from exercising. ...Every time an alien votes in an election, that vote effectively disenfranchises a United States citizen. But this administration evidently doesn’t see that as a problem worth addressing,’ he said.” (The issue will likely make its way to the Supreme Court.) [53751]

NYTimes.com reports, “The Obama administration is delaying enforcement of another provision of the new health care law, one that prohibits employers from providing better health benefits to top executives than to other employees. Tax officials said they would not enforce the provision this year because they had yet to issue regulations for employers to follow. The Affordable Care Act, adopted nearly four years ago, says employer-sponsored health plans must not discriminate ‘in favor of highly compensated individuals’ with respect to either eligibility or benefits. The government provides a substantial tax break for employer-sponsored insurance, and, as a matter of equity and fairness, lawmakers said employers should not provide more generous coverage to a select group of high-paid employees.” DailyCaller.com adds, “IRS officials appear to be stymied by the ‘regulatory detail’ of the provision. For the IRS to mandate non-discrimination in health plans for employees with different compensations, the agency must decide how to quantify the value of employer-provided health benefits, how to define ‘highly compensated officials’ and issue a final determination on what constitutes discrimination. ...Obamacare’s prescription for violating the ban is a \$100 daily excise

tax for each individual that was ‘discriminated’ against.” (It is, of course, absurd to argue that company presidents and CEOs should be prohibited from receiving better benefits than lower-level employees. One might as well argue that if a major movie star is provided with a glamorous trailer for use at location shootings, every employee of the movie studio should receive the same benefit. Some lower-level employees no doubt might expect that ObamaCare will result in them being granted those same expensive and more comprehensive insurance benefits that the “big bosses” get. The actual result may simply be that CEOs will be given salary increases that are sufficient to allow them to buy those policies in the private market. Attempts to avoid reality through legislation generally fail.) [53788, 53789, 53867]

In a scathing, nine-minute opening segment on *Justice with Jeanine*, former judge Jeanine Pirro excoriates Hillary Clinton for her role in the Benghazi: “You knew it! That’s why you didn’t go on the Sunday shows. ... You knew it! Which is why you had waited until everyone else had spoken so you could get your ducks in a row. You knew it! Because of the cables from your friend [Ambassador Chris Stevens] and because of the deteriorating security situation in Benghazi. You knew it! Which is why you appointed your friends to an accountability review board—which friends never even called you to testify. ... So which is it? If you didn’t know, you’re incompetent. If you did know, you’re guilty of criminal negligence.” [53795]

On January 19 cancer patient Josie Gracchi appears on *Fox & Friends* and addresses Obama: “I would like my health care taken care of. I was insured. I think anyone who is going through a serious illness should have immediate responses. I shouldn’t have to wait months, weeks, to even be considered for surgery that I should have had weeks ago.” According to FoxNews.com, “Gracchi was forced to postpone her Jan. 3 biopsy and follow-up treatment at New York’s Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, the largest private cancer center in the world, when her insurance rolled over into a new plan that was part of an exchange under the Affordable Care Act.” Gracchi, who has ductal-invasive carcinoma, explains, “As of January 1, my insurance plan rolled over into a new ObamaCare plan that is part of the exchange and my doctors are no longer available in my network, so the surgeons that I was dealing with ... I no longer have access to. ... This is delaying all my treatment and surgery. Most people that get breast cancer don’t wait this long to have a surgery, but it’s as if I’ve never had insurance at all.” [53772, 53837]

WND.com reports, “A just-published report from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology confirms earlier reports by WND that the Syrian government could not have launched the sarin poison-gas-laden rocket last Aug. 21 into a Syrian suburb of Damascus that killed hundreds of civilians, many of whom were children. At the same time, the report disputes continued U.S. insistence that the Syrian government was at fault, a position that almost prompted the United States to launch military attacks on Syrian chemical depots. The chemical attack, in which some estimates of deaths from the attack approached 1,800 people, occurred in the Ghouta area then under Syrian opposition control in the midst of the Syrian civil war. The report concluded that the range of the rocket that delivered the sarin was too short to have been fired from Syrian government locations, even though the Obama administration, based on what it says was technical

intelligence, said—and still insists—the gas attack was from the government forces of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.” [53752, 53851]

“The report said a large canister to hold the chemicals was placed on top of the rocket, limiting the capability of the rocket. Furthermore, the report said the design’s two-foot long, tin can-like canister to hold the chemicals as a warhead on the end of four-foot, 350mm rocket was nothing like what was in the inventory of the Syrian military. The report added that the rocket could have been constructed by anyone with ‘access to a machine shop with modest capabilities,’ implying that the crudely constructed rocket with its tin can warhead could have been devised by the Syrian opposition, a prospect reinforced by separate information given to the United Nations for investigation. ... In their report, the authors said the Syrian improvised chemical munitions fired on the morning of Aug. 21 had a range of only two kilometers, a determination confirmed by the findings of a United Nations independent assessment on the range of the chemical munitions used in the attack. ‘This indicates that these munitions could not possibly have been fired at East Ghouta from the ‘heart,’ or from the eastern edge, of the Syrian government-controlled area shown in the intelligence map published by the White House on August 30, 2013,’ the report said. ‘This mistaken intelligence could have led to an unjustified U.S. military action based on false intelligence,’ the report said. ‘A proper vetting of the fact that the munition was of such short range would have led to a completely different assessment of the situation from the gathered data.’” (In other words, the Syrian government may not have “crossed the red line” drawn—and re-drawn—by Obama.) [53752, 53851]

Richard Lloyd, a former United Nations weapons inspector, tells the *Star Telegram*, “The Syrian rebels most definitely have the ability to make these [chemical] weapons. I think they might have more ability than the Syrian government.” Theodore Postol, a professor of science, technology and national security policy at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, states, “My view when I started this process was that it couldn’t be anything but the Syrian government behind the attack. But now I’m not sure of anything. The administration narrative was not even close to reality. Our intelligence cannot possibly be correct.” [53851]

Lest anyone doubt where the sentiments of media leftists lie, *Time* magazine starts its promotion of Hillary Clinton two years before the 2016 presidential primaries with a fawning cover issue that asks, “Can anyone stop Hillary?” [53758, 53759, 53786]

On the Sunday talk shows, Congressional leaders from both parties express skepticism over Obama’s proposals to modify the NSA’s surveillance procedures. On *Face the Nation*, Congressman Mike Rogers (R-MI) says, “We really did need a decision [from Obama] on Friday, and what we got was lots of uncertainty. And just in my conversations over the weekend with intelligence officials, this new level of uncertainty is already having a bit of an impact on our ability to protect Americans by finding terrorists who are trying to reach into the United States.” Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA) says Obama’s call for a special judge to be added to the process is “a very difficult thing. The whole purpose of this program is to provide instantaneous information to be able to disrupt any

plot that may be taking place. ...New bombs are being devised. New terrorists are emerging, new groups, actually, a new level of viciousness. And I think we need to be prepared.” Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) says, “I think we have a way that we could do this. The question is, what is Congress going to do on this? ...I just think that there should be an oversight. ...I believe in going after the bad guys. ...But you still have to have some checks and balances, or you have a government that can run amok.” On *Fox News Sunday*, Leahy says, “There’s a concern that we have gone too much into Americans’ privacy. There’s still going to be legislation on this.” [53769, 53770]

On *Fox News Sunday* David Kennedy, cybersecurity expert and head of TrustedSec LLC, says, “I have to completely disagree with her [CMS Information Security Officer Teresa Fryer, who claims Healthcare.gov was thoroughly tested]. And it’s not just myself that is just saying this website is insecure, it is also seven other independent security researchers that also looked at all of the research that I’ve done and came to the exact same conclusion. And these are folks that work really well in the industry. And they’re highly respected, have an extensive experience of working for the government. And, you know, if you read the testimony and you read what she had actually said, she said that it’s done end to end security testing. They don’t say what type of testing that is. It could have been an audit that just looks at paperwork. It could have been, you know, really rudimentary testing that looks for just basic things. But what is pretty evident right now is that the site itself is not secure. ...It’s much worse off.” Of the Obama administration’s claim that Healthcare.gov has not been hacked, Kennedy says, “And that’s great. This is one of my favorite ones out of the whole testimony. And so they say that there has [sic; have] been no successful hacks that they’ve been able to detect. If you look at—there’s November testimony by Congress that basically said that a third party company was contracted to build out what we call the security operations center, which is what would actually detect these types of attacks. As of November, it hadn’t even been started yet. So, if you look at how long these security operations centers take to put into play, it takes several months, if not years to actually implement and fully build the attacks out there. So, as of November we have no modern detection. And that, from my understanding, it’s still not happening to this date. So they’re accurate in their statement. They haven’t detected any attacks on the website, because they don’t have the capability to detect them.” [53783, 53798, 53809]

Kennedy explains, “There is a technique called—what we call passer [passive?] reconnaissance, which allows us to query—look at how the website operates and performs. ...It’s a rudimentary type attack that doesn’t actually attack the website itself, it extracts information from it without actually having to go into the system. Think of it this way. Think of something where you have a car and the car doors are open and the windows are open, you can see inside of it. That’s basically what they allow you to do. And there is no real sophistication level here. It is just really wide open. So, there is no hacking actually involved. And 70,000 was just one of the numbers that I was able to go up to. And I stopped after that. You know, and I’m sure it’s hundreds of thousands, if not more and it was done within about a four-minute time frame. So, it’s just wide open. You can literally just open up your browser, go to this and extract all this information. Not actually having to hack the website itself.” [53783, 53798]

On *State of the Union*, Senator Angus King (D-ME) tells CNN's Candy Crowley, "There's no question the State Department screwed up here [with Benghazi] and there should be accountability, in my opinion. Who did make that decision [about security] in light of all that information, and why, and I think that's a very fair question. And frankly, I'm surprised and disappointed. I know some people have been shifted around, but if accountability means anything, it means somebody paying a price for having made a disastrous decision... I haven't seen any real accountability, and I think that's been a failure in this whole process." [53807]

WashingtonTimes.com reports, "The militants who gathered on the night of Sept. 11, 2012, to torch and kill inside the U.S. diplomatic mission in Benghazi, Libya, were a who's who of the modern al Qaeda movement, newly declassified documents show. Since its attacks on the U.S. in 2001, al Qaeda has worked to establish partners outside its base in Pakistan, especially in North Africa and the new fertile territory of eastern Libya and the port city of Benghazi. All of al Qaeda's work converged that night in Benghazi, according to a bipartisan report last week by the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. Global jihadists created a sort of convention of at least four terrorist franchises, complete with rocket-propelled grenades and diesel fuel. ... 'Individuals affiliated with terrorist groups, including AQIM [Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb], Ansar al Sharia, AQAP [Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula], and the Muhammad Jamal Network, participated in the September 11, 2012, attacks,' the report states." [53803]

In *The Washington Post*, Philip Rucker writes, "Concern is rising among Democrats in [Hillary] Clinton's orbit that she is at risk of losing control of one of the most pivotal parts of her biography. One friend worried that Republicans are already succeeding in muddying her record at [the] State [Department]. 'It's almost becoming a kind of conventional wisdom that there were minimal accomplishments,' said the friend, who, like some others, spoke on the condition of anonymity to talk candidly without alienating the Clinton camp. 'The concern about this talking point catching hold has lent more urgency to getting the book [her memoirs] done.' ... Clinton's aides said she is not finished with the manuscript, and some people close to her said the project is taking longer than she had hoped. 'It's a bit of a struggle to get it done,' said the friend who was worried about GOP efforts. 'She is not necessarily a natural writer.' ... Helping Clinton write the book are speechwriter Dan Schwerin and researcher Ethan Gelber, both former State Department aides, as well as Ted Widmer, a former White House speechwriter to Bill Clinton." (It is assumed that Clinton will not enlist the help of William Ayers.) [53808]

Meanwhile, health policy expert Bob Laszewski writes, "Only 11% of consumers who bought new coverage under the law were previously uninsured," according to a survey of 4,563 consumers eligible for the health insurance exchanges done by McKinsey & Company and reported in Saturday's *Wall Street Journal*. The *Journal* reports that 'insurers, brokers, and consultants estimate at least two-thirds' of the 2.2 million people who have so far signed up in the new exchanges are coming from those who already had coverage. This is consistent with anecdotal reports from insurers I have talked to that are

seeing very little net growth in their overall individual and small group markets as of January 1. That's even worse than I thought it would be even considering the January 1 individual policy cancellations and small group renewals that are driving employers to reconsider offering coverage—and that is saying something. The vast majority of the individual cancellations, particularly because of the early renewal and extension programs, are yet to come. The same can be said for the small group renewals. This also tells us why the first three months of the Obamacare enrollment had a relatively high average age—they came from the same market that tended to skew older [than] the health plans already covered. When McKinsey asked why subsidy eligible people weren't buying, 52% cited affordability as the reason. ...I'm not shocked to hear that given what I have been writing about the high after-tax premiums, net of the subsidies, people are finding, as well as the high deductibles and narrow provider networks the subsidized Silver and lowest cost Bronze exchange plans are offering people. ...I will suggest that the significant number of the new enrollees coming over from discontinued employer coverage should be troubling to Democrats. While low paid workers might fare better in the exchanges, many of those eligible for federal subsidies, particularly in two-income families, will fare far worse compared to the plan their employer offered them. Creating a circumstance that forces people to lose their employer coverage is not going to be a political win." [53784]

In a largely sympathetic interview with David Remnick in *The New Yorker*, Obama says, "As has been well documented, I smoked pot as a kid, and I view it as a bad habit and a vice, not very different from the cigarettes that I smoked as a young person up through a big chunk of my adult life. I don't think it is more dangerous than alcohol. ...Middle-class kids don't get locked up for smoking pot, and poor kids do, and African-American kids and Latino kids are more likely to be poor and less likely to have the resources and the support to avoid unduly harsh penalties." (Few people get locked up for *smoking* marijuana; they get arrested for possessing large quantities of drugs and selling them.) "...And the experiment that's going to be taking place in Colorado and Washington [where marijuana has been legalized] is going to be, I think, a challenge." (Obama does not mention his cocaine use.) Obama says he would not want a son to play professional football because of its risk of injuries. (Of course, Obama does not have a son, and by the time a son is old enough to be drafted by the NFL he is old enough to make his own decisions—even if that means doing something his father does not condone. Lastly, the odds of a son of Obama being NFL material would be close to zero, considering the DNA involved.) Radio talk show host Mark Levin later comments, "So he wouldn't let his son play football—this pretend son that he has. It's like Jimmy Stewart with the pretend rabbit. Well let me tell you something, Mr. [Obama]: I wouldn't let my son be an ambassador under you. I'd much rather that he played football." [53771, 53780, 53782, 53787, 53799, 53800, 53805, 53813, 53814, 53817, 53833, 53848, 53876, 53977, 54006]

In the interview Obama also blames racism for the drop in his approval ratings, saying, "There's no doubt that there's some folks who just really dislike me because they don't like the idea of a black [person in the White House]. Now, the flip side of it is there are some black folks and maybe some white folks who really like me and give me the benefit of the doubt precisely because I'm... black...." (Obama expects people to believe that

millions of people who voted for him have stopped supporting him because they have suddenly become racists. He refuses to accept that millions of people could simply have decided that his policies have failed and he is an incompetent and failed leader. Arguably, racism is Obama's emotional cushion; it's easier for him to believe that people resent him because he is half-black than to believe they resent his policies and ideology—because that shifts the blame from him to them.) Obama also whines about “states’ rights,” as if anything that has to do with the issue is related to racism and the Civil War. [53771, 53780, 53782, 53787, 53799, 53800, 53805, 53813, 53814, 53817, 53833, 53848, 53876, 53977, 54006]

Obama flippantly defends his claim that al-Qaeda has been ‘decimated’ and is “on the run,” saying, “The analogy we use around here sometimes, and I think [it] is accurate, is [that] if a jayvee [sic; “JV” or junior varsity] team puts on Lakers uniforms that doesn’t make them Kobe Bryant. I think there is a distinction between the capacity and reach of a bin Laden and a network that is actively planning major terrorist plots against the homeland versus jihadists who are engaged in various local power struggles and disputes, often sectarian.” (The four Americans killed in Benghazi and their families might believe otherwise. Whether the terrorist wears an official uniform and follows a strict chain of command or is simply a jihadist following fatwas matters little to the person whose head he slices off. Obama does not explain how al-Qaeda, which he claimed in 2012 was “decimated” and “on the run,” can still be “actively planning major terrorist plots against the homeland. Nor does he explain why, 16 months after the Benghazi attack, he has been unable to hold accountable any of the mere “jayvees” who killed four Americans.) “I do believe that the [Middle East] region is going through rapid change and inexorable change. Some of it is demographics; some of it is technology; some of it is economics. And the old order, the old equilibrium, is no longer tenable. The question then becomes, What’s next?” (He might have tried to answer that before he chose to run for president.) [53771, 53780, 53782, 53787, 53799, 53800, 53805, 53813, 53814, 53817, 53833, 53848, 53876, 53894, 53977, 54006, 54045]

Remarkably, Obama claims the anti-Semitism in the region has “developed over the course of decades there,” as if the Muslim hatred of Jews is a recent phenomenon brought about only by the creation of Israel. This is a clear contradiction of history (and reality) that serves only one purpose: discredit Israel and blame its existence for the region’s problems. Pamela Geller writes, “Barack Obama was raised in the largest Muslim country in the world, Indonesia. His religion on his school records is Islam. He studied quran along with the rest of the Muslim student body. Obama was [said to have been] ‘quite religious in Islam.’ *He knows*. So he is a bald-faced liar. Muslim antisemitism is in the Quran. It is a religious imperative. I don’t believe Harvard educated Obama is merely dumb on this subject. He can’t so slick and so stupid at the same time. His tight circle of friends, advisers and confidantes are fiercely antisemitic... He studied Islam in his youth. He knows.”) [53771, 53780, 53782, 53787, 53799, 53800, 53805, 53813, 53814, 53817, 53833, 53848, 53876, 53977, 54006]

Perhaps to the surprise of no one, Obama whines to Remnick that his failures have been caused by Rush Limbaugh and Fox News: “Another way of putting it, I guess, is that the

issue has been the inability of my message to penetrate the Republican base so that they feel persuaded that I'm not the caricature that you see on Fox News or Rush Limbaugh, but I'm somebody who is interested in solving problems and is pretty practical, and that, actually, a lot of the things that we've put in place worked better than people might think. And as long as there's that gap between perceptions of me within the average Republican primary voter and the reality, it's hard [sic; difficult] for folks like [House Speaker] John Boehner [R-OH] to move too far in my direction." (What "practical" solutions Obama has offered that have "worked better than people might think" remain a mystery to many in the United States—and even around the world. Obama is suggesting that Boehner would eagerly move to the political left if only Limbaugh and Fox News were not telling him what to do. Obama is essentially saying, "If only Limbaugh and Fox News would stop criticizing me, the ignorant American people would then see the light and fully comprehend my greatness.") [53771, 53780, 53782, 53787, 53799, 53800, 53805, 53813, 53814, 53817, 53833, 53848, 53876, 53977, 53979, 54006]

At WashingtonPost.com Zachary Goldfarb lists some of the "highlights" from Remnick's interview with Obama: "When Obama leaves the White House, he will write a memoir that literary agent Andrew Wylie predicted would fetch \$17 million to \$20 million. ...Michelle Obama has already started to work on her memoir." "Remnick tells readers what Marvin Nicholson, Obama's body man, carries in a bag for [him]: 'pens, the briefing books, the Nicorette, the Sharpies, the Advil, the throat lozenges, the iPad, the iPod, the protein bars, the bottle of Black Forest Berry Honest Tea.'" "Obama has had a number of presidential historians over as guests, including Doris Kearns Goodwin and Robert Caro, whose work on Lyndon Johnson often is cited as an example of how a president can more effectively get in his agenda through Congress." "Obama's older daughter, Malia, wants to be a filmmaker." "Obama believes if the current diplomatic efforts with Iran prevail, it could bring a new stability to the region. 'It would be profoundly in the interest of citizens throughout the region if Sunnis and Shias weren't intent on killing each other,' Obama said." "Obama said he feels confident that he has made the right decisions on Syria..." "Obama said he does not regard the leaks by former NSA contractor Edward Snowden as comparable to the Pentagon Papers or other leaks vindicated by history." "Obama believes that his equanimity endures as one of his key strengths. 'I have strengths and I have weaknesses... like every person,' he said. 'I do think one of my strengths is temperament. I am comfortable with complexity, and I think I'm pretty good at keeping my moral compass while recognizing that I am a product of original sin.'" [53818, 54067]

FoxNews.com reports, "Top Capitol Hill lawmakers on Sunday expressed concerns about terror attacks at the upcoming Olympic games in Sochi, Russia, amid nearby terror attacks and Russian President Vladimir Putin's assurances that his country will 'do whatever it takes' to protect athletes and visitors. 'The threats are real,' Texas GOP Rep. Mike McCaul, chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee, told ABC's 'This Week.' McCaul is among those who think an attack during the games next month will most likely occur outside of the Olympic city and that terrorists will go after 'soft targets' such as roads and transportation systems. ...On Sunday, in a new video that was posted on the website of the Chechen militant group Vilayat Dagestan, two militants vowed that

tourists and Russians attending the games would not be safe. In the video, the Russian-speaking men sitting in front of black banners with Arabic verses warn [Russian President Vladimir] Putin that if the games are held, ‘we will give you a present for the innocent Muslim blood being spilled all around the world.’ They add that ‘for the tourists who come there will be a present, too.’ ...The State Department has issued a travel warning for the games.” (The World Cup soccer games in Brazil may also be an Islamist target, especially inasmuch as the country’s infrastructure is woefully inadequate for the event.) [53773, 53774, 53785]

MSNBC’s Melissa Harris-Perry says, “Because, well, if there is anything that is quintessentially American, it is our military, and their goal can be seen in their very mottos: the Army’s ‘This we’ll defend’ or ‘Semper Fi,’ ‘always faithful,’ for the Marines.” (Harris-Perry mispronounces it “semper fee.” Additionally, the phrase is actually “Semper Fidelis,” although many a Marine greets another by saying “Semper Fi.” At BizPacReview.com Michele Kirk writes, “If you are going to report on the meaning of the military mottos, you might want to make it at least appear as if you are familiar with them. ...We all blunder, and being on camera is a tough job, but as a Marine mom it reminded me of how far removed much of the left is from the importance of the military. Maybe I’m wrong, but I can’t imagine any conservative doing a segment on the military with such ignorance.” Whether Harris-Perry’s error is worse than Obama’s mispronunciation—twice—of “corpsman” as “corpse man” is for the reader to decide.) [21151, 21172, 21220, 53794]

The latest version of TurboTax software does more than simply allow for ObamaCare tax issues, it pushes the Affordable Care Act—stating that the law makes health insurance “Easier to shop for” and “More affordable with financial help for those who qualify.” (More than a few Americans might argue that ObamaCare does neither.) [53796]

At PJMedia.com Victor Davis Hanson warns, “[O]ur way of life is changing not with a bang, but with a whimper, insidiously and self-inflicted, rather than abruptly and from foreign stimuli. Most of the problem is cultural. Unfortunately it was predicted by a host of pessimistic anti-democratic philosophers from Plato and Aristotle to Hegel and Spengler. I’ve always hoped that these gloom-and-doomers were wrong about the Western paradigm, but some days it becomes harder. Over 90 million Americans who could work are not working (the ‘non-institutionalized’ over 16). What we take for granted—our electrical power, fuel, building materials, food, health care, and communications—all hinge on just 144 million getting up in the morning to produce what about 160-170 million others (the sick, the young, and the retired who need assistance along with the 90 million idle) consume. Every three working Americans provide sustenance for two who are not ill, enfeebled, or too young. The former help the disabled, the latter take resources from them. The gang-banger has only disdain for the geek at the mall—until one Saturday night his liver is shredded by gang gunfire and suddenly he whimpers (who is now the real wimp?) that he needs such a Stanford-trained nerd to do sophisticated surgery to get him back in one piece to the carjackings, muggings, assaults, and knockout games—or lawsuits follow! Given that the number of non-working is growing (an additional 10 million were idled in the Obama ‘recovery’

alone), it is likely to keep growing. At some point, we will hit a 50/50 ratio of idle versus active. Then things will get interesting. The percentage of workers' pay deducted to pay for the non-working will soar even higher. So will the present redistributive schemes and the borrowing from the unborn. We forget that the obligations of the working to care for the 70-80 million who genuinely cannot work become more difficult, when the 90 million who can work for all sorts of reasons won't." [54000]

"An indebted and crippled U.S. has so far survived the second decade of the 21st century largely due to some ingenious engineers and audacious workers who revolutionized the gas and oil industry, at a time when wind and solar merely amused us, when our enemies considered us ripe for perpetual petro-blackmail, and when our wherewithal to pay for more imported energy was increasingly questionable. A very few people are saving very many. But how thin the strand of civilization hangs—given that the forces of our modern Lotus Eaters... have stopped the Keystone Pipeline, stopped most federal leasing of new gas and oil finds, and are trying to regulate fracking and horizontal drilling out of existence where it might be most vital to the U.S.—as in the Monterey Shale formation in California. How ironic is the Sierra Club Bay Area grandee who finds light when he flips on his office switch, and would find no light were his utopian ideas about wind, solar, and biomass to come to full fruition. Only what he despises—radioactive uranium, messy drilling rigs, and unnatural dams—for now continue to bring him what he must have. Again, the theme: the more the green activists empty reservoirs to save a bait fish, or stop fracking, or prevent salvage logging, the angrier they sigh that it is not enough and the more they must count on someone ignoring them to provide them with what they must have." [54000]

"...Once more the theme here is not just that we are insolvent, but that we are so insolvent that it is now a thought-crime to talk of dissolution, bankruptnes, and irresponsible spending—all damned as symptoms of 'callousness' to the poor, proof of 'social injustice,' and 'obsessions' with deficits. The medicine of austerity always becomes worse than the disease of profligacy. What do I mean about the 'thinning strand of civilization?' A shrinking percentage of our population feeds us, finds our energy, protects us, and builds things we count on. They get up each morning to do these things, in part in quest for the good life, in part out of a sense of social obligation and basic humanity, in part because they know they will die if idle and thrive only when busy, and in part simply because 'they like it.' We can stack the deck against them with ever higher taxes, ever more regulations, ever more obligations to others, and they may well continue. But not if we also damn them as the '1%' and call them the agents of inequality and the fat cats who did not build what they built or who profited when they should not have. ...Each day when I drive to work I try to look at the surrounding communities, and count how many are working and how many of the able-bodied are not. I listen to the car radio and tally up how many stories, both in their subject matter and method of presentation, seem to preserve civilization, or how many seem to tear it down. ...Today, as the reader can note from the tone of this apocalyptic essay, civilization seemed to be losing." [54000]

On January 20 Sarah Palin writes, “Happy MLK, Jr. Day! ‘I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.’ – Martin Luther King, Jr. Mr. [Obama], in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. and all who commit to ending any racial divide, no more playing the race card.” [53791]

Vice President Joe Biden and other prominent Democrats use Martin Luther King day to criticize photo ID laws for voting. Biden tells an audience he is “trying to stem the tide of new attempts—new attempts—to restrict the right of our people to vote. I have to admit I never thought we’d be fighting the fight again on voting rights. This has been the ultimate fight, because our opponents know—they know—the single most dangerous thing to give us is the right to vote! They know what that is!” (Some might disagree with Biden and argue that King—like the vast majority of blacks today—would not oppose proving one is eligible to vote before casting a ballot. King certainly opposed schemes to prevent blacks from voting, but he also certainly never encouraged people to vote illegally using the name of a dead person.) [53826]

At NewRepublic.com Isaac Chotiner comments on Obama’s lengthy statements and lectures—and contempt for the intelligence of his audience—in David Remnick’s interview in *The New Yorker*: “[Obama] is like a novelist who demands on telling you the motivation of every character, except he is the only character. The result is that he actually ends up speaking to us like children. Obama’s signature move, ironically, involves refusing to give simple answers to questions, a habit for which he clearly prides himself. Meanwhile, not only does [he] go meta on every specific answer; he also goes meta on his own style of giving answers. ...It’s not just that the answer [about marijuana usage] is now maddeningly long. Nor is it merely that Obama exhibits his annoying tic of stating his opponent’s case in the most extreme, over-the-top way (who exactly thinks marijuana legalization is a ‘panacea’ for solving ‘all these social problems?’) It’s also, again, the condescension. We know there are other sides to the issue. We know the issue is complex. We know there are slippery slope arguments about drug legalization. But either he doesn’t think that we know these things or, more damningly, he must remind us that he knows them, too. The reason he does this, I would argue, is that he is more interested in telling us *how* he thinks than *what* he thinks. His defense of the NSA, for example, has largely rested on his statements that he and his team are trustworthy and thoughtful people. ...Again, this isn’t really an answer. It is a description of Obama’s mind. He ‘wrestles with it.’ He knows that democracies function through a civil society. These are ‘tough decisions.’ Obama didn’t run for office so he could go to war—hence he must hate using drones, and so we should trust his instincts when he does want to use them.” (HotAir.com writes that Obama’s “Thoughtful Guy shtick is ultimately an accountability dodge. ...Even if you disagreed with him, you could trust that he’d made a fully informed, responsible decision. That’s the message of his [actions] in a two-word nutshell, from drones to the NSA to the various executive power grabs of the past two years: ‘Trust me.’”) [53892, 53893]

Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper addresses the Israeli Knesset—delivering a pro-Israel, anti-Semitism speech Obama would never dare to speak. Harper asks, “What else

[but anti-Semitism] can we call criticism that selectively condemns only the Jewish state and effectively denies its right to defend itself while systematically ignoring or excusing the violence and oppression all around it? What else can we call it when Israel is routinely targeted at the United Nations and when Israel remains the only country to be the subject of a permanent agenda item at the regular sessions of its human rights council? Any judgment of Israel's actions must start with this understanding: In the 65 years that modern Israel has been a nation, Israelis have endured attacks and slanders beyond counting and have never known a day of true peace. Neither Israel's existence nor its policies are responsible for the instability in the Middle East today. One must look beyond Israel's borders to find the causes of the relentless oppression, poverty and violence in much of the region, of the heartbreaking suffering of Syrian refugees, of sectarian violence and the fears of religious minorities, especially Christians, and of the current domestic turmoil in so many states." [53822]

Bomb blasts kill at least 26 people in Baghdad, Iraq. According to the BBC, "The violence has not reached this level since 2007, at the peak of sectarian conflict." (Civilian deaths fell precipitously in Iraq between 2006 and 2011, but started increasing again in 2012 and 2013.) Pamela Geller quips, "Someone tell [Obama] that the JV team just made it to the NBA playoffs." (DailyCaller.com notes that in September 2007 General David Petraeus and former U.S. ambassador to Iraq Ryan Crocker issued a report suggesting that the Iraqi government would not be able to effectively cope with increased sectarian violence after U.S. troops were withdrawn. They were correct.) [53853, 53869]

On Hugh Hewitt's radio program, Charles Krauthammer says of the nuclear agreement with Iran: "I think the deal is a catastrophe. I think it is the worst deal since Munich, and I think it might even be more cynical than Munich, because I think those signing it, to give them credit, I think they actually know that it is the keys to the kingdom for the Iranians. I mean, the foreign minister already said that this is a victory, that the West has surrendered to the will of Iran. And they have spelled out exactly in what ways it's a complete victory. They do not have to suspend enrichment. They're given the right to enrich, which of course the fundamental idea of non-proliferation is you do not enrich uranium. There are five Security Council resolutions demanding an end and a reversal of their enrichment. Well, this gives them until eternity the right to enrich. The only thing it does is it prevents the enrichment to 20 percent, but that's meaningless. They're continuing to enrich to 3-to-5 percent, and from there, to 20 percent, and from there to weapons grade is a matter of weeks. So they're doing that. They're producing new centrifuges. There is no restriction whatsoever in the end on their working on the weaponization of a bomb. There isn't even inspection of the Parchin facility, which is where they're working on nuclear triggers. And lastly, what they've boasted about is well, the 20 percent enriched uranium has to be, in fact, John Kerry said it has to be destroyed. That's simply not true. Twenty percent enriched uranium is [simply] turned into uranium oxide [rather than destroyed]. Here's the bad news. That is a reversible chemical process. The foreign minister boasted that everything they do that pushes the pause button can be reversed in a single day." [53939, 53940, 53941]

The mainstream media breathlessly reports on Michelle Obama's 50th birthday party, devoting twice as much time on the issue than on the Senate report on Benghazi (with 28 minutes on Mrs. Obama on ABC, CBS, and NBC versus 14 minutes on Benghazi). NBC gushes over her AARP membership card, and "an adorable tweet... showing how much she's grown." (Needless to say, the media cared little about Laura Bush's 60th birthday celebration in 2006. Newsbusters.org found only one paragraph in *The Washington Post* the week of Mrs. Bush's birthday. Hillary Clinton's 50th birthday resulted in a *Time* magazine cover issue. Barbara Bush and Nancy Reagan never appeared on the cover of the magazine.) Among the 500 or so guests at Mrs. Obama's event were NBC's Al "no conflict of interest here" Roper, Stevie Wonder, Paul McCartney, James Taylor, Smokey Robinson, Gladys Knight, Janelle Monae, Mary J. Blige, Angela Bassett, Courtney Vance, Herbie Hancock, Samuel L. Jackson, Grant Hill, Alonzo Mourning, Ledisi, Emmett Smith, Star Jones, Steve Harvey, Magic Johnson, Billie Jean King, Michael Jordan, Angela Bassett, Jennifer Hudson, Gayle King, Ahmad Rashad, Kal Penn, Ashley Judd, Joe Biden, Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, Susan Rice, Eric Holder, and Kathleen Sebelius. [53793, 53831, 53926, 53927, 54029]

In an interview with *People* magazine, Michelle Obama responds to a question about her role models: "I just went to see Cicely Tyson on Broadway. She is in her 80s and did a two-hour play with stamina and passion. I told her, "I want to be you when I grow up!" ...There's Jane Fonda, a beautiful, engaged, politically savvy, sharp woman." ("Politically savvy" may not be the first description that comes to mind when Americans recall how "Hanoi Jane" Fonda visited North Vietnam in 1972 to create anti-Americans propaganda for the communists.) [53860, 53861]

According to the WashingtonExaminer.com's Byron York, "[T]he White House apparently did not want to see photos of the first lady's glittery gala circulating around the Internet. So it imposed a strict rule: No cellphones. 'Guests were told not to bring cellphones with them, and there was a cellphone check-in area for those who did,' reported the Chicago Tribune. 'Signs at the party told guests: No cellphones, no social media.' People magazine added: 'Guests had been greeted by a 'cell phone check' table where they deposited their camera phones on arrival and it was understood that this was not an occasion for Tweeting party photos or Facebooking details.' The publications cited sources who insisted on anonymity for fear of White House reprisal. ...Why the secrecy, especially for an event involving so many well-known people? Maybe the Obamas just wanted a little privacy for an important occasion in the first lady's life, although having 500 guests, including some of the most famous people on the planet, is perhaps not the best way to achieve that goal. Or maybe, since [Obama] has announced he is devoting the rest of his time in office to an 'inequality agenda,' the White House felt photos of a champagne-soaked, star-studded party would be somewhat off-message. But the Obamas are well-off, accomplished people. They can have a big party if they want (and if they pay for it). Why hide it?" (It is worth noting that Michelle Obama appeared in a photograph proudly displaying her new AARP membership card. Arguably, that is an improper endorsement of the senior citizen lobbying organization.) [53793, 53831, 53926, 53927, 54029]

Daniel McAdams comments on Obama's NSA speech: "[I]f Obama wanted his speech to reassure critics of an intelligence community that has seemingly turned its lens inward, he got it precisely backwards. He did not come out and acknowledge from the start that given recent revelations about NSA surveillance of US phone calls, computers, text messages, etc., our concerns are legitimate and he intends to do something about it. He did not affirm the importance of protecting the First and Fourth Amendments. He did not come out preaching real and concrete reform. Instead, [Obama] opened his speech placing himself clearly on the side of the surveillance state and opposed to citizens. He told us that 'the folks at NSA and other intelligence agencies are our neighbors. They're our friends and family.' Well that was true in East Germany under the Stasi as well. Is that supposed to reassure us? Are we supposed to feel better that our neighbors, friends, and family are part of an enormous domestic spying network looking into the lives of others? Obama's speech was devoid of any concrete item of reform. There were no specific fixes presented by [him] because he does not really believe that anything is broken. It is a perception problem, and the president intends to take a close look at the recommendations made by his hand-picked intelligence review commission. He vows to strengthen executive branch oversight of intelligence, which would in effect be strengthening the source of the problem and closing the system to outside oversight. Congress seems little bothered by this." [53777]

InfoWars.com reports, "A newly released document obtained via a Freedom of Information Act request confirms that the State Department ordered the Department of Homeland Security to spare members of the Muslim Brotherhood traveling to the US in 2012 a TSA pat down or any kind of secondary screening. The one page document... obtained by the Investigative Project on Terrorism, shows that members of a Muslim Brotherhood delegation traveling through Minneapolis Airport, New York's John F. Kennedy Airport and Dulles Airport were handed expedited entry known as 'port courtesy,' which is normally reserved for high ranking government officials and dignitaries. ...The document contains four separate entries which include a directive that Muslim Brotherhood members, 'not be pulled into secondary upon arrival at a point of entry.' As well as a TSA pat down, secondary screening involves carry on luggage being inspected by hand and the use of puffer explosive detectors." [53802]

FreeBeacon.com reports, "The White House has been exploring ways to circumvent Congress and unilaterally lift sanctions on Iran once a final nuclear agreement is reached, according to sources with knowledge of White House conversations and congressional insiders familiar with its strategy. The issue of sanctions relief has become one of the key sticking points in the Iran debate, with lawmakers pushing for increased economic penalties and the White House fighting to roll back regulations. While many in Congress insist that only the legislative branch can legally repeal sanctions, senior White House officials have been examining strategies to skirt Congress, according to those familiar with internal conversations." Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL) says, "The American people must get a say in any final nuclear agreement with Iran to ensure the mullahs never get the bomb. The administration cannot just ignore U.S. law and lift sanctions unilaterally." [53895, 53896]

Veteran journalist and civil libertarian Nat Hentoff tells WND.com, “Apparently [Obama] doesn’t give one damn about the separation of powers. ... This is the worst state, I think, the country has ever been in. ... Within a few months after he was elected, I wrote a column saying he was going to be the most destructive, dangerous [person] we’ve ever had [in the White House] ... Well, we’ve given him a chance. I understated the case a little. ... He has *no right* to do these executive orders. He’s in a position now where he figures he’s going to do whatever he wants to do. ... What Obama is doing now is about as un-American as you can get.” [53819]

At ZeroHedge.com Tyler Durden posts a chart showing the dismal levels of retail store traffic and new retail space. Foot traffic exceeded 30 billion visits in 2010 and by 2013 had plummeted to 17.6 billion visits. The amount of new retail space opened annually declined from levels near or above 300 million square feet between 2000 and 2008 to less than 100 million square feet from 2009 forward. In 2013 only 43.8 million square feet of new retail space opened. Durden writes, “The entire economic recovery storyline is a sham built upon easy money funneled by the Fed[eral Reserve] to the Too Big To Trust Wall Street banks so they can... drive the stock market higher, buy up the millions of homes they foreclosed upon to artificially drive up home prices, and generate profits through rigging commodity, currency, and bond markets, while reducing loan loss reserves because they are free to value their toxic assets at anything they please... GDP [Gross Domestic Product] has been artificially propped up by the Federal government through the magic of EBT cards, SSDI for the depressed and downtrodden, never ending extensions of unemployment benefits, billions in student loans..., and subprime auto loans to deadbeats from the Government Motors financing arm... The country is being kept afloat on an ocean of debt and delusional belief in the power of central bankers to steer this ship through a sea of icebergs just below the surface. The absolute collapse in retail visitor counts is the warning siren that this country is about to collide with the reality Americans have run out of time, money, jobs, and illusions. ... The titans of Wall Street and their puppets in Washington D.C. have wrung every drop of faux wealth from the dying middle class. There are nothing left but withering carcasses and bleached bones.” [54038]

Durden continues, “The collapse in foot traffic to the 109,500 shopping centers that crisscross our suburban sprawl paradise of plenty is irreversible. No amount of marketing propaganda, 50% off sales, or hot new iGadgets is going to spur a dramatic turnaround. Quarter after quarter there will be more announcements of store closings. Macys just announced the closing of 5 stores and firing of 2,500 retail workers. JC Penney just announced the closing of 33 stores and firing of 2,000 retail workers. Announcements are imminent from Sears, Radio Shack and a slew of other retailers who are beginning to see the writing on the wall. The vacancy rate will be rising in strip malls, power malls and regional malls, with the largest growing sector being ghost malls. Before long it will appear that SPACE AVAILABLE is the fastest growing retailer in America. The reason this death spiral cannot be reversed is simply a matter of arithmetic and demographics. ... With real median household income 8% lower than it was in 2008, the collapse in retail traffic is a rational reaction by the impoverished 99%. Americans are using their credit cards to pay their real estate taxes, income taxes, and monthly utilities, since their

income is lower, and their living expenses rise relentlessly, thanks to [Federal Reserve Board chairman Ben] Bernanke and his Fed created inflation. ...There are 247 million working age Americans between the ages of 18 and 64. Only 145 million of these people are employed. Of these employed, 19 million are working part-time and 9 million are self-employed. Another 20 million are employed by the government, producing nothing and being sustained by the few remaining producers with their tax dollars. The labor participation rate is the lowest it has been since women entered the workforce in large numbers during the 1980's.The percentage of those over 55 in the workforce has risen dramatically to an all-time high, as the Me Generation never saved for retirement or saw their retirement savings obliterated in the Wall Street created 2008 financial implosion.” [54088]

Durden explains, “This entire materialistic orgy of consumerism has been sustained solely with debt peddled by the Wall Street banking syndicate. The average American consumer met their Waterloo in 2008. Bernanke’s mission was to save bankers, billionaires and politicians. It was not to save the working middle class. You’ve been sacrificed at the altar of the .1%. ...Bernanke and his financial elite owners have been able to rig the markets to give the appearance of normalcy, but they cannot rig the demographic time bomb that will cause the death and destruction of our illusory retail paradigm. ...With over 15% of all 25 to 34 year olds living in their parents’ basement and those under 25 saddled with billions in student loan debt, the traditional increase in income and spending is DOA for the millennial generation. The hardest hit demographic on the job front during the 2008 through 2014 ongoing recession has been the 45 to 54 year olds in their peak earning and spending years. Combine these demographic developments and you’ve got a perfect storm for over-built retailers and their egotistical CEOs. ...This false illusion of wealth and foolish spending led mega-retailers to ignore facts and spread like locusts across the suburban countryside. The debt fueled orgy has run out of steam. All that is left is the largest mountain of debt in human history, a gutted and debt laden former middle class, and thousands of empty stores in future decaying ghost malls haunting the highways and byways of suburbia. ...Store closings so far have only been a ripple compared to the tsunami coming to right size the industry for a future of declining spending. Over the next five to ten years, tens of thousands of stores will be shuttered. Companies like JC Penney, Sears and Radio Shack will go bankrupt and become historical footnotes. ...Bernanke and the Feds have allowed real estate mall owners to roll over non-performing loans and pretend they are generating enough rental income to cover their loan obligations. As more stores go dark, this little game of extend and pretend will come to an end. Real estate developers will be going belly-up and the banking sector will be taking huge losses again. ...The facts are not debatable. They can be ignored by the politicians, Ivy League economists, media talking heads, and the willfully ignorant masses, but they do not cease to exist.” [54088]

On *The Daily Show*, comedian Jon Stewart excoriates Obama’s NSA “reform” speech. (Most Americans were also unimpressed by the speech. According to a Pew Research Center/USA Today poll, 50 percent had heard “nothing at all” about the speech, and 70 percent believe the few changes he proposed would make “no difference” in the fight against terrorism. [53947, 53952, 53953])

On January 21, one day after the Martin Luther King holiday, weather wimps close federal offices in Washington, D.C. due to the mere threat of snow in the forecast. By 4 p.m. the capitol had a mere two inches of snow. New York City receives considerably more, and mayor Bill de Blasio punishes wealthy non-communist residents of Manhattan's Upper East Side by not plowing their neighborhood. According to NYPost.com, "There appeared to be no snow plowing between East 59th and 79th Streets and between Second and Fifth Avenues." Sanitation Commissioner John Doherty creatively explains why the plows missed an entire area: "The GPS was not working." (De Blasio, born Warren Wilhelm, Jr., served as the Regional Director for the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development for New York and New Jersey in the Clinton administration, and was Hillary Clinton's campaign manager in her 2000 bid for the U.S. Senate.) [53823, 53836, 53839, 53854, 53855, 53856, 53871, 53908, 53934, 53958]

The six month nuclear agreement with Iran begins—a period during which Israelis will have to keep their fingers crossed while the world watches to see if the mullahs "play nice." Spectator.org's Jed Babbin observes that Israel "cannot attack Iran because to do so would pit them against the United States. Israel would become an outlaw nation, would find itself sanctioned by the UN and denied American aid which would be tied up or cut off entirely. It would be in danger of losing its last friend in the world. Time is what the Iranians have needed, and time is what American presidents have been eager to give them. We know that the Iranians' top nuclear negotiator says that they'd be able to reverse the effects of the Obama agreement in one day: that is, they'd be able to resume enriching uranium to 20% almost instantaneously. And we know that it is much easier—and much faster—to further enrich the 20% enriched uranium. It's faster and easier to get from 20% to 50% and from 50% to 90%—weapons grade—than it was to get it to 20%. George W. Bush gave Iran eight years to enrich uranium and develop and test the other technologies you need to build a nuclear weapon. Barack Obama has given them another five. And now he's prevented the Israelis from denying them any more time. The only difference between the threat Iran poses to Israel and the threat it poses to us is the geographic fact that Israel is closer. We are still, to Iran, the Great Satan, and they are as much at war with us now as they have been since they seized our Tehran embassy in 1979." [54021, 54116]

According to the *Daily Mail*, Missouri resident Lesli Hill "spent six weeks trying to un-enroll from her Affordable Care Act plan, after the 'terminate' button on the website failed to work." Hill "was sent back and forth between operators on the Marketplace and her own health insurance provider as she attempted to cancel her 'Obamacare' plan. She says that despite calling the helpline, sending emails and chatting online to a helpdesk, she was unable to get off the plan and ended up driving 100 miles to get help from her own insurance company. Ms. Hill is part of the 'high risk' pool and bought an Affordable Care Act policy for \$950 [per month]. When she found out she could get a better deal with her previous insurance company, she wished to cancel her plan. ...Ms. Hill was told by an ObamaCare operator that she needed to call her insurance company, who passed her back to the Federal Exchange. Ms. Hill claims the terminate button on Obamacare's

website did not work, and that she spent ‘several hours a day’ on hold with the Health Insurance Marketplace.” [53824]

KVAL-TV reports that after spending about \$200 million on its “Cover Oregon” ObamaCare web site, the system still does not work and no one has been able to successfully enroll. Minnesota’s ObamaCare exchange, MNSure, is also a disaster, and an independent review panel states that a “large gap exists between required functionality and what has been delivered.” Call center wait times average 50 minutes. [53897, 53898, 53950, 53951]

Target announces it will no longer provide health care coverage for its part-time employees, effective April 1. Jodee Kozlak, executive vice president of human resources, states, “The Health Insurance Marketplaces [i.e., ObamaCare] provides new options for healthcare coverage that we believe our part-time members may prefer. In fact, by offering them insurance, we could actually disqualify many of them from being eligible for newly available subsidies that could reduce their overall health insurance expense. Our decision to discontinue this benefit comes after careful consideration of the impact to our stores’ part-time team members and to Target, the new options available for our part-time team, and the historically low number of team members who elected to enroll in the part-time plan.” (Columnist Charles Krauthammer later comments, “They [Target] are spinning it as, ‘We have to do that because otherwise they [part-time workers] won’t be able to acquire [taxpayer-paid] subsidies on the [ObamaCare] exchanges.’ So you have to ask yourself, ‘Why is that so?’ ...[w]hat it tells you is, the bill [the Affordable Care Act] was written deliberately to force employers to kick people off their plans, so that would be the only way to get the subsidies. In fact, what it tells you, is that none of this is an unintended side effect of the creation of ObamaCare. The purpose of ObamaCare was to destroy the relationship between the employer and the employee in getting healthcare. And that’s exactly why millions of people are being tossed off, and millions more will be as the larger employers start tossing people off later in the year.”) [53834, 53917, 53931, 54494]

In an interview with *Al Jazeera*, *New York Times* executive editor Jill Abramson says, “I would say [the current administration] is the most secretive White House that I have ever been involved in covering, and that includes—I spent 22 years of my career in Washington and covered presidents from President Reagan on up through now, and I was Washington bureau chief of the Times during George W. Bush’s first term. I dealt directly with the Bush White House when they had concerns that stories we were about to run put the national security under threat. But, you know, they were not pursuing criminal leak investigations. The Obama administration has had seven criminal leak investigations. That is more than twice the number of any previous administration in our history. It’s on a scale never seen before. This is the most secretive White House that, at least as a journalist, I have ever dealt with.” Abramson argues that the newspaper’s reporting does not consistently have a leftist slant, but admits, “There’s no question that the editorial stance of The New York Times is a liberal point of view.” [53970]

The Texas gubernatorial race heats up after revelations by a liberal reporter that Democrat candidate Wendy “Abortion Barbie” Davis “embellished” her life story and conveniently omitted some contradictory information. (RedState.com later reports, “A few years after Wendy Davis claimed in court that she had suffered damage to her mental health, a Texas court put Davis under a temporary restraining order prohibiting her from using drugs or alcohol within twenty-four hours of coming into contact with her children.”) She responds to the criticism by attacking, not the reporter but her opponent, Republican Greg Abbott, stating, “We’re not surprised by Greg Abbott’s campaign attacks on the personal story of my life as a single mother who worked hard to get ahead. But they won’t work, because my story is the story of millions of Texas women who know the strength it takes when you’re young, alone and a mother. I’ve always been open about my life not because my story is unique, but because it isn’t. ...I am proud of where I came from and I am proud of what I’ve been able to achieve through hard work and perseverance. And I guarantee you that anyone who tries to say otherwise hasn’t walked a day in my shoes.” (Abbott is a paraplegic who would be unable to walk in Davis’ shoes.) [53838, 53841, 53842, 53870, 53881, 53887, 53903, 53913, 53935, 53955, 53956, 54009, 54181]

HotAir.com comments on the Davis story: “I’m reasonably sure a guy who’s spent nearly 30 years in a wheelchair can relate to struggle, but it’s telling that Team Victim still thinks they can win a ‘my life sucked even harder than yours’ debate with someone like him. Sure, he was crippled and needed spinal surgery and extensive rehabilitation and overcame it all to become attorney general of Texas, but what hardship is that compared to a woman overcoming young motherhood to attend Harvard Law? [Davis filed for divorce the day after her second husband, a wealthy lawyer, paid off her school loans by cashing in his 401(k). Jeff Davis was given custody of their daughter.] That’s Davis-ism, though: When you vote for her, you’re not voting for Democratic policies so much as you’re voting to send a message about social progress and challenging old assumptions and empowering a type of candidate who would have stood no chance of winning in earlier days. (Ann Richards notwithstanding!) At least when Obama ran on that idea in 2008, he was sunny/hopey/changey about it. Davis just seems aggrieved.” Ann Coulter quips, “Feminists rushed to the stores to buy the shoes Davis wore during her famous [pro-abortion] filibuster. I’d like the shoes she was wearing when she met her sugar daddy.” James O’Keefe’s Project Veritas later releases undercover video of Democrat activists at Battleground Texas mocking wheelchair-bound DOP candidate Abbott, and encouraging vote fraud. O’Keefe claims that New York’s Department of Labor is harassing the organization with unreasonable demands for financial documents. He tells Fox News, “[New York] Governor [Andrew] Cuomo’s shocking words [about conservatives not being welcome in the state] this past week aren’t simply words. Governor Cuomo and the New York Department of Labor are on a witch hunt, demanding all documents and financials since our founding. ...His goal, of course, is to harass us and limit our effectiveness by tying us up in court. Just like ...Obama used the IRS to target and suppress conservatives, Governor Cuomo is using his Department of Labor to do the same exact thing.” [53838, 53841, 53842, 53870, 53881, 53887, 53903, 53913, 53935, 53955, 53956, 53984, 54009, 54047, 54181]

Ohio's WKBN-27 reports, "Hundreds of people in the Mahoning Valley can no longer go to their trusted doctors, and local officials say the Affordable Care Act is to blame. Doctors from the Mahoning County Medical Association sat down with US Representative Bill Johnson [R-OH] in Canfield Tuesday to discuss their concerns with UnitedHealthcare's decision to drop local doctors, including the Eye Care Associates practice in Beaver Township, from their Medicare Advantage plans. That means patients either have to change doctors or pay out of their own pockets. 'Now they are facing the choice of switching to another doctor. They are really scared, really scared,' said Dr. H.S. Wang, Eye Care Associates, Beaver Township." (The changes are a result of ObamaCare, which drastically slashed Medicare Advantage funding.) [53963, 53964]

Senator Jon Cornyn (R-TX) introduces legislation that would allow gun owners with concealed carry permits to travel from state to state without fear of breaking state laws. [53857]

The Washington Post dumps its far-left, Obama-defending columnist Ezra Klein. Also leaving the Post are "director of platforms" Melissa Bell, and Dylan Bell, who also wrote for Klein's "Wonkblog." The *Post* also announces a partnership with "The Volokh Conspiracy," a Libertarian/conservative blog that covers law, public policy, politics, culture and other topics." (According to David Catron at Spectator.org, Klein probably sealed his fate when he "pitched an idea for a new website and asked [the Post] for an eight-figure check to get it off the ground." Whether Amazon.com CEO and new *Post* owner Jeff Bezos told Klein not to let the door hit him on the way out is not known. Klein, some may recall, once complained that the text of the U.S. Constitution "is confusing because it was written more than 100 years ago." Klein also started the infamous "JournoList," a "listserv that he and other MSM [mainstream media] types used to coordinate their misrepresentations of the news"—and their Democrat talking points.) [53905, 53906, 53907, 54046]

At FrontPageMag.com J. Christian Adams writes, "Republicans mistake leftist ideology for incompetence. ...So admit it Republicans: you're confused. You can't understand why ...Obama's policies and his nominations are so radical. It doesn't make sense, you think, for him to pick extremist nominees who would have radical skeletons that would have disqualified them in any other administration. You also can't understand why he continues to lurch left on almost every foreign and domestic issue. Get over it. It isn't 1990 anymore, and leftist radicalism is a prerequisite for jobs in this administration, not a disqualifier. Leftist radicalism is the administration's reason for existence. ...Until the Republican Party understands that these extreme leftist policies and personnel choices are core deliberate features of the Obama era, they will never learn to combat them. It isn't enough to express shock that someone like Tom Perez would be nominated as Labor Secretary with his extremist history. The Obama administration isn't afraid of your shock and strongly worded letters. The administration is instead marching forward into a bold future without you. When they march right over you, they assume you will complain. What the Obamites are really afraid of, and haven't seen from most in the Republican Party, are effective counter-attacks to their radicalism. They are afraid of the most radical policy units inside their government being defunded by the House. They are afraid of the

impeachment of lower-level federal officials who abuse power, such as IRS or DOJ employees, by the House. They are afraid of rough power being met with rough power. But the Obamites don't have much to worry about. One can't stop what one can't even recognize. Many won't even attach a name to what we are all witnessing: leftist radicalism. So step one to effectively stopping Obama is to stop giving his radical nominees and radical policies the benefit of the doubt. ...First, purge the word 'incompetence' from your lexicon. ...The Obama administration policies... are not incompetent follies. They are instead representative of ideological desires deliberately implemented through the mechanisms of power available to this administration." [53946]

"...Second, stop assuming we enjoy a measure of immunity from their radical policies because 'they would never get away with it.' History is filled with victims who failed to act in time. Assuming that America enjoys a unique cultural ability to resist the ideological aims of the new left is a dangerous assumption. ...Third, listen to what they plainly say they want to do. What about 'fundamentally transform America' didn't you understand? ...When radicals say they plan to transform the nation and hobnob (or pardon) the most destructive extremists in America, you better pay attention. ...This is not your grandfather's Democratic Party. ...The radicalism of the administration is on open and continuous display for anyone to see. Attorney General Holder and ...Obama routinely meet with the race hustler Al Sharpton. Holder has spoken at Sharpton's National Action Network convention. Sharpton has been invited to the White House for behind-closed-doors policy debates with top Justice Department officials. Don't forget, Sharpton's past would disqualify him from even obtaining a security clearance. ...Sharpton's past has produced lots of White House invitations and plenty of high profile administration love. Sharpton is not embraced by the Obama administration in spite of his radical past. He is being embraced because of it. Yet Republicans seem unable to comprehend this central feature of the age of Obama. ...Obama has profited by extremist actions and the radicalism of nominees being ignored throughout his administration. The extent of the radicalism places the GOP in unfamiliar territory. Many in leadership still behave and speak as if they are dealing with [someone] from the Democratic Party of the Kennedy era. This impotent response will complete the job for the radicals and ensure the fundamental transformation they seek. Radicals who are treated like moderates are free to implement policy without scrutiny or exposure. ...A small percentage of Americans share the views of the radicals in the Obama administration. Failing to label radicals as radicals means this deep wellspring of American opposition to their policies will remain untapped. Failing to recognize a radical official as a radical means the administration official enjoys a measure of undeserved mercy. Assuming that ...Obama is unaware of the radical backgrounds of his nominees or the radical policies of his agencies risks our national future. So stop giving the radicals the benefit of the doubt." [53946]

The Supreme Court hears arguments in *Harris v. Quinn*, which involves Illinois legislation that treats home health care workers as state employees subject to labor union bargaining and dues payments—even if they are family members caring for their own disabled relatives. (The absurd law claims that because the disabled person is receiving state and Medicaid benefits, the care givers are “state employees.”) Pamela Harris, the mother of a disabled child, tells FreeBeacon.com, “I don't want to be the face and name

associated with anti-union campaign, but this is at its heart a mother doing what she thinks is right for her son. I don't see this as a union issue, but the current administration in Illinois has an unhealthy relationship with public sector unions. We got swept up in that." (Democrat Governor Pat Quinn has received almost \$5 million in campaign contributions from the Service Employees International Union—which, since 2009, has already collected \$52 million in union dues under the scheme.) Interestingly, while the state and the union argue that people like Harris are state employees and should pay union dues, they are not entitled to state employee pensions or liability coverage. On *Special Report*, Charles Krauthammer observes that if the Court rules against Quinn and the state of Illinois, "this would be a blow to organized labor from which they would not recover. Unless you force people into these unions, they generally don't go. As we saw in Wisconsin, as we saw in Indiana, once you release government workers from the obligation to actually pay into a union—in Indiana, for example, the government stopped collecting dues on behalf of the union. Membership collapsed by 80, 90 percent. ... I would guess the Supreme Court is not going to overturn this. It is really quite loathe to overturning longstanding arrangements. ... There are ways in which it could rule in a less radical way. For example, it could say that these workers don't have to be deemed state workers which would be slightly different from saying you're a state worker, you now have to pay into a union. So I suspect they are going to look for a way to be less sweeping in their ruling." (It is worth noting that the State of Illinois never required proof that the SEIU had actually won a majority of the votes of home health care workers in its organizing drive. The state merely took the union's word for it that it had. Of course, reasonable people would assume that Harris and others like her would have voted against the union.) [53888, 53889, 53890, 54319, 54377, 54389]

WND.com reports, "The Senate's 88-page report on the Benghazi assault provides a new detail about the role of an al-Qaida-linked organization that provided external security to the fated U.S. special mission. According to the report, the Libyan 17th of February Brigade militia refused to 'provide cover' for the U.S. security team that was trapped inside the compound. The detail was not mentioned in the State Department-sanctioned Accountability Review Board, or ARB, investigating the Benghazi attack. The ARB paints a picture of the 17th of February Brigade as largely aiding in the evacuation of the U.S. personnel at the mission. The 17th of February Brigade, which was hired by the State Department to protect the U.S. facility in Benghazi, operates under the Ansar-Al-Sharia banner. Ansar al-Sharia, tied to al-Qaida, has been implicated in carrying out the attack. The Senate report states 'there were three armed members of the Libyan 17th of February Brigade militia' present and working as part of the mission's security external detail during the attack. 'Outside the compound, the security team asked 17th of February Brigade members to 'provide cover' for them to advance to the gate of the Temporary Mission Facility with gun trucks,' the report says. 'The February Brigade members refused, saying they preferred to negotiate with the attackers instead.' 'Eventually,' states the report, 'the security team initiated their plan of assault on the Mission compound. Some members of the 17th of February Brigade 'jump[ed] into the vehicle' and 'a few 17 Feb members follow[ed] behind on foot to support the team' according to the informal CIA notes provided to the Committee.'" (The report does not state who was ultimately responsible for the lack of security at the compound, or why it had no armed Marines

guards—even though they are present at the U.S. embassy in Paris. That then-Secretary of State Hillary Clinton could have thought Paris was more dangerous than Benghazi is absurd—yet that is what her actions suggest.) [53844]

FreeBeacon.com reports that an executive order issued by Obama in 2011 “that was designed to ‘cut red tape’ has added \$10.2 billion in regulatory costs to the economy, according to a new report. Tuesday was the third anniversary of Executive Order 13563, prompting the American Action Forum to examine the effects of the order. It was intended to reduce ‘redundant, inconsistent, or overlapping’ regulations. ... The ‘deregulatory measures’ resulting from the executive order actually add over \$10 billion in costs to the economy. For example, a final rule imposing energy standards for transformers carries a \$5.22 billion cost to comply and 58,320 hours of paperwork.” [53846]

GOPUSA.com reports, “National Security Agency (NSA) veterans Bill Binney, Russ Tice and Kirk Wiebe spoke at a Friday news conference at the National Press Club, in Washington, D.C., with Tice declaring that the spy agency monitored Barack Obama’s telephone conversations—and those of his wife—in 2004, apparently as a result of Obama’s run for the U.S. Senate and emergence as a major figure in the Democratic Party. This should have been big news. However, the claim was ignored or dismissed by most of the major media. A major exception was NBC News, which posted a clip from the press conference and an item noting that ‘Former NSA analyst Russ Tice says that, during his tenure, the NSA had a program that spied on phone and email messages of Congress, the Supreme Court, reporters, military and an up-and-coming politician named Barack Obama.’” (What may have been learned from that surveillance is not known.) [53847]

Government officials announce that at least two U.S. Navy warships will be deployed in the Black Sea off the coast of Russia in case they are needed to respond to terrorist attacks at the Winter Olympics in Sochi, or to evacuate Americans. Meanwhile, Iran sends warships into the Atlantic Ocean—for the first time in its history. [53849, 53850, 53852]

On January 22, despite recent snow and cold temperatures, hundreds of thousands of Americans gather in Washington, D.C. for the annual March for Life demonstrations against abortion. (As many as 56 million babies have been killed and their bodies have been discarded since the Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* in January 1973.) According to a Marist poll, “Eighty-four percent of Americans would limit abortion to, at most, the first three months of pregnancy, with 58 percent of strongly pro-choice Americans supporting such limits. ... [A]lmost three-quarters of Americans (74 percent) favor a ban on abortions after 20 weeks except to save the life of the mother, a majority of Americans (53 percent) believe life begins at conception, and more than 6 in 10 (62 percent) think abortion is morally wrong. More than 8 in 10 Americans (84 percent) do not see the abortion debate as an all or nothing proposition, saying that laws can protect both the well-being of a woman and the life of the unborn.” Additionally, “80 percent support parental notification before a minor can obtain an abortion; 79 percent support a 24-hour

waiting period prior to having an abortion; 76 percent oppose allowing abortions to be performed by non-doctors; 62 percent want to change laws to allow for some restrictions on abortion; 58 percent support showing a woman an ultrasound image of her baby at least a day before an abortion; 57 percent believe abortion does a woman more harm than good in the long run; 55 percent—including 6 in 10 Millennials (adults 18 to 32)—want continued debate on the abortion issue.” Pope Francis Tweets: “I join the March for Life in Washington with my prayers. May God help us respect all life, especially the most vulnerable.” (The media largely ignores the event. Obama has no comment.) [53859, 53865, 53877, 53878, 53884, 53885, 53886, 53909, 53910, 53911, 53932, 53942, 53957, 53975, 54020]

Obama enthusiastically celebrates 55 million abortions with a Twitter message: “Today, as we reflect on the 41st anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*, we recommit ourselves to the decision’s guiding principle: that every woman should be able to make her own choices about her body and her health. We reaffirm our steadfast commitment to protecting a woman’s access to safe, affordable health care and her constitutional right to privacy, including the right to reproductive freedom. And we resolve to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies, support maternal and child health, and continue to build safe and healthy communities for all our children. Because this is a country where everyone deserves the same freedom and opportunities to fulfill their dreams.” (It is unclear what, if anything, Obama has done to “reduce the number of unintended pregnancies,” as well as unclear how babies can “fulfill their dreams” after having their limbs pulled apart and their brains sucked out.) [53961, 53962, 53967, 53974, 53975]

According to a Quinnipiac poll, Obama’s approval/disapproval ratings are 40/54. He is “underwater” on other issues as well. On the economy: 39/56; healthcare: 36/59; foreign policy: 40/49; handling Iran: 39/47. On handling terrorism Obama is in positive territory: 48/41. Seventy-seven percent of Americans say the economy is “poor” or “not so good.” Fifty three percent say the Obama administration is not competent to run the government; 46 percent say Obama is honest and trustworthy and 49 percent say he is not; 49 percent say he is a strong leader and 48 percent say he is not; 51 percent say he cares about their needs and problems and 46 percent say he does not.” [53862, 53863, 53875]

According to DailyCaller.com, “The Secret Service visited with a Florida Republican running for the state assembly Tuesday after he tweeted that ...Obama should be arrested and hanged. Joshua Black [who happens to be black], a candidate for state assembly in Florida’s 68th District, on Monday retweeted another person who wrote, ‘I’m past impeachment. It’s time to arrest and hang him high.’ ‘Agreed,’ Black added to the end of the tweet.” Despite the Secret Service visit, Black states, “I believe that if you are a murderer, you should face the death penalty. I believe that if you are a traitor to the United States and cause the deaths of other Americans [with drone strikes, for example], you should face the death penalty. I’m saying [Obama] should face the same thing George Zimmerman had to face when he killed somebody else’s teenager. He had to face a trial where people had to determine if he was guilty or not guilty of murder, and he had to face the consequences. I believe that everyone, no matter what position they hold

...should have to face justice.” (Many Florida Republicans have called for Black to drop out of the race. While Obama may or may not have committed treason, no punishment could or should be imposed unless and until he is indicted, tried, and convicted. For many Americans, the repeal of ObamaCare and being treated by history as worse than Jimmy Carter might be punishment enough for Obama’s crimes against the nation.) [53868]

BizPacReview.com reports, “A financial giant has filed shocking court pleadings claiming the Obama administration brought a sham lawsuit against it in retaliation for a credit downgrade it had made against the government two years ago. The government brought a lawsuit against Standard & Poors, seeking \$5 billion in fines for the credit rating it had attached to bonds supported by subprime mortgages in the years leading up to the financial crisis, according to CNN. Lawyers for McGraw-Hill, Standard & Poors’ parent company, filed an affirmative defense Tuesday, claiming that the government lawsuit lacks merit and was filed to punish the firm for its U.S. creditworthiness downgrade during the 2011 debt ceiling debate. ...To support its claims, Standard & Poors submitted an affidavit from McGraw-Hill’s chairman, Harold McGraw III, regarding a threatening phone call he’d received from then-Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner mere days after the downgrade...” According to McGraw, Geithner said, “you have done an enormous disservice to yourselves and to your country” and S&P’s conduct would be “looked at very carefully.” At CainTV.com Dan Calabrese comments, “[R]egardless of why the downgrade was issued, the White House had no business issuing threats and lawsuits against a credit rating agency for issuing it. S&P has every right to issue its opinion about the credit-worthiness of the United States, and given the nation’s long-term debt situation, anyone who thinks the government really deserves a AAA credit rating is insane anyway. This is what you get, though, when you cross the Obama White House. They insist on keeping that AAA rating no matter what the facts say, and if you don’t give it to them, they’ll threaten you and make good on the threat. That’s what S&P found out when it decided to stop indulging the fantasy that the structure of America’s fiscal house is just fine.” (The rating firm Moody’s Investor Service did not downgrade the government’s credit rating—but Moody’s is owned by Warren Buffet’s Berkshire Hathaway, and Buffet has been supportive of Obama.) [53872, 53873, 53891, 53924, 53933]

According to FreeBeacon.com, “California resident Beth Kramer signed up for Obamacare, but no doctor will take her insurance, KPIX reports. Kramer, a disabled mother of two, recently ran out of prescription antibiotics and medication but has yet to find a doctor that will take her insurance plan purchased through California’s state exchange, Covered California. ‘I’m sitting here with an infection and the symptoms are coming back. And I have no idea when I can go to a doctor or where,’ Kramer said.” [53880, 53963]

Target Corp. announces it will layoff about 500 employees. [53976]

At FoxNews.com Jim Angle reports, “To justify a no-bid contract with Accenture after firing CGI as the lead contractor [on Healthcare.gov], the administration released documents from the Department of Health and Human Services and the Center for

Medicare and Medicaid Services that offered a rare glimpse of its worst fears, saying the problems with the website puts ‘the entire health insurance industry at risk’ ... ‘potentially leading to their default and disrupting continued services and coverage to consumers.’ Then it went even further, saying if the problems were not fixed by mid-March, ‘they will result in financial harm to the government.’ It even added that without the fixes ‘the entire health care reform program is jeopardized.’” White House press secretary Jay Carney tells reporters, “I’m not aware of those statements.” (Publicly, the Obama administration says ObamaCare is doing what it is supposed to do, while privately it admits it is a disaster.) [53925, 54008]

At HotAir.com Ed Morrissey writes, “Last week, Barack Obama outlined what he called ‘reform’ of American signals surveillance—the end of the Section 215 program at NSA, but only ‘as we know it.’ The ‘reform’ doesn’t actually end *anything*, but merely transfers ownership of collected telecom metadata to some unspecified third party ... at some point in time. It also throws a couple of more essentially meaningless hurdles between NSA and access to the data by having the FISA court grant approval, when the FISA court almost always does so anyway. The government will still collect the data, will still have access to the data, and still will not need to get a specific search warrant to mine the data.” But, according to *The Washington Post*, government officials “are deeply concerned that there may be no feasible way to accomplish the task soon, according to individuals familiar with the discussions. ... [E]ven among U.S. officials who applauded the recommendation in principle, there is a growing worry that [Obama’s] goals are unattainable in the near future, officials said. Telephone companies have said they do not want to be responsible for the database, and no one has come up with a workable idea for how a third party could hold the records. ‘The idea that this complicated problem will be solved in the next two months is very unlikely, if not impossible,’ said one official with knowledge of the discussions. ‘It is not at all inconceivable that the bulk collection program will stay the same, with the records held by the government until 2015,’ when the law that authorizes the bulk collection is set to expire. ... No meeting has been scheduled between government officials and the phone companies to discuss the issue, and no decision has been made about approaching the companies to further discuss the possibility of them holding the records.” Morrissey comments, “One would think that a [person] preparing a major policy speech on reforming a controversial and unpopular government program would have lined up the changes announced to make sure it would work. A prepared executive would have made sure his team met with all the stakeholders, gotten agreements on partnerships, and worked with legislators to ready any statutory changes necessary. ... Obama wrote a speech, and *then* his team has to figure out how to make it work. ... [T]he short answer is that it won’t. ... [I]t’s clear that the White House half-assed the ‘reform’ response, apparently believing that all they needed was a pretty speech to fix the (political) problem.” [53882, 53883]

At AmericanThinker.com Dr. Jason Kissner, associate professor of criminology at California State University, Fresno, delves into the mystery of the inclusion of the name “Barack Hussein Obama (Soebarkah)” in the “include (exclude) children” section of the August 13, 1968 passport renewal application of Obama’s mother, Stanley Ann Dunham. Although many (including *The Obama Timeline*) suspect that Obama was legally adopted

by Dunham's second husband, Lolo Soetoro, there has been no satisfactory explanation for the inclusion of the name (or word) "Soebarkah" in parentheses directly after Obama's name. Kissner comes up with what may be a possible explanation: "Believe it or not, the reason may be linked to one Loretta Fuddy. Yes, *that* Loretta Fuddy—the Hawaii state health director who approved the release of Obama's long-form birth certificate and who has apparently succumbed to a nasty case of post random plane crash induced arrhythmia. Ann Soetoro and Loretta Fuddy appear to have one very odd thing in common: both have been linked to the Subud [pronounced "soo bood"] cult, which originated in, of all places, Indonesia and was founded by the Javanese Muslim Muhammed Subuh. The smallish cult appears to have had, at least circa 2001 and according to [a] profile of sorts in the *Honolulu Advertiser*, 20,000 members worldwide. Notice the picture of Deliana Fuddy, then 'regional helper' and member of the faith? (The photograph is of Loretta Fuddy, and her obituary at SubudGreaterSeattle.com refers to her as "Deliana Loretta Fuddy" and as the "Chairperson of Subud USA from 2006 to 2008." Note that Stanley Ann Dunham lived in and attended school in Seattle, and Subud has had a presence in Seattle, Chicago, Hawaii, and Indonesia. Additionally, Subud members were regularly found at the East-West Center at the University of Hawaii—where Dunham allegedly met second husband Lolo Soetoro, Sr., and which was established by the State Department and had CIA ties. A "Subud-style" memorial service was reportedly held after Dunham's death. There has also been speculation that Indonesia's CIA-installed dictator, General Suharto, was an adherent of Subud—and Lolo Soetoro had ties to Suharto.) [13933, 13934, 13936, 53899, 53900, 53901, 53902, 53918, 53919, 53920, 53921, 53922, 53923, 53945, 54084, 54085, 54209, 54391, 54392, 54393, 54395, 54396, 54397, 54398, 54399, 54400, 54401, 54402, 54403, 54418, 54440, 54469, 54470, 54473, 54480, 54635, 54726, 55907]

Kissner continues, "Now to [Stanley] Ann Soetoro. She was linked to Subud by her biographer (and *New York Times* reporter) Janny Scott (Harvard '77) in the book *A Singular Woman: The Untold Story of Barack Obama's Mother*... [N]ote in passing that of all the persons—Christian, Jew, Muslim, Buddhist, Atheist, Hindu, or you-name-it—that [sic; who] could have been installed as Director of the State Department of Health in Hawaii, Hawaii alighted on Fuddy—a leader of a small cult with roots in Indonesia and connections to [Stanley] Ann Soetoro—Obama's mother. Second, observe that Fuddy assumed the Director position in Hawaii in January 2011, just a few months before the release of Obama's long form birth certificate." (As noted previously in this *Timeline*, Fuddy, a social worker, was given her position by Governor Neil Abercrombie—a friend of Barack Hussein Obama, Sr.—after he unexpectedly removed Dr. Neal A. Palafox from the position. Abercrombie had made Palafox the director on December 18, 2010. On December 27, 2010 Abercrombie announced he would resolve the "birther" issue. On January 20, 2011 Abercrombie announced that he could not find the birth certificate but that information "actually exists in the archives, written down." On January 26, 2011 Abercrombie replaced Palafox with Fuddy. On April 25, 2011 Fuddy miraculously "finds" the document Abercrombie could not locate and releases it to attorney Judith L. Corley of Perkins Coie—the high-profile law firm that has, at substantial cost, been defending Obama eligibility lawsuits in court.) [20083, 20179, 20180, 20181, 20182, 20272, 53899, 53900, 53901, 53902, 53918, 53919, 53920, 53921, 53922, 53923, 53945,

54084, 54085, 54209, 54391, 54392, 54393, 54395, 54396, 54397, 54398, 54399, 54400, 54401, 54402, 54403, 54418, 54440, 54469, 54470, 54473, 54480, 54635, 54726, 55907]

According to Scott's book, Dunham "found a group of young Americans and Britons enrolled in an intensive course in Bahasa Indonesia, the national language, at the University of Indonesia recalled Irwan Holmes, (a member of the original group). She was looking for teachers. A half dozen of them accepted her invitation, many of them members of an international spiritual organization, Subud, with a residential compound in a suburb of Jakarta..." "But," asks Kissner, "what might the Ann Soetoro, Deliana Fuddy, Subud links really have to do with the sobriquet Barry *Soebarkah*?" The answer is that many people in Subud change their names for spiritual reasons. "If changing one's name for 'spiritual reasons' was something frequently done by [Subud] followers... and Stanley Ann Soetoro was in fact closely associated with Subud, it is reasonable to suppose that 'Soebarkah' arose in the same way new names for others (like 'Deliana' Loretta Fuddy?) associated with Subud did: as a matter of course depending on the case. Readers might agree that the above is a quite reasonable account of the origin of Barry 'Soebarkah.' [Stanley] Ann Soetoro's 1968 passport renewal application raises the spectre of possible Obama birth certificate fraud yet again. Have a look at page 2 of the document: 'Soebarkah' appears in the section labeled 'Amend to Include (Exclude) Children.' The name Barack Hussein Obama (Soebarkah) is crossed out. Nick Chase has concluded that this signifies that Ann Soetoro had improvidently decided to exclude Barack from her passport renewal. Chase thinks that Soetoro changed her mind about exclusion after having been informed by the Consulate that doing so would leave Barack passportless. But there is another possibility—one just as valid on its face. What if Soetoro was trying to include Obama in the renewal, but she wasn't able to produce a birth certificate, and the Subud name 'Soebarkah' just didn't do the trick? ...That could explain why the Subud name 'Soebarkah' appears nowhere else (that we are aware of anyway)." Interestingly, Obama bears a striking resemblance to Bapak ("Father") Muhammad Subuh Sumohadiwidjojo (1901–1987), the founder of Subud. (Not surprisingly, it does not take long for Obama critics to add references to him, Dunham, and Fuddy at the Wikipedia page for Subud—nor does it take long for them to be deleted by Wikipedia.) [53899, 53900, 53901, 53902, 53918, 53919, 53920, 53921, 53922, 53923, 53945, 54084, 54085, 54209, 54391, 54392, 54393, 54395, 54396, 54397, 54398, 54399, 54400, 54401, 54402, 54403, 54418, 54440, 54469, 54470, 54473, 54480, 54635, 54726, 55907]

FoxNews.com reports, "Israel has foiled an Al Qaeda plan to attack the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv, Fox News confirmed. According to a senior U.S. official who has been briefed on the intelligence shared by Shin Bet, Israel's internal security agency, about the plot, 'we have no reason to question the Israeli intelligence.' 'Details are still emerging,' he said. The official described the plot as 'audacious' and involving a 'small cell.' Shin Bet said Wednesday it arrested three Palestinians it accuses of plotting to carry out bombings, shootings, kidnappings and other attacks. It said the men, two from Jerusalem and one from the West Bank, were recruited by an operative based in the Gaza Strip who worked for Al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri. Shin Bet alleges the Palestinians planned on attacking a Jerusalem conference center with firearms and then killing rescue workers

with a truck bomb.” (Whether the conspirators are “professional” terrorists or simply “junior varsity” is not reported.) [53904, 53928, 53954, 53999]

Fox also reports, “Newly disclosed emails suggest senior policy officials at the Environmental Protection Agency and environmental groups are working closely to kill the Keystone XL pipeline, critics say. ‘These damning emails make it clear that the Obama administration has been actively trying to stop this important project for years,’ Senator John Barrasso (R-WY), who has long advocated for the Canada-to-Texas pipeline’s construction, said in a statement to Fox News. The emails were obtained under a Freedom of Information Act request by the Energy and Environment Legal Institute. In one communication, Lena Moffit of the Sierra Club wrote to three senior policy staffers at the EPA, including Michael Goo, who was then the associate administrator for policy.” An email from the Sierra Club’s Lena Moffit to the EPA reads, “Thanks so much for taking the time to meet with us on Keystone XL yesterday. Let me know if I can be helpful in any way—particularly in further identifying those opportunities for EPA to engage that don’t involve ‘throwing your body across the tracks,’ as Michael put it.” Energy and Environment Legal Institute senior fellow Chris Horner tells Fox News, “On its face, it smacks of classic secret dealing and an uncomfortably close working relationship and one that is known to these parties, but quite plainly not advertised to the public.” (Meanwhile, TransCanada starts delivering oil from Cushing, Oklahoma to Nederland, Texas through the portion of the pipeline that has already been completed. The betrayed-sounding Sierra Club responds, “Today’s announcement is a painful example of ...Obama’s all of the above energy plan at work: polluted air and water, carbon pollution, and the ever present threat of poisoned drinking water for millions of Texas and Oklahoma families. The Sierra Club will fight hard to protect the families who are now at risk, and turn the Obama administration’s shortsighted dirty energy policy around.”) [53914, 53915, 53916, 53960, 54441]

The Dallas Morning News reports that conservative radio and television talk show host Sean Hannity has been invited by Congressman Louie Gohmert (R-TX) to attend Obama’s January 28 State of the Union address. According to DailyCaller.com Charles Woods, the father of Navy SEAL Ty Woods (one of the four Benghazi victims) has been invited by Congressman Jim Bridenstine (R-OK). Duck Dynasty’s Willie Robertson will be the guest of Congressman Van McAllister (R-LA). [53937, 53938, 54100, 54140, 54149, 54198, 54269]

White House press secretary Jay Carney dodges a question from ABC’s Jonathan Karl about the cost of Michelle Obama’s 50th birthday party and who paid for it. Carney replies, “I think we put out information on that. I don’t have it here. I refer you to the East Wing.” (By “East Wing” Carney means Michelle Obama’s office—which is also unlikely to provide Karl with an answer.) [54005]

NBCNews.com reports, “The Pentagon on Wednesday is expected to announce widespread changes to rules governing religious items and religion-based physical attributes that service members can maintain while in uniform—including beards, some religious tattoos, and turbans.” [53948, 53949]

Although Obama and Secretary of State John Kerry may believe they achieved a deal with Iran that will slow down its nuclear program, Iran certainly does not think so. Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif tells CNN's Jim Sciutto, "We did not agree to dismantle anything. ...The White House version both underplays the concessions and overplays Iranian commitments... The White House tries to portray it as basically a dismantling of Iran's nuclear program. That is the word they use time and again. If you find a single, a single word, that even closely resembles dismantling or could be defined as dismantling in the entire text [of the agreement], then I would take back my comment. ...We are not dismantling any centrifuges, we're not dismantling any equipment, we're simply not producing, not enriching over five percent." (According to Erika Johnsen at HotAir.com, the agreement calls for, "Halting production of near-20% enriched uranium and disabling the configuration of the centrifuge cascades Iran has been using to produce it." Whether "disabling the configuration" means to Iran the same thing that it means to Obama and Kerry is debatable.) Pamela Geller comments, "More O-baloney sliced and diced. What contempt [Obama] has for us. He has no regard for the American people, for the Constitution he swore to protect and defend, or for freedom; but most of all, he has no regard for the truth. In fact, he wants nothing more than to prohibit it. The Middle East is embarking on a nuclear arms race, thanks to Obama's dangerous Islamophiliac misadventure." [53939, 53941, 53959, 53980, 53998, 54019]

On CNBC's *Squawk Box*, Aetna CEO Mark Bertolini warns that the insurance giant may have to pull out of ObamaCare if the program fails to attract more customers. Bertolini notes that on May 15 the company will submit its ObamaCare rates for 2015, and says, "Are they going to be double-digit [increases] or are we going to get beat up because they're double-digit or are we just going to have to pull out of the program? Those questions can't be answered until we see the population we have today. And we really don't have a good view on that. ...We see [that] only 11 percent of the population [of ObamaCare enrollees are] actually people that were formerly uninsured that are now insured. So [it] didn't really eat into the uninsured population. ...We need to make it a lot more simpler for people. There needs to be more choice. When you get more choice, you make it more of a market and you get more people in the program. ...Whether or not there's a government bailout because we lose some money on members is irrelevant to us from our standpoint of our earnings [because ObamaCare represents such a small portion of company revenue]." [53978, 54018]

On January 23 the Obama administration rejects the findings of an independent review board—the Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board (PCLOB)—that states the National Security Agency's mass data collection program is illegal and should be ended. White House press secretary Jay Carney, who is apparently unfamiliar with the First and Fourth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, tells reporters, "We simply disagree with the board's analysis on the legality of the program. ...The administration believes that the program is lawful." According to FoxNews.com, "Along with its call for ending bulk phone surveillance, the oversight board report outlined 11 other recommendations on surveillance policy, calling for more government transparency and other reforms aimed at bolstering civil liberties and privacy protections. The board called for special attorneys to

provide independent views in some proceedings before the secret spy court—as opposed to Obama’s plan for a panel of experts that would participate at times. The board also urged the administration to provide the public with clear explanations of the legal authority behind any surveillance affecting Americans.” [53944, 53952]

Vogue.com reports on the romantic relationship between MSNBC’s Alex Wagner and White House chef Sam Kass—the “It couple of the year.” (Wagner’s agent is Ari Emanuel, the brother of former White House chief of staff Rahm Emanuel and one of ObamaCare’s “architects,” Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel. Kass is a long-time friend of the Obamas, and was their private chef at their Chicago mansion. Some might argue that the “middle class” Obamas’ infamous “school loans” might have been paid off sooner had they not maintained a private chef.) [12931, 12932, 19048, 32065, 53965]

BearingArms.com reports that the state of Connecticut has “tallied the number of citizens who have registered their ‘assault weapons’ and ‘high capacity magazines’ required by the state’s unconstitutional gun laws, compared that to the estimated number of applicable weapons and magazines in the state, and realize[d] they’ve been ignored. Historically speaking, 90-percent or more of those required to comply with gun registration laws in the U.S. refuse to do so, and there is no reason to suspect that this registration attempt in Connecticut is any different. I’ve seen estimates of 1,000,000 firearm magazines that should have been registered under the law, but the state reports registering only 40,000... just 4 percent.” Governor Daniel Malloy and state legislators are now considering an “amnesty period” in an attempt to persuade more gun owners to register weapons and turn in high capacity magazines. Meanwhile, membership in the National Rifle Association increased from 22,000 to 41,000 in New York since Governor Cuomo signed strict gun control legislation. New York State Rifle & Pistol Association president Tom King tells the *Buffalo News*, “I think it sends a message to all the anti-gun politicians, all the politicians sitting on the fence, that yes, if they thought that we were quiet and this was going to go away without anyone paying any more attention to it, they were just flat-out wrong.” (New York’s “SAFE Act” is so absurd it prohibits even armed police officers from entering a school.) [54563, 54564, 54565, 54611, 54639]

Senator John McCain (R-AZ) is less than impressed by Obama’s nominee for the post of U.S. ambassador to Norway, attorney George Tsunis. Grilled by McCain and others at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, Tsunis demonstrates a remarkable lack of knowledge about the Scandinavian nation to which he is headed. Tsunis says Norway has a president (it does not; it is a constitutional monarchy), and slams the country’s Progress Party as consisting of “fringe elements” who “spew their hatred” and have been denounced by the government. McCain (in a performance reminiscent of the John McCain of old) responds, “The government has denounced them? The coalition government—they’re part of the coalition of the government! ...I have no more questions for this incredibly highly qualified group of nominees.” (No one should be surprised to learn that Tsunis’ main qualification for the job is his ability to raise more than \$1 million for Obama and the Democrats.) [54013, 54014, 54064, 55035]

In a speech to the far left Center for American Progress, Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) calls for the IRS to go after Tea Party groups: “They’ve won elections, stymied Democratic priorities and taken a sledgehammer to programs that are important to tens of millions of Americans. ... We have to look at electoral reform. ... Our very electoral structure has been rigged to favor tea party candidates in Republican primaries, even when the district or the state may not be that red. ... It is clear that we will not pass anything legislatively as long as the House of Representatives is in Republican control, but there are many things that can be done administratively by the IRS and other government agencies—we must redouble those efforts immediately. One of the great advantages the Tea Party has is the huge holes in our campaign finance laws created [by] the ill advised decision [*Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*]. Obviously the Tea Party elites gained extraordinary influence by being able to funnel millions of dollars into campaigns with ads that distort the truth and attack government.” [53994, 54024, 54026, 54030]

FreeBeacon.com, noting Schumer’s remarks, writes, “The Obama administration proposed new IRS restrictions on campaign related activity by tax-exempt groups last November. The rules would crack down on ‘candidate-related political activity,’ which includes advocacy ‘for a clearly identified political candidate or candidates of a political party’ and communications that are ‘made within 60 days of a general election (or within 30 days of a primary election) and clearly identify a candidate or political party.’ Last May, the IRS admitted to singling out Tea Party groups for increased scrutiny when they applied for tax-exempt status. The scandal forced the resignations of IRS Commissioner Steven Miller and director of Tax Exempt Organizations Lois Lerner. Schumer was one of several Democratic senators who sent a letter in 2012 calling on the IRS to investigate tax-exempt groups for allegedly engaging in political campaign activity. He was also the architect of the 2010 DISCLOSE Act, legislation targeting the Citizens United ruling that failed to pass Congress. Senate Democrats introduced a similar bill in 2012.” (Obama’s proposed IRS restrictions on campaign activities are most certainly unconstitutional and an abridgement of the First Amendment right to free speech. A Tea Party activist’s right to free speech does not end 60 days before an election. Further, because primary elections occur throughout the campaign year, any restriction within 30 days of a primary election effectively prohibits all campaign-related activity by Tea Party groups. That, of course, is Obama’s goal. Not surprisingly, labor unions would be excluded from Obama’s proposed IRS rules.) [53994, 54024, 54026]

While Schumer and Obama go after Tea Party groups, NYTimes.com reports that the IRS is giving grief to Friends of Abe, a conservative group in Los Angeles “that bucks the prevailing political winds” of leftist Hollywood. “Friends of Abe keeps a low profile and fiercely protects its membership list, to avoid what it presumes would result in a sort of 21st-century blacklist, albeit on the other side of the partisan spectrum. Now the Internal Revenue Service is reviewing the group’s activities in connection with its application for tax-exempt status. Last week, federal tax authorities presented the group with a 10-point request for detailed information about its meetings with politicians like Paul D. Ryan, Thaddeus McCotter and Herman Cain, among other matters, according to people briefed on the inquiry. ... [T]he application had been under review for roughly two years, and had

at one point included a demand—which was not met—for enhanced access to the group’s security-protected website, which would have revealed member names.” (Regardless of a group’s ideology and purpose, it should not take *two years* for the IRS to grant or deny tax-exempt status. Such a delay is nothing more than harassment.) “Tax experts said that an organization’s membership list is information that would not typically be required. The I.R.S. already had access to the site’s basic levels, a request it considers routine for applications for 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. Friends of Abe—the name refers to Abraham Lincoln—has strongly discouraged the naming of its members. That policy even prohibits the use of cameras at group events, to avoid the unwilling identification of all but a few associates—the actors Gary Sinise, Jon Voight and Kelsey Grammer, or the writer-producer Lionel Chetwynd, for instance—who have spoken openly about their conservative political views.” (Leftist Hollywood advocacy groups, such as Norman Lear’s People for the American Way enjoy tax-exempt status, but Obama and the IRS seem determined to deny that privilege to conservative groups. Pamela Geller asks, “Why hasn’t the IRS gone after, say, OFA (Obama’s fundraising arm, Organizing For America)? *Headslap* because they have no political affiliation.”) [53995, 53996, 54007, 54016, 54037]

CNSNews.com reports that apprehensions of illegal immigrants at the border, which had been declining each year between 2005 and 2011, increased in both 2012 and 2013. “The increase in total border apprehensions in FY 2013 and FY 2012 comes after six years of decline (see below); and it coincides with the relaxing of immigration policy by the Obama administration. ...On June 17, 2011, ...Obama’s director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, John Morton, ordered federal immigration officials to use ‘prosecutorial discretion’ in deciding which illegal aliens to remove from the country. Under that policy, federal agents were instructed to remove only those illegal aliens who pose a threat to public safety while releasing many others, particularly victims of domestic violence and other crimes; witnesses to crimes; or people who are charged with minor traffic violations. One year later, on June 15, 2012, ...Obama announced that despite congressional inaction on the DREAM Act, his administration would stop deporting young illegal aliens who were brought to the U.S. as children and ‘are Americans in their heart.’ Those young people, he said, ‘will be able to request temporary relief from deportation proceedings and apply for work authorization.’” (Not surprisingly, the relaxing of border security and deportation rules was interpreted by foreigners as an invitation to enter the United States. The administration’s repeated demand for “comprehensive immigration reform”—also known as “amnesty”—only increases the incentive to break the law and illegally cross the border.) [53966]

FoxNews.com reports, “Though many may not realize it, states are allowed to recover the cost of health care after someone’s death by seizing their assets. It applies to Medicaid recipients who are between the ages of 55 and 64. The law has been in place since 1993, when Congress realized states were going broke over rising Medicaid expenses. But under ObamaCare, Medicaid eligibility has expanded dramatically along with the promise that the federal government will pick up the cost of the higher tab—at least for the first few years, after which states will be on the hook for a portion of the increase. Millions more are entering the system, perhaps without knowing that their assets could be

at risk. ...Critics see a money grab. 'I think that people are maybe in for a shock when they find out their heirs are going to be paying for their care, because they got into a system under false pretenses,' said Dr. Jane Orient of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons, a group opposed to the Affordable Care Act. The estate recovery law is so under the radar right now that interest groups like the AARP are still studying how it will play out under ObamaCare for seniors." (Oddly, this means that a person who is *very* poor is treated more harshly than someone who is low-income but *not* as poor. For example, a poor person has to relinquish part or all of his estate to repay the government for the Medicaid benefits he received, yet a person who has a somewhat higher income and receives a taxpayer-funded subsidy for his ObamaCare coverage does not have to pay those funds back.) [53968]

TheNationalRealEstatePost.com reports, "There are 19 lenders sitting on top of \$325 billion dollars of Heloc's [Home Equity Line of Credit] that are ready to reset. When they do, lenders are somewhat fearful that it may result in new defaults. Back in 2005 there were a lot of HELOC's [sic; HELOCs] that were made. Well believe it or not, many of them are still alive and kicking and are close to resetting. When they reset, [they will] either come due as a balloon payment or they will become amortized. Either way this can be a problem for many homeowners. The question is, will people be able to deal with it, or will they throw in the towel and default." [54042]

WashingtonExaminer.com reports, "According to new records obtained by the taxpayer watchdog group Judicial Watch, three separate jaunts taken by ...Obama, first lady Michelle Obama, and Vice President Joe Biden during last year's Presidents Day weekend cost at least \$295,437. And that's mostly just for security, not Air Force One or other official costs. The records were obtained from the U.S. Secret Service and details some of the 'security and/or other services' of Obama's mid-February 2013 golf trip to West Palm Beach, Fla., the annual Aspen, Colo. ski trip taken by the first lady and her daughters, and the Biden family trip, also to Aspen. According to Judicial Watch, [Obama's] trip cost the Secret Service \$98,135.79, including \$32,406.50 for the flights, \$16,466.25 for rental cars, and \$48,490 for hotel rooms. [Michelle Obama's] trip totaled \$81,523.64, including \$13,221.30 in flights, \$3,925 in rental cars, and \$64,377.34 in lodging. And the Biden ski weekend cost \$115,777.61, including \$5,315 in flights, \$92,596 in accommodations, and \$17,866.61 in rental cars." Judicial Watch president Tom Fitton says, "The Obamas and Vice President Biden are oblivious to the costs to taxpayers for their vacation travel." [53969, 54056]

According to a Fox News poll, 60 percent of voters blame former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for what happened in Benghazi on September 11, 2012; 28 percent blame her "a great deal" and 32 percent say she deserves "some blame." The respective percentages for Obama are 59, 26, and 33. Opposition to ObamaCare jumps to 59 percent, up from 55 percent in June 2013. [53981, 53982, 53983]

CNN.com's web site briefly shows an article titled, "BREAKING: China dumps all bonds, declares South China Sea closed zone," with the text, "China has just announced, in response to what it calls US aggression, that it has placed all its US treasury bonds on

the open market and simultaneously has declared the South China Sea a closed zone. This is a developing story, please check for updates.” (The item turns out to be a fake story planted by a hacker.) [53985, 53986, 53987, 53988]

In *The Wall Street Journal* Peggy Noonan (barely) anticipates Obama’s State of the Union address, writing, “[W]hen I imagine Barack Obama’s State of the Union, I see a handsome, dignified man standing at the podium [sic; lectern] and behind him Joe Biden, sleeping. And next to him John Boehner, snoring. And arrayed before [Obama] the members, napping. No one’s really listening to [Obama] now. He has been for five years a nonstop wind-up talk machine. Most of it has been facile, bland, the same rounded words and rounded sentiments, the same soft accusations and excuses. ...The bigger problem is that [Obama] stands up there Tuesday night with ObamaCare not a hazy promise but a fact. People now know it was badly thought, badly written and disastrously executed. It was supposed to make life better by expanding coverage. It has made it worse, by throwing people off coverage. And—as we all know now but did not last year—the program was passed only with the aid of a giant lie. Now everyone knows if you liked your plan, your doctor, your deductible, you can’t keep them. When the central domestic fact of your [administration] was a fraud, people won’t listen to you anymore. ...You know when we will know America is starting to come back? When some day the sergeant at arms bellows: ‘Mr. Speaker, the President of the United States’ and the camera shows a bubble of suits and one person emerges from the pack and walks into the chamber and you’re watching at home and you find yourself—against everything you know, against all the accumulated knowledge of the past—interested. It’ll take you aback when you realize you’re interested in what he’ll say! And the members [of Congress] won’t just be enacting, they’ll be leaning forward to hear. And the president will speak, and what he says will be pertinent to the problems of the United States of America. And thoughtful. And he’ll offer ideas, and you’ll think: ‘Hey, that sounds right.’ That is when you’ll know America just might come back. Until then, as John Dickerson just put it: Barack Obama, Inaction Figure. Zzzzzzz.” (Regrettably, the microphones in the chamber will amplify Obama’s words, cheers, and applause... but not everything else. Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas said in 2010, “There’s a lot that you don’t hear on TV—the catcalls, the whooping and hollering and under-the-breath comments.”) [53989, 54058]

Meanwhile, a Quinnipiac poll shows that most Americans don’t care one whit about several of the “important issues” Obama is likely to focus on during his address. According to the poll, although the economy, jobs, and healthcare top the list of items of importance to most Americans, only one or two percent rank the minimum wage, income inequality, class inequality, gun control, immigration, budget, taxes, education, and the environment as deserving “top priority” for Obama and Congress in 2014. Yet Obama will most certainly talk about “income inequality,” raising the minimum wage, federally-funded pre-kindergarten education, and “climate change.” [54059, 54060]

Because of the growing uncertainty of ObamaCare, Moody’s Investor Service downgrades its outlook for health insurance companies from stable to negative. FoxBusiness.com reports, “Moody’s Analyst Steve Zaharuk, who authored the report,

says it would take positive news regarding the implementation of the Affordable Care Act for the firm to upgrade the industry back to stable. ‘We would need some positive enrollment numbers, the back-end problems with the exchange fixed and the regulatory environment, where changes are being made ad-hoc [stabilized]. Positive news would help the situation,’ Zaharuk says.” [53990, 54004]

TheBlaze.com reports, “A conservative scholar and author known recently for his critical works on ...Obama has been indicted in New York on charges he violated campaign finance laws. Federal prosecutors announced the charges Thursday against Dinesh D’Souza, who made the anti-Obama documentary ‘2016: Obama’s America.’ They say he’ll be arraigned Friday on charges he directed \$20,000 in illegal contributions to be made in the New York Senate race in 2012. The funds allegedly headed to the Wendy Long campaign, who unsuccessfully ran for Hillary Clinton’s U.S. Senate seat. D’Souza found out he was being investigated by the feds in the mid-2013, months after his anti-Obama documentary earned roughly \$33 million at the box office, according to the *Hollywood Reporter*. The film went on to become the second most popular political documentary in U.S. history.” (D’Souza is accused of exceeding campaign donation limits by giving money to others who would then donate to Long’s campaign. The practice is incredibly common, despite being improper, but almost never results in prosecution—especially in elections that are nowhere near close. A 2004 John Edwards donor was charged with a mere misdemeanor for the same crime.) Law professor Alan Dershowitz tells *Newsmax.com*, “This is clearly a case of selective prosecution for one of the most common things done during elections, which is to get people to raise money for you. If they went after everyone who did this, there would be no room in jails for murderers. ...This is an outrageous prosecution and is certainly a misuse of resources. It raises the question of why he is being selected for prosecution among the many, many people who commit similar crimes. This sounds to me like it is coming from higher places. It is hard for me to believe this did not come out of Washington or at least get the approval of those in Washington.” [39570, 53991, 53992, 53997, 54015, 54047, 54104, 54122, 54160, 54167, 54206, 54285, 54352, 54597]

The movie’s co-producer, Gerald Molen, who also produced *Schindler’s List*, says the charges are politically motivated and tells the *Hollywood Reporter*, “In America, we have a long tradition of not doing what is commonly done in too many other countries—criminalizing dissent through the selective enforcement of the law. ...In light of the recent events and the way the IRS has been used to stifle dissent, this arrest should send shivers down the spines of all freedom-loving Americans.” On *The Steve Malzberg Show*, Molen says, “I’ve never had the occasion to think that I had to fear my government. I never had the thought that I had reason to think I had to look over my shoulder until now.” Congressional candidate Dan Bongino comments, “This is a frightening story. I spent 12 years as a federal agent and have never heard of a case like this.” (It is worth noting that Obama’s closest advisor, Valerie Jarrett said in 2012, “After we win this election, it’s our turn. Payback time. Everyone not with us is against us and they [had] better be ready because we don’t forget. The ones who helped us will be rewarded, the ones who opposed us will get what they deserve. There is going to be hell to pay. Congress won’t be a problem for us this time. No election to worry about after this is

over and we have two judges ready to go.” How Obama plans to retaliate against *The Obama Timeline* is not known.) [39570, 53991, 53992, 53997, 54015, 54047, 54104, 54122, 54160, 54167, 54206, 54285]

WesternJournalism.com reports that Michelle Obama “has now teamed up with one of the largest chains in the world to bring... government interference into the private sector. A recently announced partnership between the first lady and Subway restaurants indicates the latter has promised \$41 million to spread the nutrition gospel according to Michelle Obama. The chain’s chief marketing officer portrayed the move as ‘a natural extension of what we do.’ It appears, however, to be merely a reflection of the disastrous policies Obama has already foisted upon the public school system. Kids’ meals will now follow the same basic guidelines that made school lunches even more undesirable than they were in generations past. These meals will forego chips and a soda for an apple and water, all while echoing the highly partisan rhetoric of the Obama administration. While leftist nannies are celebrating the capitulation of a major restaurant chain, many who would prefer not to think about Michelle Obama as they unwrap their meatball sub are threatening to find another sandwich shop.” [53993, 54023, 54057, 54412]

On PoliticKing, disgraced former Congressman Anthony Weiner tells host Larry King that Hillary Clinton is “arguably the most qualified candidate in the history of the United States ever to run for president.” (Weiner’s Muslim wife, Huma Abedin, remains Clinton’s “close friend” and “chief of staff.” HotAir.com comments on Weiner’s outrageous claim: “Should we cut this guy some slack for slobbering this way knowing that he’s just trying to make amends for jeopardizing his wife’s career? Huma was, and probably still is, a lock for membership in the White House inner circle if Hillary wins in 2016. The only baggage that might get her booted is you-know-who’s habit of doing you-know-what. If, after two years of public humiliation, Weiner wants to make it up to her by keeping a straight face while saying something like this on TV, who among us would fault him? Everyone atones in their own way. This guy just happens to do it by insisting that his wife’s boss is arguably more impressive than, say, Dwight Eisenhower. Or even John Kerry.”) [54049, 54050]

On *The Kelly File*, columnist Charles Krauthammer comments on Obama’s interview in *The New Yorker*, in which he blames Fox News and Rush Limbaugh for Washington gridlock: “At least he is not blaming it on climate change or George W. Bush. Look, it’s rather unseemly if you are the commander-in-chief, the leader of the free world, and the most powerful man on earth who can reduce pieces of the planet to a cinder on his command, to get so whiny. You know, when you pull the camera back and you look at the media landscape—on one side you’ve got those elements in the media that are sympathetic or even who worship at his feet. You’ve got ABC, NBC, CBS, PBS, CNN, of course MSNBC, you’ve got Hollywood that’s sympathetic, you’ve got the television, entertainment side. I mean, you’ve got the major newspapers, *The [New York] Times*, *The Washington Post*. ...It’s what Lenin would call the commanding heights of the culture—are all on one side; all of them. And what do you have on the other side? Fox News and talk radio. And you’ve got [Obama] complaining that that explains the failures of his administration. ...This is the best example you can find of Obama’s political and

ideological self-righteousness. He truly believes that the way he sees the world, as he says in this little snippet of the interview, that it's pragmatic, it's rational, all he wants to do is help the folks. And, of course, anybody who is on the other side, anybody who sees, say, the biggest stimulus in American history, or the takeover of one-sixth of the U.S. economy with a scheme that is completely irrational and collapsing around him—anybody who says this is not working can only be either acting against the national interest or being suspicious of him without any reason. He simply can't accept the fact, or at least in public he doesn't accept the fact, that one can actually have a view that contradicts his, that is in good faith, that is patriotic, and that also seeks the good of the country. So if you think as he does, self-righteously, that there is no way to oppose him and be honestly patriotic and sympathetic to the American people, then of course you have to attribute all of these evil motives to the other side who are preventing the people from receiving the message. I think it is a myopia that's—rather it's unbecoming, and in fact it often becomes repulsive. It's a refusal to give respect to the other side." [54027, 54028]

On January 24 DailyCaller.com reports on leftist outrage over a statement by former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee: "I think it's time for Republicans to no longer accept listening to Democrats talk about a war on women. Because the fact is, the Republicans don't have a war on women. They have a war *for* women. For them to be empowered; to be something other than victims of their gender. Women I know are outraged that Democrats think that women are nothing more than helpless and hopeless creatures whose only goal in life is to have a government provide for them birth control medication. Women I know are smart, educated, intelligent, capable of doing anything anyone else can do. Our party stands for the recognition of the equality of women and the capacity of women. That's not a war *on* them, it's a war *for* them. And if the Democrats want to insult the women of America by making them believe that they are helpless without Uncle Sugar coming in and providing for them a prescription each month for birth control because they cannot control their libido or their reproductive system without the help of the government, then so be it, let's take that discussion all across America because women are far more than Democrats have made them to be. And women across America have to stand up and say, Enough of that nonsense." (Leftists who are incensed by Huckabee's statement no doubt support a recent ThoughtCatalog.com essay in which Amy Glass declares, "I look down on young women with husbands and kids and I'm not sorry." Glass condescendingly asks, "Do people really think that a stay at home mom is really on equal footing with a woman who works and takes care of herself? ...Having kids and getting married are considered life milestones. We have baby showers and wedding parties as if it's a huge accomplishment and cause for celebration to be able to get knocked up or find someone to walk down the aisle with. These aren't accomplishments, they are actually super easy tasks, literally anyone can do them. They are the most common thing, ever, in the history of the world. They are, by definition, average. And here's the thing, why on earth are we settling for average?") [54010, 54044]

Not surprisingly, leftists in politics and the media totally miss Huckabee's point. CNN's Dana Bash tweets, "At Rnc [sic; RNC] meeting Mike Huckabee just said fed govt

shouldn't help women who can't control their libido w birth control." Of course Huckabee did not say women cannot control their libidos; he stated that women should be insulted by Democrat politicians who believe they have uncontrollable libidos that need government supervision. Daily Caller observes, "Interestingly, not too long ago, liberals were applauding someone who was fighting for the exact thing that Mike Huckabee is deriding: Sandra Fluke. Remember her? She got a special phone call from ...Obama himself and was nominated for *Time* magazine's Person of the Year. And why? Because she stood up in front of the House Democratic Steering and Policy Committee and begged for the government to pay for college students' birth control. According to her, female students have to pay \$3,000 a year in order to have safe sex, and that's too much money, so obviously, the government has to come in and take care of that, stat. ...So how exactly was anything that Mike Huckabee said incorrect? What he described is exactly what liberals and pseudo-feminists are doing. It isn't empowering to women to tell them that they're nothing more than the sum of their reproductive organs. It isn't empowering to tell women that they're not strong and capable enough to either pay for their own birth control or abstain from sex if they can't. In fact, it's harmful. And it doesn't make women equal to men—it makes them objects to be used and thrown away. Telling women that they can be better than that, that's true empowerment. When it comes down to it, Mike Huckabee was right. Why else would the liberals in the media be so offended?" (Huckabee's mistake, of course, was in his phrasing and his use of the word "libido." Leftists immediately pounce on such statements, knowing they can readily transform them into "Republicans want women barefoot and pregnant" messages. Conservatives who say, "Democrats think Republicans hate women," should realize that their political enemies can easily remove the words "Democrat think" from the sound bite.) [54010]

The Obama administration announces that three million people have enrolled in ObamaCare since October 1, 2013. (The government does not state how many of those three million have actually paid for coverage, how many will be receiving taxpayer-funded subsidies for their coverage, how many had to enroll in ObamaCare because the law caused their prior insurer to cancel their coverage, or how many of the three million are old and sick.) [54074, 54075]

Veteran Congressman Jim Moran (D-VA) tells WAMU American University Radio, "I'm afraid that the millennials, if you will, are less likely to sign up [for ObamaCare]. I think they feel more independent, I think they feel a little more invulnerable than prior generations. But I don't think we're going to get enough young people signing up to make this bill work as it was intended to financially. And, frankly, there's some legitimacy to their concern because the government spends about \$7 for the elderly for every \$1 it spends on the young. I just don't know how we're going to do it frankly. If we had a solution I'd be telling [Obama] right now." (Having announced his retirement, Moran apparently now feels comfortable criticizing the legislation he admits will probably not work but which he voted for.) [54125, 54127, 54128]

Attorney General Eric Holder once again expresses his disdain for photo ID requirements for voting, telling MSNBC, "If we can show that that photo ID efforts are done inappropriately and for improper reasons, that ought to be the basis for federal

intervention, and so I'm a little concerned that that appears, at least for now, to not be a part of the scheme. ...People have to understand that we are not opposed to photo identification in a vacuum, but when it is used in certain ways to disenfranchise certain groups of people... that from my perspective is problematic. ...The reality is that all the studies show that this whole question of ballot integrity, in-person voter fraud simply does not exist to the extent that would warrant these kinds of measures. ...I think it's a remedy in search of a problem, and it is being used, in too many instances to depress the vote of particular groups of people who are not supportive of the party that is advancing these photo ID measures." (At HotAir.com Erika Johnsen translates: "Sure, 'we're not opposed to photo identification in a vacuum'—just when it comes to voting, really." Holder apparently believes that if he keeps repeating a lie often enough—"in-person voter fraud simply does not exist"—even non-Democrats will start to believe it. He is mistaken. Opinion polls show that overwhelming numbers of Americans support photo ID rules for voting, including blacks and Hispanics.) [54017]

Jeh Johnson, Obama's new Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, addresses the U.S. Conference of Mayors and says, "An earned path to citizenship for those currently present in this country is a matter of, in my view, homeland security to encourage people to come out from the shadows. It is also, frankly, in my judgment, a matter of who we are as Americans, to offer the opportunity to those who want to be citizens, who've earned the right to be citizens, who are present in this country—many of whom came here as children—to have the opportunity that we all have to try to become American citizens." Johnson also says, "The five core missions of the Department of Homeland Security are guarding against terrorism, securing our borders, enforcing our nation's immigration laws, safeguarding cyberspace and critical infrastructure in partnership with the private sector, and supporting emergency preparedness and response efforts at every level." (Johnson is apparently incapable of comprehending that "securing our borders" cannot be accomplished if people who cross those borders illegally are rewarded with citizenship. He does not explain how those illegal immigrants have "earned the right to be citizens.") Johnson, it should be noted, is an ambulance-chasing, multimillionaire attorney who has never held an executive position in government and has no experience in border, port, or airport security or immigration issues. Additionally, Johnson somehow managed to author a 2010 executive summary of a Defense Department survey on gays in the military—*three days before the survey was even conducted*. [21854, 21881, 50083, 50385, 52599, 52636, 52664, 54107]

According to Politico, "Obama is reopening his White House political operation as the Office of Political Strategy and Outreach and naming aide David Simas as the director... Simas, currently Obama's deputy senior adviser for communications and strategy, takes over duties that had been outsourced since 2011, when then-White House political director Patrick Gaspard became executive director of the DNC. He assumes the role amid mounting Democratic concerns about this year's midterms and ...Obama's level of political engagement." (Some suggest that the promotion of Simas, as well as the addition of leftist John Podesta to Obama's inner circle, means billionaire leftist George Soros is unhappy with the performance of Obama and Valerie Jarrett and wanted his own people closer to the decision-making process.) Congressman Darrell Issa (R-CA) criticizes

Obama's decision, saying, "The White House's announcement ...again raises troubling concerns about the illegal use of taxpayer funds to support campaign-related initiatives." [38300, 54061, 54062, 54090]

The Supreme court issues an injunction allowing the Little Sisters of the Poor charity to not comply with ObamaCare's requirement that it provide employees with abortifacients, contraceptives, and sterilizations while its lawsuit against the government is pending. (The Obama administration refuses to allow the charity a religious exemption from the ObamaCare rules because it serves poor non-Catholics as well as poor Catholics.) [54031, 54043, 54048]

NBC reports on another terrorist threat against the upcoming Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. "The video was posted earlier this month on a jihadist website but gained traction Friday, two weeks before the opening ceremony. It shows a militant, 'Amin Abu Usama,' mocking how Russians have become terrified of 'so-called Muslim extremists.' '[Russian President Vladimir] Putin has caused Russians to seriously think about life, and life is something that can end suddenly, like on a trolley bus, or along the Volga River,' the speaker says in the video. ...Putin, who is spending a reported \$50 billion on the games, has vowed that they will be safe. A 'ring of steel,' patrolled by roughly 40,000 Russian security forces, will protect a 1,500-square-mile area surrounding the Olympic venues. A venue manager at the Olympic ice rink told NBC News on Thursday that Sochi will be the safest city in the world during the games, which run Feb. 7-23. The video was recorded by the Islamic Jihad Union, an al Qaeda ally based near the Afghan-Pakistani border. It serves as an umbrella group for fighters from the Caucasus, Turkey and beyond, and has been involved in plots in Uzbekistan and Germany." Meanwhile, the State Department urges members of the U.S. Olympics team to not wear "conspicuous Team USA clothing" outside the official areas of the games. (Pamela Geller observes, "This is the very slogan of the Obama administration... hide your red, white, and blue. ...Perhaps they would be safer, Mr. [Obama], if they all said the shahada [the Islamic creed].") [54032, 54033, 54034, 54035, 54036, 54078]

WorldTribune.com reports, "The planned wave of jihadist terrorism against the Sochi Winter Olympics (Feb. 7-23) is likely to be more extensive than was earlier considered, and with broader ramifications. It also has a strong linkage back into the jihadist groups functioning in Syria with the support of the U.S. and some of its regional allies. ...Should the Chechen/Caucasian jihadists attempt to strike out against a major event in Sochi, the perpetrators will be members of a new elite force called Ansar al-Sunnah [Supporters of the Sunnah] trained and prepared by, and presently under the command of, Emir Umar or Abu-Umar al-Shishani [the Chechen]. Significantly, this new elite force has been trained and prepared in jihadist camps in Syria during the current upheaval." (In his eagerness to oust Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, Obama is supporting "rebels" who, in turn, are supporting terrorists who may attack the Olympic games.) [54181, 54182]

In an interview with NBC that is certain to enrage Obama, former GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney says, "I think [Russian president Vladimir] Putin has outperformed [Obama] time and time again on the world stage. We are, I said this before,

geopolitical adversaries—not enemies, but adversaries geopolitically—and Putin lines up with [Syrian President] Assad, and gave Assad the cover that he needed and won a diplomatic battle with regards to Syria. He likewise keeps Edward Snowden as a bit of a stick in the eye at America. And I think most observers of the international political scene suggest that Russia has elevated itself in stature and America has been diminished.” [54054, 54055]

DailyCaller.com reports, “A U.S. newspaper conglomerate has considered building state-by-state databases of people who have the right to carry concealed firearms. Civitas Media, which owns 88 newspapers in 12 states and more than 100 total publications, is planning to use public records requests to build their databases, according to an internal Civitas email obtained by the Buckeye Firearms Association in Ohio.” Civitas director of content Jim Lawitz wrote that the “project examines the explosion of ‘conceal and carry’ gun permits across the U.S. Through public records act requests, we will attempt to build state-by-state databases that list those who have the right to carry a concealed weapon.” (After Lawitz’s statement is made public, Civitas CEO Michael C. Bush issues a statement: “A poorly crafted internal memo meant to highlight editorial discussions and planning incorrectly indicated that such a database was being planned; it has been considered and rejected.”) [54070, 54071]

WashingtonExaminer.com reports, “A new study from Harvard University on the ability of low-income children to achieve social mobility found that the largest hindrance to moving up the income ladder is being raised by a single parent. ‘The strongest and most robust predictor [of social mobility] is the fraction of children with single parents,’ the study said. Further, the study found that ‘[children] of married parents also have higher rates of upward mobility if they live in communities with fewer single parents.’ Now, obviously there are cases of successful children who were raised by single parents, but the study suggests that it is more likely for a child to climb the income ladder if they are living with both parents in a community of married parents. The study found the prevalence of single parents to be a much larger factor in determining social mobility than income inequality—something ...Obama and Democrats speak of ad nauseum. In fact, the study found that income inequality was not a statistically significant predictor of social mobility. But don’t expect Obama and company to admit that. If [Obama] was truly concerned with rescuing the American dream, he would extol the benefits of marriage rather than playing the class warfare card.” [54079]

WND.com reports, “Two new, classified documents leaked by Egyptian security implicate ...Obama, [former] Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and former President Bill Clinton in the aiding and abetting of terrorists. The documents have been entered as evidence in the criminal trials of former Egyptian President Mohammed Morsi and other top Muslim Brotherhood leaders, scheduled to begin next month in Cairo. Obtained by Arabic-speaking former Palestinian Liberation Organization-member Walid Shoebat and posted Thursday on his website [Shoebat.com], the two leaked documents provide evidence Egyptian security forces have monitored the movements and activities of Obama’s half-brother, Malik Obama, and his Islamic Dawa Organization, or IDO. The security forces also have kept an eye on the dealings with the Muslim Brotherhood of

Essam El-Haddad, the father of Gehad El-Haddad, a senior adviser to the Muslim Brotherhood in the United States and a former employee of the William J. Clinton Foundation.” According to the Shoebat Foundation, “While IDO funded Hamas throughout the years, it still does and is still part of the coalition of the UG (Union of Good). Again, the U.S. Treasury Department has designated the Union of Good—a worldwide collection of charities headed by global Muslim Brotherhood leader Yusuf al-Qaradawi—as a terrorist entity as a result of its fund-raising activities on behalf of Hamas. ...The IRS granted a terror funding outfit the ability to operate under a 501(c)(3) and the worst part is we’re talking about the brother of [Barack Obama]. Everything we reported adds up; the Obama family, to include Grandmother Mama Sarah, Uncle Sayid Obama, Cousin Musa Ismail Obama and now Malik Obama, is part of a clandestine team that funds terrorism. Some questioned the links we provided, complaining that we only provided limited websites of Malik’s IDO. The fact is, there is a plethora of forums and religious websites (some very prominent). There are also universities and even sports clubs raising funds for Hamas and asking donors to send the money to the Sudan’s IDO.” [54068, 54252, 54411, 54813, 54830, 55154]

Walmart announces it will be cutting 2,300 Sam’s Club jobs. [54094]

On January 25 Muslim Brotherhood members riot in Egypt to commemorate the third anniversary of the toppling of President Hosni Mubarak and to protest the ouster of their radical president, Mohammed Morsi. At least 49 people are killed in the demonstrations. Reuters reports, “As police tried to calm Cairo’s politically-charged streets, a car bomb exploded near a police camp in the Egyptian city of Suez, security sources said. The blast, which was followed by a fierce exchange of gunfire, suggested the authorities could be locked in a long-term battle with Islamist insurgents who are gaining momentum.” (Pamela Geller writes, “Obama-backed Muslim Brotherhood terrorists vow more death, more destruction. Obama’s ‘moderate’ al Qaeda has claimed responsibility for the triple bombings Egypt. Al Qaeda and the Muslim Brotherhood are working together in Egypt. Well done, Obama. The good news is that Obama has so dismantled our standing and power in the Middle East that his ability to influence, affect change and pressure players is substantially diminished. Under his administration, the United States, once the force for good and moral leadership in the world, has become the de facto arm of the Islamic supremacist revolutions swallowing whole swaths of Africa and the Middle East.”) [54095, 54097]

WND.com reports, “In a scenario Israelis would have found too far-fetched to believe just a few years ago, Egypt is set to become the Jewish state’s new best friend in the fight against Hamas terrorism. Having finally put down the Muslim Brotherhood after its hijacking of the 2011 pro-democracy revolution, the Egyptian military has been making not-so-subtle threats against the Palestinian terror group. ...The new military rulers in Cairo know that they cannot be truly done with the Muslim Brotherhood without eradicating the Hamas threat, too. Since last summer, the Egyptian army has destroyed more than 1,200 tunnels running under the Sinai-Gaza border, dealing a severe blow to the Hamas economy. Now, officials in Cairo say the regime intends to launch a series of campaigns to undermine Hamas’ legitimacy in Palestinian society and put the group on

the run. Egypt will reportedly begin bolstering Hamas' rivals in Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah faction, while also instigating in Gaza the same kind of street rallies that brought down Morsi's government. ...Israel is remaining relatively mum on the development. But during a press conference in Jerusalem last week, Dov Weissglas, former chief of staff to Ariel Sharon, said Israelis had to 'pinch themselves' to make sure they weren't dreaming when first reading the news of Egypt's shift." (Some claim there are plans to create a union of Sunni Muslim states to include Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Saudi Arabia, to maintain a united front against the Shi'ite Muslim nations. Some further suggest that Obama is in on the scheme—which is why he worked to topple Libya's Moammar Gaddafi and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak. Obama did not want to see Mohammed Morsi, the Muslim Brotherhood president, removed from power in Egypt, and he does not want to see Egypt's military leaders going after Hamas—let alone doing anything that would be good for Israel.) [54066, 54067]

Mohammad Ali Ja'fari, commander of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, says the United States "could never understand the extent of the offensive capacity of the Islamic Republic of Iran. ...[Secretary of State John] Kerry must know that direct battle with the U.S. is the biggest dream of pious and revolutionary people across the world. Your threats offer our revolutionary people the best opportunity. The pioneers of Islam have been ready for years for the great and fateful battle... It is unlikely that the American administration would actually implement the ridiculous military option. The sun of the civilization of American imperialism has nearly set, and the American officials must not advance the crumbling of their own civilization by repeating this defeated strategy—that is, the use of military force. Mr Kerry, in the eyes of the true fighters, the U.S., with all its military force, is miniscule and shabby. Your military option will remain only on the table. Iran has no fear of this threat, and it and its revolutionary allies worldwide will unite to respond. I have recommended to the American statesmen that their words match their ability, and that they not set themselves up for ridicule by the revolutionary society of Iran. Thousands of revolutionaries across the world will act if you, Kerry, implement this option." [54334]

RedState.com writes, "Basically there's been quite a shake-up in the White House and the Democrats and George Soros are doing the shaking. They've been the brunt of all Obama's political blunders and have grown weary of their Commander in Chief's screw ups for the past five years. ...So Obama just assigned another 'junk yard' dog (David Simas) to run his new operations office, but that didn't seem to appease the restless Dems. Obama is frantic and desperate—'desperate men do desperate things.' [From] Stage left in comes George Soros and guess who he brought with him? Old George brought John Podesta his personal hatchet man. John Podesta is without a doubt one of the most vicious evil political progressives in our Nation. In fact George Soros, David Simas and John Podesta are now the 'go to' men who will be running our country now. ...Obama's base is dwindling, he's tanked in all of the polls and George Soros isn't happy with [Valerie] Jarrett or Obama—they aren't getting the job done that he hired them to do. ...The [issues of] income inequality, executive action and economic mobility all smell of John Podesta's after shave along with his dirty fingerprints. Podesta, not Jarrett will craft the State of the Union Address regardless of the story the Liberal News

is pitching.” (Although *The Obama Timeline* believes Podesta will have a significant impact on the Obama White House and will do his best to push Obama further to the political left, Jarrett will remain a strong force and influence. Podesta may help tell Obama what to think, but Jarrett will continue to tell him when, where, and how.) [54061, 54062]

In his weekly Saturday Internet/radio address, Obama says his job is to “keep working to stop sexual assaults wherever they occur... Some of this is a job for government, but really, it’s up to all of us. We’ve got to teach young people—men and women—to be brave enough to stand up and help put an end to these crimes. We’ve especially got to teach young men to show women the respect they deserve. I want every young man in America to know that real men don’t hurt women. And those of us who are fathers have a special obligation to make sure every young man out there understands that being a man means recognizing sexual violence and being outraged by it, and doing their part to stop it. ...Perhaps most important[ly], we need to keep saying to anyone out there who has ever been assaulted: you are not alone. We have your back. I’ve got your back.” [54113]

On January 26 Walid Shoebat and Ben Barrack report at Shoebat.com, “The Obama Administration has been seeking to dialogue with The Islamic Front which comprises six major Islamist rebel groups. And in doing this, they have been covering up for Muslim terrorists. Secret documents which have been circulating the Middle East media for some time, reveal that Saudi Arabia, instead of executing its criminals who were sentenced to death by beheading, are releasing them instead into circulation to carry out Jihad in Syria in what it now calls the Islamic Front. The *Islamic Front* is a newly concocted name for Jihadi terrorists who are under Saudi control. This is all done in order to make them palatable as a partner in the Geneva Conference and is why the Obama Administration is courting this group to continue the war with the Shiite regime in Syria. Never mind that Saudi Arabia through these thugs can drink the blood of the saints by beheading and raping Christians in Syria. In one document, the Saudis sent more than one thousand hardened criminals mostly rapists and drug dealers.” (The claims are consistent with the theory proposed by some that Obama and the Saudis are working together to create more powerful Sunni Muslim states by sending terrorists to fight the Shi’ite and secular regimes in the region. It is perhaps no small coincidence that Obama has always sided with the Sunnis in any Sunni versus Shi’ite conflict. The claims are also consistent with the fact that Obama administration includes at least six Muslims who are either members of the Muslim Brotherhood or are sympathetic to its cause. Additionally, Hillary Clinton’s closest aide, Huma Abedin, has Muslim Brotherhood ties.) [54069]

Iranian Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei states, “Our top officials should pay attention to what [Secretary of State John Kerry and others in the West are] saying, because they smile and say that they are interested in negotiations, but at the same time, they say that all options are on the table. Well, what exactly are these options? What kind of action—or mistake—could they possibly take against Iran? If they are serious, they should exercise some self-restraint. All those people who utter this kind of nonsense must be stopped. ...Along comes some wealthy American statesman [that is, Secretary of State John Kerry], who makes a mistake and says: ‘We should drop a nuclear bomb on some

Iranian desert.’ He makes threats and so on. Such a man should be punched in the mouth and crushed!” [54334, 54335, 54336]

Ali Akbar Velayati, advisor to Khamenei, says, “This is not the first time that American officials utter these slogans. These declarations are more of a bluff. Obviously the Americans do not have this capability, because if they did, they would not have been expelled, completely weakened, from Iraq and Afghanistan. These slogans have no impact at all on Iran’s determination to defend its nuclear achievements.” [54334]

Yadollah Javani, Khamenei representative in the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, states, “The Americans will undoubtedly not succeed in stopping the activity of [our] nuclear facilities... Their reiteration of their threats against Iran annuls the validity of these threats... Today, all the experts, strategists, and security and military analysts believe that the Americans are in no position to act militarily against a strong country like Iran and that these declarations are a bluff... The Americans know very well that if they make a mistake, Iran’s response will be crushing... They will enter into a battle that they will not easily exit unharmed. Iran can target all the American interests in the region, and the Americans will never manage to suitably respond to the measures that Iran will take.” [54334]

Politico reports, “The board of the New York state teachers union this weekend unanimously withdrew its support for the Common Core standards as they have been implemented—a major blow for Common Core advocates who have been touting support from teachers as proof that the standards will succeed in classrooms nationwide. ‘We’ll have to be the first to say it’s failed,’ said Richard Iannuzzi, president of New York State United Teachers. Iannuzzi said he has talked with union leaders in other states who may follow suit. ‘We’ve been in conversations where we’re all saying our members don’t see this going down a path that improves teaching and learning. We’re struggling with how to deal with it,’ he said. ...Amid fierce and growing opposition to the standards—fanned by conservative political organizations—promoters of Common Core have counted on teachers to be their best ambassadors and to reassure parents and students that the guidelines will lead to more thoughtful, rigorous instruction. Now, one of the biggest groups of educators in the country is on record saying it’s not working.” [54081]

On *Meet the Press*, Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) responds to Democrat claims that Republicans are engaged in a “war on women.” Paul says, “This whole sort of war on women thing, I’m scratching my head because if there was a war on women, I think they won. You know, I don’t see so much that women are downtrodden; I see women rising up and doing great things. And in fact, I worry about our young men sometimes because I think that women really are out-competing the men in our world. ...So I don’t really see this, that there is some sort of war that’s, you know, keeping women down. I see women doing great, and I think we should extol that success and not dumb it down into a political campaign that somehow, one party doesn’t like women or that. I think that’s what’s happened. It’s all been for political purposes. ...One of the workplace laws and rules that I think are good is that bosses shouldn’t prey on young interns in their office. And I think really the media really seems to have given President Clinton a pass on this. He took

advantage of a girl that was twenty years old and an intern his office. There is no excuse for that. And that is predatory behavior. ...We shouldn't want to associate with people who would take advantage of a young girl in his office. This isn't having an affair. ...Someone who takes advantage of a young girl in their office? ...And then they have the gall to stand up and say Republicans are having a war on women? Now, it's not Hillary's fault, but it is a factor in judging Bill Clinton in history." [54082, 54083, 54105, 54111, 54132, 54156, 54294, 54295]

Also on *Meet the Press*, Senator Dick "Eddie Haskell" Durbin (D-IL) lectures, "For goodness sakes, let's judge Hillary Clinton based on her talents and her vision of America should she choose to run for president." (Durbin does not elaborate on her talents or vision.) Durbin states that Paul should not "dwell on these chapters in the past," but it is *precisely* the past that will persuade many voters to support Hillary Clinton in 2016. They will certainly not vote for her because of the recent Benghazi cover-up, but because they somehow think she can miraculously recreate the positive aspects of the late 1990s economy, when her husband was in the Oval Office. HotAir.com's Ed Morrissey writes, "The *only* real argument for Hillary as a presidential candidate is Bill Clinton nostalgia. Paul was just reminding us of why even *that* is hypocrisy on stilts." (Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO) later criticizes Paul for criticizing Bill Clinton—apparently forgetting that she once said, "I think he's [Clinton's] been a great leader but I don't want my daughter near him.") [54082, 54083, 54105, 54111, 54219, 54220]

On *State of the Union* Paul says Obama's repeated statements that he will issue more executive orders to get around Congress "sounds vaguely like a threat. And I think it also has a certain amount of arrogance." [54087]

Appearing on *Fox News Sunday* to push Obama's State of the Union address, White House senior adviser Dan Pfeiffer says, "The Republican Congress is not going to rubber-stamp [Obama's] agenda, and [Obama] is not going to sign the Republican Congress' agenda." Obama will instead attempt to drive his agenda with executive orders and more rules and regulations from federal agencies. Pfeiffer says, "If Congress doesn't act, [Obama] will." Pfeiffer tries to defend Obama's economic policies by repeating a five-year-old excuse: "I think it's important to remember [that Obama] inherited the worst economic situation through the Great Depression, a financial crisis. ...We are making progress. There is more to do. That's what you hear [Obama] talk about. I think it's important to remember that what we're trying to do here is restore opportunity for all Americans. Grow the economy and create jobs." After Pfeiffer attempts to paint a rosy picture of a recovering economy, host Chris Wallace asks, "If things are so great, how come they are so lousy?" Pfeiffer responds, "I think we made tremendous progress. But there is much more work to do. [Obama] always said that," and calls for an increase in the minimum wage (which will destroy some jobs) and more "infrastructure" spending (that did not work in 2009, but added almost \$1 trillion to the national debt). Pfeiffer says Obama again demands a debt ceiling increase with no strings attached and will "not pay ransom" over the issue. [54087, 54088, 54089, 54091, 54092, 54096, 54106, 54109]

Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) also appears on the program and says, “Some of the most significant legislation passed in the last 50 years has been in conjunction with the debt ceiling. ...I think for [Obama] to ask for a ‘clean’ debt ceiling when we have a debt the size of our economy is irresponsible. So, we ought to discuss adding something to his request to raise the debt ceiling that does something about the debt or at least does something positive for our country. ...I think [Obama] is taking an unreasonable position to suggest that we ought to treat his request to raise the debt ceiling like some kind of motherhood resolution [to which] everybody just says ‘aye’ and we don’t do anything when we have this stagnant economy and this massive debt created under his administration.” [54106, 54108]

Pfeiffer also appears on *State of the Union*, where Candy Crowley notes Obama’s terrible poll numbers and asks, “With numbers like that, how can [Obama] have any more success this year than he had last year? I want to show you some of the proposals that were in [Obama’s] 2013 [State of the Union] speech last year that have gone nowhere: increasing the minimum wage, expanding access to preschool, immigration reform, gun-control legislation. None of that has happened because the year took control of the agenda.” Pfeiffer replies, “You’re going to hear new things, but [what] you’re also going to hear from [Obama], is this is supposed to be a year of action. So, he is going to look in every way he can with his pen and his phone to try to move the ball forward.” [54101]

On *This Week*, White House press secretary Jay Carney also promotes Obama’s January 28 speech, calling 2014 an “action year” for Obama and claiming ObamaCare is a success that is “expanding access to quality and affordable health insurance to millions of Americans and reducing the growth in health care costs.” ABC’s Jonathan Karl asks Carney, “How can [Obama] lead when [polls show that] barely a third [of American voters] trusts his ability to make the right decisions?” Carney blames Congress: “Jon, I think what we saw last year in 2013 was a Washington that did not deliver for the American people. And [Obama] sees this as a year of action, to work with Congress where he can and to bypass Congress where necessary to lift folks who want to come up into the middle class. ...[Obama] is very disappointed that the Senate failed to heed the will of the vast majority of the American people when it came to expanding background checks [for gun purchases] On immigration reform, we’re actually optimistic that 2014 will be the year that Congress delivers to [Obama’s] desk a bipartisan, comprehensive immigration reform bill that meets the principles he laid out and that he can sign into law.” On the issue of ObamaCare, Carney says, “I just disagree that Republicans are going to have a winning issue on this, if they decide to run on it, because they got to explain what repeal means. ...[I]t [ObamaCare] is absolutely worth it, no matter what happens politically.” (Carney is essentially saying, “Obama doesn’t care if ObamaCare causes Democrats to lose control of the Senate, as long as his “legacy” remains intact.) [54087, 54112]

Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) appears on *Face the Nation*, but CBS intentionally removes from the prerecorded interview Cruz’s more damning criticisms of Obama. In the telecast version, host Bob Schieffer asks Cruz, “Will you run for president?” Cruz responds, “Well, look, my focus is on the challenges facing this country right now, it’s on the

Senate. My focus, for example, is on the abuse of power from the [Obama administration]. Let's take something like the IRS scandal—" Schieffer interrupts, "So I'll take that as a yes or a no... or still thinking about it." Cruz: "Well, what you can take that as, is that my focus is standing and fighting right now in the senate to bring back jobs and economic growth. Economic growth is my number one priority—" The image of Cruz is then abruptly cut, and Schieffer says, "Thank you, so much, for joining us and we'll talk to you again." [54093, 54110, 53131]

Newsbusters.org posts video of what was *not* aired. Cruz: "Well, what you can take that as, is that my focus is standing and fighting right now in the Senate to bring back jobs and economic growth. Economic growth is my number one priority—and let me tell you something that deeply concerns me. It's the abuse of power from this administration. We've seen multiple filmmakers prosecuted and the government's gone after them. Whether it was the poor fellow that did the film that [Obama] blamed Benghazi and the terrorist attacks on—turns out that wasn't the reason for the attack but the Administration went and put that poor fellow in jail on unrelated charges. Or just this week it was broken that Dinesh D'Souza, who did a very big movie criticizing [Obama], is now being prosecuted by this Administration—" Schieffer interrupts, "Senator..." Cruz: "Bob, can you image the reaction if the Bush Administration had went, gone and prosecuted Michael Moore and Alec Baldwin and Sean Penn?" Schieffer: "Senator..." Cruz: "It should trouble everyone that this administration uses government power and the IRS in particular to target their enemies and you're talking in a new minutes to [Senator] Chuck Schumer [D-NY]—he's calling on the administration—" Schieffer: "We are going to leave this for another day, senator. Thank you for joining us and we'll talk to you again." [54093, 54110, 54131]

Schieffer *does* allow Cruz to say, "If ...Obama wants to give an honest, candid State of the Union Address this week, he'll address the fact that his economic policies are not working and that they're exacerbating income inequality. They're hurting the people that are struggling the most. ...For the State of the Union [address], one of the things ...Obama really ought to do is look in the TV camera and say to the over five million Americans all across this country who have had their health insurance cancelled because of ObamaCare—to look in the camera and say, 'I'm sorry. I told you if you like your health insurance plan you can keep it. I told you if you like your doctor you can keep your doctor. And that wasn't true. I'm sorry.' But then, Bob, here is the real kicker. If you are really sorry you just don't say you're sorry, you actually do something to fix the problem. The pattern we've seen over and over again with [Obama] is he says he's sorry—he expresses outrage—but then he doesn't fix the problem. He keeps doing it over and over again." [54099, 54110, 54131]

In France, thousands of demonstrators take to the streets, chanting, "Jew, France is not for you!" (Obama has no comment.) [54134, 54135]

On January 27 CBS analyst Mellody Hobson appears on *This Morning* and supports Obama's "income inequality" message, saying, "If you look today, the typical CEO makes 354 times more than the typical worker in his or her company, mostly this is

because there are so few women running companies. If you look back to 1980, that difference was just 42 times. So it's been that kind of income inequality that has started a lot of backlash and chatter and I think put CEOs in the hot seat." (Hobson is married to picture producer George Lucas, who the Media Research Center notes is worth \$7.3 billion—which is easily far more than 354 times what most of his employees are worth. Hobson is also 25 years younger than Lucas, and may have discovered that marrying a CEO is the easiest way to bridge that “354-times-more” gap.) Hobson—along with Obama and many others—are annoyed that CEOs make far more than the average worker at their companies, yet those same “income inequality” critics are quite selective in their targets. Obama, who once famously said in a speech, “I do think at a certain point you’ve made enough money,” has almost certainly never said that to Oprah Winfrey, Bill Gates, Warren Buffett, George Soros, or any of the multimillionaire basketball players he admires. NBA player Kobe Bryant earns far more than the CEOs of Walmart and Wells Fargo, but Obama hasn’t picked on Bryant—despite criticizing Walmart and big banks. Walter Williams explains why: “The strategy for want-to-be tyrants is to demonize people whose power they want to usurp. That’s the typical way tyrants gain power. They give the masses someone to hate. ...[P]romoting jealousy, fear and hate is an effective strategy for leftist politicians and their followers to control and micromanage businesses. It’s not about the amount of money top executives earn. If it were, politicians and leftists would be promoting jealousy, fear and hatred toward multi-multimillionaire Hollywood actors, celebrities and sports stars.” [10787, 10788, 10798, 54130, 54137]

The White House announces that one of Michelle Obama’s guests at the State of the Union address will be openly gay former basketball player Jason Collins.

Michelle Obama sends a fundraising email begging for cash to “protect ObamaCare.” Her message reads, “Friend — Earlier this month, because of what you did, it became illegal for insurance companies to discriminate against the up to 129 million Americans living with pre-existing conditions. Young Americans are able to stay on their parents’ health care plans as they get on their feet, and we can now know that our insurance companies won’t put lifetime caps on our coverage. You should be so proud of that. That happened because you organized, you talked to your friends and neighbors, and you chipped in what you could, when you could, to elect Barack and a Congress who [sic; that] supported his agenda. Today, I’m asking you to do it again. So before Barack gives his State of the Union address tomorrow, chip in \$10 or more and help protect Obamacare: <https://my.democrats.org/State-of-the-Union> Thank you so much, Michelle.” [54117, 54139]

The Fox News Channel’s Ed Henry asks White House press secretary Jay Carney, “On executive action, if [Obama] wants to move quickly to create jobs why not take that pen today and approve the Keystone pipeline?” Carney replies, “Ed, as you know, as has been the practice for many years now of administrations of both parties, the reviews involved in an international pipeline like this, a pipeline that crosses an international boundary, are done or run by the State Department and that process continues at the State Department.” Henry: “But [the White House] would be involved in the decision. The State Department handles it, but they’ve had it on their desk, for what, two years?” Carney: “Well, what

[Obama] is doing is what his predecessors did, presidents of both parties, which is allowing the State Department to oversee a process where this pipeline is evaluated and when that process is done I'm sure we'll be made aware of it. But what [Obama] believes is that it's important to maintain a process that was devised, again, and utilized by White Houses of both parties in order to assure that the right decision is made." (Republicans would be wise to make approval of the pipeline a condition of the next debt ceiling increase.) [54158]

According to an ABC/Washington Post poll, 63 percent of Americans have little to no confidence Obama is capable of making the right decisions for the nation's future; 52 percent do not believe Obama understands people like them; 51 percent believe he is not a strong leader. [54114, 54115]

According to a Gallup poll, Obama's approval rating in 2013 was below 50 percent in all but 11 states and Washington, D.C. Obama's approval ratings are the highest in the nation's capitol (80.8 percent) and Hawaii (61.3 percent), and lowest in North Dakota (35.5 percent) and Wyoming (22.5 percent). (Interestingly, the unemployment rate tends to be much higher than average in the states that approve of Obama's job performance, while it is much lower in the states where Obama is unpopular.) [54123]

Rastegar Panah, an official in Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, says in a television interview, "What are the [American] military options? What do they want to do? What is this military option that they are repeatedly threatening to use as a trump card [when the Obama administration says, 'All options are on the table']?... I believe that the Americans cannot attack us... We take upon ourselves a commitment that, with our nation, our people, and the values of our revolution, we will be able to respond in kind to whatever military action they take... Today, we have capabilities of long-range missiles, which can hit any necessary target. We definitely have the potential to hit any American or Israeli target, but we are not the ones who initiate wars. We have improved all our capabilities of deterrence, and the enemy knows this full well." (Whether Iran has the capability to "hit any American or Israeli target" is not as significant as the fact that the mainstream media in the United States essentially ignored the statement by Panah. The average American should not have to rely on The Middle East Media Research Institute to learn about Iranian threats on their homeland.) [54334, 54337]

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton addresses the National Automobile Dealers Association convention in New Orleans, and attempts to put Benghazi behind her with the statement, "I mean, you know, you, you make these choices based on imperfect information, and you make them to, to, as we say, the best of your ability, but that doesn't mean that there's not gonna be unforeseen consequences, unpredictable twists and turns. You know, my, my, my, biggest, you know, regret, that is what happened in Benghazi. Uh, it was a terrible tragedy, uh, losing four Americans, two, uh, diplomats and now it's public so I can say two CIA operatives, losing an ambassador like Chris Stevens, who was one of our very best and had served in Libya and across the Middle East and spoke Arabic." (For the record, Clinton did not put it behind her.) Clinton also tells the audience she has not driven an automobile since 1996—an odd admission to make to an assembly

of car sellers, and one that gives the GOP the opportunity to portray her as a chauffer-driven elitist. [54119, 54126, 54157, 54159]

In addition to the Benghazi scandal, there are a few statements made by Hillary Clinton over the years that are likely to hurt her if they are repeated in 2016: “Where is the Godamn fucking flag? I want the Godamn fucking flag up every morning at fucking sunrise!” “Fuck off! It’s enough I have to see you shit-kickers every day, I’m not going to talk to you too! Just do your Godamn job and keep your mouth shut.” “If you want to remain on this detail, get your fucking ass over here and grab those bags!” “Stay the fuck back, stay the fuck back away from me! Don’t come within ten yards of me, or else! Just fucking do as I say, Okay?” “Where’s the miserable cock sucker?” “You fucking idiot!” “Put this [helicopter] on the ground! I left my sunglasses in the limo. I need those sunglasses. We need to go back!” “Come on Bill, put your dick up! You can’t fuck her here!!” “Heavens, no! It could get subpoenaed. I can’t write anything [down].” “Of course, I love many things American, including the food. You know, I used to work in a Howard Johnson’s restaurant.” “God bless the America we are trying to create.” “Who is going to find out? These women are trash. Nobody’s going to believe them.” “If I didn’t kick his ass every day, he wouldn’t be worth anything.” “I’m not going to have some reporters pawing through our papers. We are the president.” “I knew nothing about my brother’s involvement in these pardons... I had no knowledge whatsoever.” “That’ll teach them to fuck with us.” “I just don’t have any memory of that.” “We are going to take things away from you on behalf of the common good.” (In the interest of civility, *The Obama Timeline* has omitted some of Clinton’s anti-Jew rants.) [54119, 54216]

Muslim jihadists kill 52 people and burn 300 homes in Nigeria. (Obama has no comment.) [54136]

According to Americans for Tax Reform, Obama will propose higher net business taxes in his State of the Union address. The additional tax revenue (resulting from a lower tax rate but reduced business deductions) would be used “to pay for Democrat-aligned union construction projects.” [54120, 54212]

FoxNews.com reports, “Afghani officials freed 37 insurgents and Taliban fighters with ‘blood on their hands’ in what the Pentagon called a ‘major step backward’ for the rule of law in the war torn nation. The hardened fighters were among 88 prisoners who were being held by the U.S. and being transferred to the emerging Afghan criminal justice system. U.S. authorities said many had directly participated in attacks that wounded or killed scores of U.S. military personnel and Afghan citizens, yet were freed by the Afghan Review Board. ‘The ARB is releasing back to society dangerous insurgents who have Afghan blood on their hands,’ the United States Forces-Afghanistan said in a statement. ‘This extra-judicial release of detainees is a major step backward in further developing the rule of law in Afghanistan.’ Many of those freed were Taliban fighters who were connected by forensic evidence to specific IED attacks. Several were captured in possession of bomb materials and some even admitted taking part in attacks on coalition forces. At least two had been captured, freed and recaptured. ‘These guys have all been caught, clearly engaged in activities designed to kill people,’ said retired U.S.

Army Lt. Col Tony Shaffer, a senior fellow at the Washington-based Center for Advanced Defense Studies. ‘There is zero justification for releasing them.’” [54129]

The White House threatens an Obama veto of proposed legislation that would permanently ban federal funding of abortions. [54176]

Addressing the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce in San Antonio, Texas, Congressman Paul Ryan (R-WI) says, “The challenge with all of this [immigration reform process] is we have a hard time trusting [Obama] in enforcing the laws. Look what he’s doing on health care and all these extra-legal things he’s doing with executive orders and executive actions that we don’t believe he has the authority to do. ... We have to find a way to write these laws so that they are actually enforced. ... I won’t get into all the details on how to do that, but we have strong opinions on how to do that.” (The implication is that if Congress does pass “comprehensive immigration reform” legislation, Republicans will include language and rules that makes it difficult for Obama to go around the new law or selectively enforce it.) [54142]

Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT), Tom Coburn (R-OK), and Richard Burr (R-NC) announce an alternative to ObamaCare called the “Patient Choice, Affordability, Responsibility and Empowerment Act.” According to FoxNews.com, it would repeal the Affordable Care Act “while instituting new reforms the senators say would give states and individuals more flexibility and purchasing power. ... Under the plan, insurances companies would not be able to impose lifetime limits on patients and would be required to allow dependent coverage up to the age of 26, as ObamaCare currently does. The Republican proposal would address the issue of pre-existing conditions by creating a new ‘continuous coverage’ standard that would prevent any individual moving from one insurance plan to another from being denied on the basis of a pre-existing condition so long as that individual was continuously enrolled in a health plan. The requirements on individuals to buy insurance, and on mid-sized and large businesses to provide it, would be repealed. ... Their proposal calls for the targeted use of tax credits to help individuals buy health care. Employees who work for a small business with 100 or fewer employees would be able to receive a credit while those whose annual income is 300 percent of the federal poverty level could receive an age-adjusted refundable tax credit to buy health coverage. Small businesses would also be allowed to band together and purchase insurance, even across state lines. To help offset the costs of the plan, the senators would maintain ObamaCare's cuts to Medicare and also eliminate the unlimited tax exclusion of employer-provided health coverage, instead capping the employer’s tax exclusion at 65 percent of an average plan’s cost.” Burr states, “The American people have found out what is in ObamaCare—broken promises in the form of increased health care costs, costly mandates and government bureaucracy. We can lower costs and expand access to quality coverage and care by empowering individuals and their families to make their own health care decisions, rather than empowering the government to make those decisions for them.” [54133]

On *The Five*, Greg Gutfeld offers a way to get through Obama’s State of the Union address: “Every time he says, ‘Folks,’ drink. Every time he says, ‘Fair share,’ drink.

Every time he says, ‘Extraordinary,’ drink. Every time he brags about working tirelessly, drink. ...The only shovel-ready job Obama has created is White House speechwriter. ...These speeches are rhetorical Ambien.” [54138]

On *On the Record*, columnist Charles Krauthammer makes light of Obama’s “I’ve got a pen and a phone” threat: “That’s how they do it in Venezuela, Cuba, and other places, the [dictator] waves a pen, he shows it on Twitter, and says, ‘I will rule from the pen.’ What makes it sort of pathetic, is that it sounds like a tough threat and it is unconstitutional... but in the end, there’s very little he can do. What’s interesting is that he said the same thing in 2011. This was a speech he gave in Nevada. It was announced by the White House as the ‘We Can’t Wait’ tour. And it was one statement after another: ‘I’m not gonna wait for Congress to act, I will do X, Y and Z.’ In the end it didn’t work, because in the end, the only things [Obama] can do with a pen and executive orders are fairly limited. With one exception: that’s EPA and using the EPA to shut down entire industries. That’s power. ...And the reason he gave up is because he failed. He was unable to do what he thought he would do, and he couldn’t even do what other presidents have done... He can’t even do what normal presidents have done, what a Clinton did, what a Reagan did—which is to work with the other side. ...You get the impression he chose the wrong field. ...He doesn’t like what the presidency requires, which is... some understanding and some respect for the other side...” [54141, 54207]

On *Crossfire*, Senator John Hoeven (R-ND) says that Obama needs to deal with Congress if he wants something done, rather than talk about pens and phones: “That’s why you get involved and you figure out how to compromise. But he’s got to understand that you don’t come and dictate an agenda. You offer compromise... and you can’t say, ‘Oh, it’s tough, so I’m going to go off by myself.’” [54164]

On January 28 the White House announces that Obama will issue an executive order (EO) boosting to \$10.10 per hour the minimum wage for employees who work for federal contractors. HotAir.com observes, “The large increase will mean higher costs for taxpayers in a couple of ways. The way the White House crafted the EO (or at least their statement), federal contractors will have to pay \$10.10 as the minimum wage for *all* workers if they agree to any new contracts for the federal government. That means that their labor costs will escalate rather dramatically, especially since that new minimum will have to get scaled into workers earning above the current minimum. Raising the floor in a workplace means raising a few levels above it, too. Increased labor costs will force companies to bid higher rates on federal contracts. We will be paying more for the same services and products we currently buy as taxpayers—a *lot* more. ...Can Obama do this? On new contracts, sure. But it’s going to end up being a disaster, the way most of his unilateral moves have been. Taxpayers will pay a high price for Obama’s mostly-impotent muscle-flexing.” Congressman Jason Chaffetz (R-UT) says Obama “just unilaterally, without Congress, which I think is fundamentally wrong—has just made government that much more expensive. We all have to pay for it. And yet, he hasn’t made the case on the justification of this; he hasn’t made the case on why we should go out and spend all this. I have no idea what the total cost is going to be to the federal government, nor where he’s going to get the dollars.” (Obama’s action would be

unconstitutional, based on the Supreme Court's ruling in *Youngstown Sheet and Tube Co. v. Sawyer* [1952]. The Court wrote, 'the President's power, if any, to issue the [executive] order must stem either from an act of Congress or from the Constitution itself.'" [54155, 54161, 54162, 54163, 54166, 54174, 54175, 55242, 55243, 55244]

Mark Steyn comments on the upcoming State of the Union address: "[Obama] gives a performance, extremely animatedly, head swiveling from left-side prompter to right-side prompter, continually urging action now: 'Let's start right away. We can get this done... We can fix this... Now is the time to do it. Now is the time to get it done.' And at the end of the speech, nothing gets done, and nothing gets fixed, and, after a few days' shadowboxing between admirers and detractors willing to pretend it's some sort of serious legislative agenda, every single word of it is forgotten until the next one. In that sense, like Beyonce lip-synching the National Anthem at the inauguration, the State of the Union embodies the decay of America's political institutions into a simulacrum of responsible government rather than the real thing, and a simulacrum ever more divorced from the real issues facing the country. If all that sounds familiar, it's because I wrote it this time last year. I could file my SOTU column a month early and go to the Bahamas, as all self-respecting commentators should do. I do not expect this year to depart from the script." [54144]

In another sign of a weak economy, the Census Bureau reports, "New orders for manufactured durable goods in December decreased \$10.3 billion or 4.3 percent to \$229.3 billion. ...Excluding transportation, new orders decreased 1.6 percent. Excluding defense, new orders decreased 3.7 percent. Transportation equipment, also down two of the last three months, led the decrease, \$7.7 billion or 9.5 percent to \$73.1 billion. This was led by nondefense aircraft and parts, which decreased \$3.8 billion." [54145, 54146]

On *Morning Joe*, former White House press secretary Robert Gibbs says, "Thank God" he is no longer in that job. Asked what happened to Obama's 2008 promise to change how Washington works, Gibbs responds, "Well, I think, uh, you know, the, the, the ability to change Washington, uh, I think, is something, that, uh, that long ago, uh, the White House sort of stopped trying to do and whether or not that's a good thing, we'll will look back on history..." (At HotAir.com Ed Morrissey writes, "Obama never actually bothered to change Washington, except perhaps to think that it would change *for* him by the sheer dint of his personality. ...Obama got elected in 2008 on the promise that he would rise above partisanship and heal a broken political process. Instead, he's so disinterested in working across the aisle that he'd rather mope at not controlling Congress and fall back to using EOs [executive orders]. Gibbs senses the irony and hypocrisy of this, and offers the 'let history judge' dodge, when the utter failure to engage in the White House is apparent right now.") [54148]

Obama advisor Valerie Jarrett also appears on *Morning Joe*, and says, "People around our country are hungry for action, and what you'll hear from [Obama] tonight is going to be all about action, creating opportunity, and it's going to be a very optimistic speech." Obama will "set forth very specific, concrete proposals that he thinks will move our country forward [and] create opportunity for hard-working Americans who want to

succeed. ...We're going to do what we can, within [Obama's] own executive power, and working throughout the country with those who want to move our country forward. And it is a lot of potential there. And I think the optimism that [Obama] has comes from the grit and determination of the American people, our businesses, many of who [sic] are bringing jobs back to America, so we have some momentum going, and we just need to call on everybody to work together, and that's what [Obama] will do this evening." (Whether the American people are "hungry" for more executive orders from Obama remains to be seen.) [54165, 54205]

On NBC's *Today*, Savannah Guthrie asks Obama's chief of staff Denis McDonough, "I looked at last year's State of the Union [address]. He [Obama] called for a hike in the minimum wage, for immigration reform, for gun laws to be revamped. By the way, he also said the government shouldn't shut down. None of that happened. So when he calls for those things tonight, how can the American people believe that they really will come to pass?" On CBS' *This Morning*, Norah O'Donnell asks McDonough the same thing: "I went back and looked at [Obama's] State of the Union address from 2013; then he called for an increase in the minimum wage, nothing. Last year, he called for immigration reform, nothing. Last year, he called for new gun control measures, nothing. Is tonight's address more of a wish list than a to-do list?" [54293]

Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK), who is being treated for prostate cancer and has had colon cancer, states that his oncologist is not in the insurance network he was forced into because of ObamaCare. (*The New York Times'* Keynesian propagandist, Paul Krugman, essentially calls Coburn a liar, telling CNN, "It's a totally misleading story, by the way. ...It's, you know—nobody has ever found that their private insurer has told them the doctor they were using is no longer in the network. ...It's a garbage story. It really is." Krugman's claim is, of course, absurd, and there is no possibility that he cannot know he is lying.) [54169, 54170, 54239, 54338]

Iranian Army Chief of Staff Hassan Firouzabadi says, "The military option that is today on the table in the U.S. has become a joke among the nations. It is best that the American officials examine the past, and if they themselves do not remember it, they should ask those who preceded them [in office] why they dared not attack Iran, despite the many threats [they issued], their deployment of forces, and their preparation of equipment." [54334]

On MSNBC, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) repeats the "year of action" mantra in pushing Obama's State of the Union address, and tells interviewer Chuck Todd, "[U]nder ...Obama's administration, we have eight million jobs created... We have an opportunity gap that [Obama] will be addressing, but let's remember where we were and how far we have come from the Bush economic policies to where we are now. ...The point is, what is happening here now, and let's, since you're trying to analyze it, is we have a large segment of the Republican party that is anti-government. We don't want any more government than we need, but they're anti-government, anti-science, and anti-Obama. They have a trifecta that is going. Now, I say to the Republicans... take back your party. ...But to obstruct every initiative that [Obama] has put forth on jobs and say,

‘Why don’t we have more jobs?’ Well, we do have more jobs, but no thanks to the Congress of the United States.” Todd does not laugh when Pelosi says, “...We did not treat President Bush this way. ...This obstruction to [sic; of] ...Obama is something quite stunning, and something quite different.” [54147, 54284]

Also on MSNBC, Andrea Mitchell absurdly states that before President George W. Bush said in his 2002 State of the Union address that Iran was part of the “axis of evil” in the world, “Iran was cooperating with the United States on the border of Afghanistan. Post-9/11 Iran was more or less an American ally but being included in the Axis of Evil, it turned the Iranian government in a completely different direction and it was a turning point in American politics and foreign policy.” *The Washington Post’s* just-as-delusional Chris Cillizza says, “I would agree with you.” (PatDollard.com astutely observes, “This is beyond offensive. And she’s doing it not so much to make Bush look bad, but to make Iran look warm and fuzzy so Obama doesn’t look like an idiot, psycho or traitor by giving our top enemy a nuclear energy/weapons program.”) [54150, 54151, 54154, 54188, 54292]

According to a Rasmussen poll, “Just 28% of voters think State of the Union speeches are important for setting the nation’s agenda for the next year. Sixty-two percent (62%) view them instead as mostly just for show, up nine points from 53% a year ago when [Obama] delivered the first State of the Union speech following his reelection.” (*The Obama Timeline* predicts fewer than 35 million viewers.) [54171, 54172]

CNSNews.com reports, “‘Mental disorder’ is the leading ‘diagnostic group’ for disabled people receiving federal disability insurance benefits, with 35.5 percent of all disabled beneficiaries having such a disorder, according to the latest Annual Statistical Report on the Social Security Disability Insurance Program. The report provides a statistical profile of the 10,088,739 disabled beneficiaries who were receiving federal disability benefits as of December 2012. ...Within the ‘mental disorders diagnostic group,’ the most common specific diagnosis for disabled beneficiaries was a ‘mood disorder.’ According to the report, as of December 2012, 14.1 percent of all disabled beneficiaries in the United States had such a disorder.” According to the Social Security Administration, “Individuals are considered to be disabled only if their physical or mental impairment(s) are of such severity that they are not only unable to do their previous work but cannot—because of their age, education, or work experience—engage in any other kind of substantial gainful activity (SGA) that exists in the national economy.” (U.S. taxpayers are expected to believe that 3.5 million individuals are receiving disability benefits because of a mental disability. How many of those “disabilities” are nothing more than “depression because I can’t find a job” is not known.) [54228]

BusinessInsider.com reports, “At this point, it looks extremely unlikely that long-term emergency unemployment benefits will be extended. This has caused a huge debate about whether this is wise, and what will happen to the long-term unemployed and the unemployment rate. North Carolina has been without long-term unemployment benefits since last Summer, and so they might offer a glimpse of what happens when the unemployment insurance is not extended. The answer? A gigantic drop in the

unemployment rate.” (Historically, recessions have tended to end when unemployment benefits ran out. The reason is that the unemployed are less particular about the jobs they are willing to accept when they face the reality of their benefits ending.) [54240, 54323]

Nineteen Senate Democrats sign a “friend of the court” brief in support of the Obama administration and in opposition to Hobby Lobby’s lawsuit against ObamaCare’s forced abortifacient, contraceptive, and sterilization requirement. [54152, 54153]

Asked by radio talk show host Hug Hewitt to summarize what Hilary Clinton accomplished as Secretary of State, longtime Clinton confidante and advisor Lanny Davis responds, “Well the biggest thing of all is goodwill around the world, which is what Secretaries of State do. I don’t know...” Hewitt: “Like in Syria, and Egypt and Libya?” Davis: “I don’t know. Well, Libya—and certainly the intervention in Libya, getting Gaddafi—you would say is a pretty good achievement for [Obama]. But these are presidential achievements with a partnership with the Secretary of State. What do Secretaries of State do? For example, she was very instrumental in the details of the Iranian sanctions program, which has produced, apparently some results. I’m very skeptical of this deal and Iran on the weaponry... [She’s] the most popular woman in the world.” Hewitt: “All right Lanny, we’re out of time. But your ‘achievement’ is one that’s been swept away by [Obama].” [54236]

The Shoebat Foundation’s Walid Shoebat posts a photograph of Obama’s half-brother Malik Obama “wearing a Hamas scarf (keffiyeh) that bears a well-known Palestinian slogan—‘Jerusalem is ours—WE ARE COMING!’ It also includes a map of Palestine that says, ‘From the River to the Sea!’ In other words, Malik is saying, THERE IS NO ISRAEL.” Malik Obama has attended events of the terrorist group Hamas, and “Malik reads and speaks fluent Arabic as do many in his family, like cousin Musa Ismail Obama and uncle Sayyid, who’ve been to at least one prominent Wahhabist university in Saudi Arabia. Barack recited the opening lines of the Arabic call to prayer with a ‘first-rate accent’ according to the New York Times’ Nicholas Kristof. ...Those who see this as a matter of guilt by association run into some major problems. ...Barack Obama and Malik are much closer than is being admitted publicly.” (Malik Obama was best man at Barack Obama’s wedding, and Barack Obama served as best man at one of Malik’s weddings.) “Another Obama brother—Mark Ndesanjo Obama—accused [Barack Obama] of lying about their relationship as well, after Barack said the two had only met one time, presumably during [Barack Obama’s] visit to China in late 2009. Ndesanjo insists they met several times, dating back to the 1980s...” Shoebat, who posts a photo of Mark Obama with his half-brother at the White House that was taken before the China visit, notes, “The point here is that Barack cannot be trusted to issue a full disclosure when it comes to the relationships he has with his family members. Once again, this leads us to his relationship with Malik. How is it that Malik received 501(c)(3) status for his Barack H. Obama Foundation in less than 30 days and had it illegally backdated 38 months by [IRS official] Lois Lerner? If Barack had anything to do with it, history says he might be lying if he denies it. In order to come full circle here, Malik’s foundation is tied to a State Sponsor of Terrorism in Sudan. ...Lois Lerner should be granted immunity and compelled to testify about why she granted tax exempt status to a man who is tied to

terrorism and just so happens to be the brother of [Barack Obama].” [54208, 54252, 54830]

Rush Limbaugh tells his listeners what he would like to see during Obama’s speech: A male Republican member of Congress should “find an attractive woman, not his wife, and put his arm around her and start taking some selfies while Obama is delivering the State of the Union address. Would that not be hilarious? Would that not be eye catching? I had some really brilliant ideas yesterday for the White House Correspondents Dinner, and I’m just adding to it today. We know it’ll never happen because the Republicans, they would never do it. But Obama did do it.” [54173]

Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) tells *The Wall Street Journal* that Obama will not put forth “a grandiose agenda” in his speech. “It’s going to be a very practical agenda aimed at middle-class people.” [54183]

At NationalReview.com Kevin D. Williamson writes, “The annual State of the Union pageant is a hideous, dispiriting, ugly, monotonous, un-American, un-republican, anti-democratic, dreary, backward, monarchical, retch-inducing, depressing, shameful, crypto-imperial display of official self-aggrandizement and piteous toadying, a black Mass during which every unholy order of teacup totalitarian and cringing courtier gathers under the towering dome of a faux-Roman temple to listen to a speech with no content given by a man with no content, to rise and to be seated as is called for by the order of worship — it is a wonder they have not started genuflecting—with one wretched representative of their number squirreled away in some well-upholstered Washington hidey-hole in order to preserve the illusion that those gathered constitute a special class of humanity without whom we could not live. It’s the most nauseating display in American public life—and I write that as someone who has just returned from a pornographers’ convention. It’s worse than the Oscars. ...But they will listen, rapt, and the media mandarins afterward will evaluate each promise with great sobriety, ignoring entirely that the central promise made during the same charlatan’s first State of the Union address was subsequently labeled ‘Lie of the Year’ by the great man’s own frustrated admirers. That an entire class of people should be so enthusiastic about being lied to, serially, is perplexing. ...Whether it’s Barack Obama or some subsequent pathological megalomaniac, Republican or Democrat, the increasingly ceremonial and quasi-religious aspect of the presidency is unseemly. It is profane. It is unbecoming of us as a people, and it has transformed the presidency into an office that can be truly attractive only to men who are unfit to hold it. George Washington showed the world that men do not need a king. We, his heirs, have allowed the coronation of something much worse.” [54179]

Senator Mark Udall (D-CO) does his best to avoid a direct answer when CNN’s Dana Bash asks him if Obama “is a liability to you back home” or if they will “campaign side by side.” Senator Mark Begich (D-AK) does the same when Jake Tapper asks him similar questions. [54237, 54299]

On ABC, *Good Morning America* host George Stephanopoulos complains, “[O]ne of the real puzzles [Obama] has to solve tonight, the economy, doing about as well as it’s ever

done in his [five years], as he comes into the chamber tonight, but most people don't believe it and don't give him credit for it." On NBC, David Gregory repeats the complaint, saying, "Look, the economy's getting better. That's what [Obama] had to do, he had to make the economy better. And, yet he's not getting a lot of credit for it." On CBS, Bob Schieffer proves that he received the same White House talking points, stating, "I thought *The New York Times* had a good headline today on one of their things, it said the economy has rarely been better, but the approval ratings have rarely been worse. People seem to favor many of the programs that [Obama] wants to pass, but they are worried and concerned about whether he can actually... actually get it [sic] done." (The Media Research Center notes, "The latest NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll showed 60% of Americans believe the nation is heading in the wrong direction, 68% think the country is in the same place or worse than when Obama took office, and 70% are dissatisfied with the economy.") [54287]

While waiting for Obama's speech to begin, Congressman Randy Weber (R-TX) tweets, "On floor of house waitin on 'Kommandant-In-Chef' ...the Socialistic dictator who's been feeding US a line or is it 'A-Lying?'" [54281]

On MSNBC, Obama toady Chris Matthews expresses outrage that any Republicans would dare criticize Obama before he even delivered his address: "The very idea that they would do this, in what is a historic occasion, just tells you that there are no rules. ...[This] right wing, sort of, revolutionary thinking... We're throwing stones at the window of the American republic. [But] That's fine, because somehow, we're so angry that anything goes." (Whether Matthews believes there was no criticism of George W. Bush, George H.W. Bush, or Ronald Reagan before or after their State of the Union addresses is a question best left to his psychiatrist.) [54291]

Obama delivers an underwhelming and plodding State of the Union address, facing lame duck status a full year earlier than most of his predecessors. (Only five of the nation's nine Supreme Court Justices attend; missing are Antonin Scalia, Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito, and Sonya Sotomayor.) The speech is largely a boring rehash of the prior year's speech and is largely devoid of new ideas. (It also includes at least one cringe-worthy line from a sophomoric speechwriter: "A man took the bus home from the graveyard shift, bone tired...") Obama proposes a "MyRA" ("my IRA") to help people save for retirement with government bonds—which is nothing more than a U.S. Savings Bond sales scheme and sounds suspiciously like a way to get Americans to finance the federal debt that China is no longer covering. Obama notes the agreement with Iran with a lie: "Iran has begun to eliminate its stockpile of higher levels of enriched uranium." (Iran has not. Its enriched uranium is simply temporarily being turned into uranium oxide, which can readily be turned back into its former state. Iran is destroying nothing.) Obama says, "Unprecedented inspections help the world verify, every day, that Iran is not building a bomb. And with our allies and partners, we're engaged in negotiations to see if we can peacefully achieve a goal we all share: preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon." According to LATimes.com, "The interim nuclear deal between Iran and world powers will allow Tehran to continue far more research and development on centrifuges to enrich uranium than has been publicly recognized..." A report by the nonpartisan

Institute for Science and International Security states that the agreement is “not expected to seriously affect Iran’s centrifuge research and development program.” In other words, Iran is developing nuclear weapons.) He states, “If John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan could negotiate with the Soviet Union, then surely a strong and confident America can negotiate with less powerful adversaries today.” (Obama ignores two important facts: He is neither Kennedy nor Reagan, and the Soviet Union already *had* a huge stockpile of nuclear weapons.) [54177, 54178, 54189, 54190, 54191, 54194, 54197, 54199, 54202, 54216, 54218, 54225, 54227, 54253, 54279, 54313, 54316, 54375, 54379, 54421, 54443, 54444, 54456, 54691, 54839]

On the subject of energy, Obama says, “Now, one of the biggest factors in bringing more jobs back is our commitment to American energy. The all-of-the-above energy strategy I announced a few years ago is working, and today, America is closer to energy independence than we’ve been in decades.” (Obama’s “strategy” is not working. The nation’s energy output has increased in spite of Obama’s policies, not because of them.) “One of the reasons why is natural gas—if extracted safely, it’s the bridge fuel that can power our economy with less of the carbon pollution that causes climate change. Businesses plan to invest almost \$100 billion in new factories that use natural gas.” (Obama does not dare credit the “shale revolution” or fracturing process that have led to the increased production of oil and gas—because he had nothing to do with either, and because his environmentalist supporters have resisted both.) “I’ll cut red tape to help states get those factories built, and this Congress can help by putting people to work building fueling stations that shift more cars and trucks from foreign oil to American natural gas.” (Ignoring the fact that Obama has never demonstrated either the willingness or the ability to “cut red tape,” he has apparently lurched from electric vehicles to vehicles powered by natural gas. American investors should be happy they did not invest billions of dollars on the electric charging stations that Obama previously wanted.) “My administration will keep working with the industry to sustain production and job growth while strengthening protection of our air, our water, and our communities. And while we’re at it, I’ll use my authority to protect more of our pristine federal lands for future generations.” [54177, 54178, 54189, 54190, 54191, 54194, 54197, 54199, 54202, 54216, 54218, 54225, 54227, 54253, 54279, 54313, 54316, 54375, 54379, 54421, 54443, 54444, 54456, 54691, 54839]

Obama declares that the global warming issue “is settled” and is “fact.” (It is not, but he sneakily uses the term “climate change,” knowing no one can dispute that the climate changes. It has, of course, done so since the earth was created and will continue to change—regardless of the number of SUVs on American roads.) He calls for the elimination of business tax loopholes in exchange for a reduction in the corporate tax rate—for companies that move jobs from overseas to the United States. (The result would be a net tax *increase* for companies that have no overseas employees, of course. That is hardly a recipe for economic growth.) Obama, who does not mention Benghazi or North Korea even once in his speech, notes that he will bring home all the troops from Afghanistan—and then says he will leave some there for two “narrow missions,” “training and assisting Afghan forces, and counterterrorism operations to pursue any remnants of al-Qaida.” (Plans probably call for about 10,000 Americans to remain in

Afghanistan, but Obama has a convenient “out.” Afghan President Hamid Karzai does not support the agreement to leave U.S. troops in his country. Obama could use that as an excuse to withdraw all troops, or he could simply wait to negotiate an agreement with Karzai’s successor in the upcoming election.) [54177, 54178, 54189, 54190, 54191, 54194, 54197, 54199, 54202, 54216, 54218, 54225, 54227, 54253, 54279, 54313, 54316, 54375, 54379, 54421, 54443, 54444, 54456, 54691, 54839]

The speech is largely devoid of “red meat”—beyond Obama saying that if Congress doesn’t give him what he wants he will sign executive orders to get around obstinate Republicans on issues like gun control—and many leftists may be disappointed. Arguably, even if everything Obama calls for were to come to pass (extend unemployment compensation, increase the minimum wage, federal funding for pre-Kindergarten “education”—which studies show is a waste of taxpayer funds, “comprehensive immigration reform,” etc.), the “state of the union” would largely be unchanged. (House Speaker John Boehner does not join the Democrats in standing to applaud Obama’s immigration reform remarks. That suggests he may not be quite as eager to cave in on the issue as some critics believe—or he wants Tea Party activists to think that.) His proposals include no details and essentially nothing that would boost the economy. Forty minutes into the address Obama finally mentions the Affordable Care Act and trots out a woman in the audience who has been helped by ObamaCare—but one anecdote can hardly offset the fact that six million people have lost their insurance as a result of the legislation. [54177, 54178, 54189, 54190, 54191, 54194, 54197, 54199, 54202, 54216, 54218, 54225, 54227, 54253, 54279, 54313, 54316, 54375, 54379, 54421, 54443, 54444, 54456, 54691, 54839]

Obama also brings up the “women are paid less than men” claim—to substantial Democrat applause. (He seems not to know that pay differences are generally the result of career choices, not gender, and that gender pay discrimination has been illegal for 50 years. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The Equal Pay Act of 1963 protects men and women who perform substantially equal work in the same establishment from sex-based wage discrimination. No new legislation is therefore necessary; Obama can end any existing discrimination simply by enforcing existing federal law. Further, the 77 cents figure he cites is incredibly out of date. According to a 2007 study, women make, on average, about 91 cents for every dollar a man earns. Even that figure is misleading, as it represents nothing more than the average male wage versus the average female wage—not taking into account what people do for a living. That a female kindergarten teacher earns less than the male CEO of IBM does not mean she was the subject of discrimination any more than Oprah Winfrey earning more than a male truck driver is “proof” of gender discrimination. Male autoworkers earn less than the new female CEO of General Motors—but that does not mean anyone is being treated unfairly.) [54177, 54178, 54189, 54190, 54191, 54194, 54197, 54199, 54202, 54216, 54218, 54223, 54224, 54225, 54227, 54253, 54279, 54313, 54316, 54375, 54379, 54456]

Obama wisely (but arguably shamelessly) ends his speech by noting Cory Remsburg, a heroic disabled veteran in the audience—ensuring that he would get some “overflow”

enthusiasm and applause. Obama says, “My fellow Americans, men and women like Cory remind us that America has never come easy. Our freedom, our democracy, has never been easy. Sometimes we stumble; we make mistakes; we get frustrated or discouraged. But for more than two hundred years, we have put those things aside and placed our collective shoulder to the wheel of progress—to create and build and expand the possibilities of individual achievement; to free other nations from tyranny and fear; to promote justice, and fairness, and equality under the law, so that the words set to paper by our founders are made real for every citizen. The America we want for our kids—a rising America where honest work is plentiful and communities are strong; where prosperity is widely shared and opportunity for all lets us go as far as our dreams and toil will take us—none of it is easy. But if we work together; if we summon what is best in us, with our feet planted firmly in today but our eyes cast towards tomorrow—I know it’s within our reach. Believe it. God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.” (At Morning Jolt, Jim Geraghty later comments, “As a political lesson, ‘nothing ever comes easy...’ well, no shinola, Sherlock. Welcome to the [White House]. Welcome to life. If you expected any of this stuff to be easy, you were woefully unprepared for the office. If you’re a supporter of Obama and surprised at how hard everything seems, it’s probably because you elevated him to the status of Munificent Sun-God in 2007 and 2008 and figured he would step down into the [Oval Office] from his celestial golden throne and calm the waters and lower the oceans with the power of his words. When Remsburg says it in his context, it’s inspiring; when it’s applied to [Obama]... it’s trite and obvious.”) [54177, 54178, 54189, 54190, 54191, 54194, 54197, 54199, 54202, 54216, 54218, 54223, 54224, 54225, 54227, 54253, 54279, 54313, 54316, 54375, 54379, 54456]

Obama’s speech most definitely does not live up to its billing. After two days of White House and media promises that Obama would be announcing a “year of action,” the address includes no major ideas. In fact, it arguably includes only a few small ideas—some of them carryovers from 2013.

Although Obama makes “pen and phone” threats about acting without the consent of Congress on issues like gun control, it is worth noting that George Washington said in his first State of the Union address, “A free people ought not only to be armed but disciplined; to which end a Uniform and well digested plan is requisite: And their safety and interest require that they should promote such manufactories, as tend to render them independent on others, for essential, particularly for military supplies.” [54203]

Congressman Steve Stockman (R-TX) walks out of the House chamber before Obama even got warmed up—but after he said he would get around Congress through executive orders. Stockman states, “I could not bear to watch as he continued to cross the clearly-defined boundaries of the Constitutional separation of powers. Needless to say, I am deeply disappointed in the tone and content of tonight’s address,” with Obama pledging to “break his oath of office and begin enacting his own brand of law through executive decree. This is a wholesale violation of his oath of office and a disqualifying [that is, impeachable] offense.” Congressman Raul Labrador (R-ID) states, “Unfortunately, what I heard from ...Obama tonight was hostility toward our foundational principles, condescension toward a co-equal branch of government, and a general aversion to

common sense and bipartisanship.” Congressman Gregg Harper (R-MS) states, “[Obama’s] attempt to intimidate Congress by abusing executive power demonstrates a serious unwillingness to work with the coequal legislative branch of government.” [54211, 54270]

At WashingtonTimes.com Ben Wolfgang writes, “[O]ne of the most notable parts of Tuesday night’s address was Mr. Obama’s plan to raise the minimum wage for federal contracts to \$10.10 from \$7.25, a substantial change but one that only underscores how this administration has been unable to muscle through Congress a broader minimum wage increase. ‘Over the past five years, his number of requests have increased, but the requests have gotten smaller. He started out with some very big, very bold proposals, but eventually, when you look at [more recent speeches], the kinds of things he’s promising and asking for are smaller policies,’ said Brandon Rottinghaus, a political science professor at the University of Houston who has written extensively on presidential speeches, including State of the Union addresses. ‘Historically, the last couple of State of the Unions have been [full of] these small, penny-ante policies that haven’t amounted to that much,’ Mr. Rottinghaus said.” [54183, 54199]

On MSNBC, Chris Matthews calls the speech “a masterful address... which I believe reminds many of the people who voted for him why they voted for him... The greatness of the speech, I believe, was the ability to mask ...to deliver a center-left proposal for lots of government action in the language of the center-right even [sic].” (In other words, Obama was deceitful.) [54192]

NBC’s Brian Williams says, “A lot of things will perhaps be remembered from this speech, including the call for the middle class to finally make headway as [Obama] declares war on income inequality and asks for the support of Congress. [Obama’s] quote about doing away with workplace policies that belong in a ‘Mad Men’ episode. [Obama’s] quote that we must move off a permanent war footing, which brought us to... easily the emotional high point of the evening. ...He was strong on education, strong on immigration, and seemed to hit a stride midway through, used humor and feistiness the second half.” [54288]

NBC’s Chuck Todd criticizes the presence of *Duck Dynasty*’s Willie Robertson at event, saying, “...after the shooting with Gabby Giffords and for a couple of State of the Unions in a row... There was more of a dignified feeling about the guests that you would invite. Boy, you can tell things are a lot different now, when you’re inviting *Duck Dynasty* stars. Everybody’s trying to make a partisan political point. ...You get the feeling that whatever Kumbaya that there had been, at least in the last couple of years, that’s, that’s gone with this State of the Union.” (The Media Research Center observes, “During the 2013 State of the Union, Todd never voiced any concern over ...Obama using Gabby Giffords herself to make a ‘partisan political point’ about pushing gun restrictions.” Additionally, of course, although a Republican Congressman invited Robertson, he certainly did not order the media to focus cameras on the duck hunter. Todd is therefore making a fuss about a fuss his own network created. Television viewers would not even know Robertson was in attendance were it not for the media. in contrast, during 2013’s address

Obama specifically mentioned Giffords' name to call attention to gun control legislation.) [54289, 54290]

ABC's Jim Avila gushes, "This was ...Obama, the go-it-alone Terminator, mindful he has only three years left. This was a stare down, chest pumping [Obama], angry and resentful about a Congress determined to log jam his ideas." [54361]

Columnist Charles Krauthammer comments, "Well, there wasn't a lot in the speech—of course, he's playing a very weak hand. I was impressed by the fact that he delivered it with conviction because, again, there wasn't a lot in it. I would call it the 'chestnut speech,' where there's [sic] so many old chestnuts that were shown it was almost embarrassing. You know, he brought out stuff he tried last year and that went nowhere... So when he repeated Guantanamo, which is a cause he gave up on himself, years ago, you knew that he'd sort of run out of ideas. What I was surprised he didn't do, was to do sort of an overall arching theme... I think the most important element of the speech, with regard to foreign affairs, was his insistence on the Iran negotiations in saying he would veto a sanctions bill, and... that [resulted in] the most tepid applause of the evening." [54193, 54195, 54573]

A respectable Republican response to Obama's address is delivered by Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R-WA). MSNBC's Alex Wagner tweets, "Living room. Lady on a settee. Where's the needlepoint?" Leftist, feminist "comedian" Laura Levites tweets, "I want to rip out the uterus of that pro life Cunt Cathy McMorris Rodgers and eat it, so I can see the surprised look on her frigid face." She follows with another tweet: "I'm pretty sure I'm going to lose a lot of followers tonight. If you don't get it, it's ok I'll pray for you." (If a conservative made comments like that about a Democrat woman politician, the leftist media would be justifiably outraged. What annoys leftists most about McMorris Rodgers is perhaps that, like Sarah Palin, she has a Down Syndrome child she chose not to abort; six-year-old Cole now reads above grade level.) [54189, 54204, 54213, 54243, 54262]

Senator Mike Lee (R-UT) delivers a Tea Party response to Obama's speech. He says, "In the few minutes I have tonight—I'd like to speak especially to those Americans who may feel they have been forgotten by both political parties. Those individuals and families who work hard, play by the rules, balance their budgets, honor the Golden Rule ...and don't understand why their government in Washington can't do the same. ...To be fair, ...Obama and his party did not create all of these problems. The Republican Establishment in Washington can be just as out-of-touch as the Democratic Establishment. ...I believe we need to do what Americans have always done—come together and press for positive change. Protesting against dysfunctional government is a great American tradition, going back to the *original* tea party in Boston, about 240 years ago. Americans have a natural instinct to stand up and speak out when they know something is wrong. ...[The] inequality crisis presents itself in three principal forms: immobility among the poor, who are being trapped in poverty by big-government programs; insecurity in the middle class, where families are struggling just to get by and can't seem to get ahead; and cronyist privilege at the top, where political and economic

insiders twist the immense power of the federal government to profit at the expense of everyone else. ...Inequality—*real inequality*—is trapping poor children in failing schools to benefit bureaucrats and union bosses.” Lee calls ObamaCare an “inequality Godzilla.” [54196, 54221]

Libertarian-like Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) also delivers a less-government-is-better response to Obama’s address. [54200]

In an interview with MSNBC, Congressman Tim Huelskamp (R-KS) calls leftist host Rachel Maddow a “cheerleader for the [Obama] administration.” When she objects, Huelskamp continues, “You’re not being a journalist when you’re not willing to look at the facts [about Benghazi]. If it was Bush you would be jumping and screaming—” Maddow: “You’re amazing.” Huelskamp: “—but because it’s Hillary Clinton, you don’t want the answers, Rachel. Face the facts! We don’t know the answers there.” Maddow then disagrees with Huelskamp’s charge that Obama using executive orders to bypass Congress constitutes “lawlessness.” [54275, 54282]

Congresswoman Michele Bachmann (R-MN) tells reporters Obama is “not a king. He may think he’s a king, he may declare himself king, but that’s not what he is under our Constitution. ...He said it over and over and over again and throughout the speech. In fact, I think there’s a line that I wrote down that he said: ‘Let’s make this a year of action,’ and then he declared himself King Obama shortly thereafter. So he said, ‘Do it, but if you don’t do it—if you don’t do what I say—I’m going to do it anyway.’ ...So, the American people know that the legacy of [Obama] will be the establishment of lawlessness in the United States. He really doesn’t see himself restricted in any way by Article 2 under the Constitution—that’s his limitations in powers. He refuses to faithfully execute the laws as they are written, and he decides to write the laws the way he wants them written. So he’s ...complete[ly] lawless...” [54280, 54298]

Comedian Jay Leno says, “Obama gave his State of the Union address, or as Fox News called it, *Lame Duck Dynasty*... I understand the speech tonight was kind of a mixed message. The bad news is, these days a lot of Americans are getting screwed; but the good news is [that] while you’re getting screwed ObamaCare will pay for the birth control. ...This was a very important speech for [Obama] tonight, and he gave it at a time when he’s losing support from his own party. In fact, Congressional Democrats were warned tonight [that] if they didn’t applaud [Obama’s] speech, he would go out and campaign for them.” [54314]

On January 29, the day after Obama calls for quick Congressional approval of “fast track” foreign trade legislation, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) announces it will go nowhere. Reid says, “I’m against fast track. ...Everyone would be well advised just to not push this right now.” (HotAir.com’s Erika Johnsen translates: “I would rather appease special interest groups like Big Labor, and incidentally court their campaign contributions, by putting their well-monied preferences over the health of the overall American economy and everyone involved in it.”) [54306]

Television ratings for Obama's speech show a definite lack of enthusiasm. On NBC, more people watched *The Biggest Loser* (6.6 million viewers) than the State of the Union address (5.99 million) an hour later. On CBS, an *NCIS* rerun drew 11.4 million viewers, while Obama drew 7.8 million. On ABC, only 4.8 million watched the speech, and 2.5 million watched it in Fox. The total number of viewers was about 33.3 million—the lowest since the 31.5 million who watched Bill Clinton's address in January 2000. [54184, 54185, 54186, 54245, 54302]

At Morning Jolt, NationalReview.com's Jim Geraghty writes, "The... speech was interminable, meandering, shifting in tone, unfocused, and at least twice as long as it needed to be. In a development that surprises no one, his fans liked it, his critics largely hated it, and millions upon millions of Americans wondered what happened to their favorite shows that usually air at 9 p.m. Eastern. ... We're stuck with this guy until January 2017. We don't know exactly what the future holds, but the outlook on the horizon isn't good. The economy sputtering along, unemployment still high by historical standards, low workforce participation rate, a complicated mess in health care, annual deficits that are merely ludicrously high instead of incredibly ludicrously high, chaos overseas, hoping our numb-skull big campaign-donor ambassadors manage to avoid exacerbating a crisis."

At Townhall.com Katie Pavlich notes that Obama invited six illegal immigrants to attend his State of the Union address, but remains "more serious about emboldening illegal immigrants than helping law enforcement agents dealing with the problem. According to Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agent and President of the National ICE Council Chris Crane, ... Obama is still refusing to meet with them to discuss the issue." Crane says that Obama "will provide those illegally in the U.S. with the seat of honor at one of the most important events of the year, but ICE officers who serve under him are unwelcome in the White House. This is symptomatic of [Obama's] continued demonstration of contempt for immigration officers and his blatant disregard for Congressionally-enacted law. ICE officers are forced every day to release violent offenders back into the streets; we are prohibited from enforcing immigration violations and document fraud and from cracking down on illegal employment; we are prohibited from enforcing public charge law to protect taxpayers; and we are forced to catch-and-release illegal aliens who are not 'priorities' even when officers believe there is a threat to public safety. ... We are pleading with House Republicans to stand up to the Obama Administration's abuses and to support ICE officers. I am therefore alarmed to read that House Republicans are working with prominent amnesty proponents instead of reaching out and working with ICE officers. Any immigration principles crafted by House Republicans should be crafted in consultation with the ICE personnel who know firsthand what is wrong with our immigration system and how to fix it." [54187]

Meanwhile, TheHill.com reports that Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) "said he is open to an immigration reform bill that does not include a path to citizenship for the nation's estimated 11 million illegal immigrants. Rubio, an architect of a Senate bill that provided a pathway to citizenship, was commenting on expected House GOP principles for immigration reform. The House GOP is expected to provide a pathway for legal status,

but not citizenship. Rubio said he is waiting to see the details of the House framework, but is willing to discuss the idea. ...Rubio said that the 'fundamental' problem to passing immigration reform right now is skepticism on the right that the administration would enforce beefed up border security measures. ... 'I don't know if it can happen under this administration given its lack of willingness to enforce the law. It's a real impediment,' he said. 'I think that is the fundamental challenge right now ...how do we gain people's confidence that the enforcement will happen.'" HotAir.com asks, "When did it dawn on him, precisely, that [Obama] can't be trusted to be a hard-ass on the border even if Congress has authorized him to be one? I'll up the ante by asking another question: When did Obama's lawlessness become an 'impediment' to passing immigration reform, as Rubio says here, rather than the whole reason for passing the bill in the first place? ...If you can't trust O to carry out the law then logically it doesn't much matter what Congress does. O's going to do what he wants to do. In fact, if you're worried about a backlash among conservatives against the GOP leadership if they pass a legalization bill, you're arguably better off letting Obama do that himself via EO so that he takes all the political heat. The GOP can focus on border security instead and then, if Obama refuses to enforce the bill they pass, they can run on that in the midterms. It'd be superb motivation to get grassroots righties to turn out to beat the Democrats." (*The Obama Timeline* asks why anything has to be done other than to better patrol the border and enforce existing immigration laws. It is *not* a false choice of granting citizenship or deporting 10–20 million illegal immigrants. They can simply be left "in the shadows"—which they entered of their own free will.) [54303, 54304]

At Time.com, *Reason* magazine's Nick Gillespie writes, "The most emotionally powerful moment in Barack Obama's State of the Union address was also its most morally dubious. The nation's commander in chief drew attention to a wounded warrior while eliding any responsibility for placing the young man in harm's way. ...After a typical laundry list of empty boasts (unemployment is down largely because labor force participation is tanking), fantasy policy prescriptions ('a new savings bond that encourages people to build a nest egg?'), and outright falsehoods (economic mobility has not declined), ...Obama introduced America to Cory Remsburg, 'a proud Army Ranger,' who 'on his tenth deployment ...was nearly killed by a massive roadside bomb in Afghanistan.' Remsburg's sacrifice is plain to see: He has a long, visible scar on his head and, [Obama] explained, he 'is still blind in one eye' and 'still struggles on his left side.' Regardless of political affiliation and ideological positioning, all Americans can appreciate Remsburg's willingness to serve while questioning whether ...Obama is right to use such a soldier as an applause line in a political speech. ...What exactly was Remsburg—or any of his fellow soldiers—fighting for in Afghanistan? [Obama] didn't offer any explanation in his State of the Union address and you'd search his past speeches in vain for a clear and compelling reason, too. ...'Patriotism is the last refuge to which a scoundrel clings,' Bob Dylan once sang, updating Samuel Johnson's dark maxim. Obama's gesture in the State of the Union will only accelerate the cynicism that already understandably dominates public opinion. There is no more serious decision that a government makes than to send its citizens a war. And there is nothing more disturbing than a president using soldiers' sacrifices as a way of selling a grab-bag of domestic policy agenda items." [54210]

NBC senior political editor Mark Murray tweets, “Obama’s ending on [disabled veteran Cory] Remsburg wasn’t just a story about America—it was also a story about Obama. Nothing has ever come easy [for him].”)The message is immediately met with revulsion and anger from people who are disgusted that anyone would compare the hardship of an Army Ranger who served 10 combat tours and was almost killed with the easy life of Obama—who was sent to incredibly expensive private schools, had the advantage of affirmative action programs, and never seemed to have a “real” job in his life. That someone as callous or delusional as Murray could be a *senior political editor* at NBC is stunning—but may help explain the network’s fawning coverage of Obama. for the record, Murray’s wife Sasha works in the Obama administration.) To make matters worse, former Obama speechwriter Jon Favreau tweets, “My thought exactly the first time I read it.” [54241, 54242, 54248, 54283]

MSNBC’s Ronan Farrow (son of Mia Farrow and Frank Sinatra) mocks Cory Remsburg’s disability with a Twitter message: “Cory ‘struggles on the left side.’ Congress relates.” [54249, 54250, 54251]

At his “Stockman for Senate” web site, Congressman Steve Stockman (R-TX) writes, “I’m considering filing Articles of Impeachment against Barack Obama. You see, I walked out of Obama’s State of the Union address last night. Obama defiantly vowed not only to radically expand the reach of government from cradle to grave, but to smash the Constitution’s restrictions on government power while doing it. His goal is to eliminate our constitutional republic. Last year I said I would consider impeachment as a last resort to stop Obama’s abuse of power. And, quite frankly, we’re running out of options. But I can’t do it alone. This will only succeed if I have hundreds of thousands standing with me. That’s why I need to hear from you immediately. Do you want Barack Obama impeached? ... You have the power to determine the future of our constitutional republic. I need hundreds of thousands like you standing with me.” [54271]

At a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing, Senator Mike Lee (R-UT) asks Attorney General Eric Holder to explain where Obama gets the constitutional authority basis for issuing executive orders, such as in the case of delaying ObamaCare’s employer mandate. Holder answers in part, “I’ll be honest with you, I have not seen—I don’t remember looking at or having seen the analysis in, in some time, so I’m not sure where along the spectrum that would come. ... I’ve not had a chance to look at, you know, for some time, exactly what the analysis was there, so I’m not sure that I would be able to put it in what category. ... I would think that given that we’re talking about a statute passed by Congress that delegates or devolves to the executive branch certain authorities, I would think that you’re probably in category one there as well but, again, I have not looked at the analysis in some time.” (WashingtonExaminer.com explains : “Lee had based his question on a standard legal test, first described by Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson, who said [a] president’s authority to issue executive orders is strongest when he does so with the backing of Congress (category one), more dubious when he issues an order pertaining to a topic on which Congress has not passed a law (category two), and weakest when the executive order is ‘incompatible with a congressional command’

(category three), to use Lee’s paraphrase.” Holder is incorrect in stating that Obama’s employer mandate change falls into category one. Obama did not have the explicit backing of Congress to delay the mandate, and Obama’s action specifically contradicts the language of the Affordable Care Act—which does not provide any leeway for the effective date of the mandate.) In addition to Lee, Senators Ted Cruz (R-TX) and John Cornyn (R-TX) press Holder on the issue of IRS discrimination against and harassment of Tea Party groups. (They get equally unresponsive and evasive answers from Holder.) [54308, 54309, 54310]

Holder tells the committee, “And on the subject of the use of [Obama’s] authority, my hope is—and I would argue that he take whatever action is possible, as he has done in a number of steps already and as you have done in trying to clarify the mental health issues that have to be reported to the NIC [National Instant Criminal background check] system, my hope is that additional measures, executive actions are contemplated [by Obama] under that authority. [Obama]—it is his intention to again try to work with Congress, but in the absence of meaningful action to explore all the possibilities and use all the powers that he has to, frankly, just protect the American people.” (In other words, Obama will attempt to impose some form of gun control even if it is not approved by Congress.) Holder also testifies that he did not know that Barbara Bosserman, the woman he named to investigate the IRS’ targeting of conservative groups, is an Obama supporter and donor: “No, I don’t know anything about the political activities of any of the people who are involved in this investigation.” Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) asks Holder, “Is it your position that out of the 117,000 employees at the Department of Justice the only lawyer available to head this investigation was a major Obama donor?” [54312, 54359, 56037]

At the committee executive meeting, Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA) states, “I’d just like to mention one point regarding the nominee [Debo Adebile] to head the Civil Rights Division. There are a number of controversial aspects of this nominee’s record, and I won’t take the Committee’s time to discuss those issues today. But, I’d note Maureen Faulkner has written to the Committee in opposition to the nominee. Ms. Faulkner’s husband [Daniel] was the Philadelphia Police Officer who was brutally murdered in 1981. The nominee later got involved in the case in order to get the defendant’s death sentence lifted. She has requested that she be given the opportunity to be heard before the Committee. I think that’s a reasonable request and I support it.” (Katie Pavlich notes at Townhall.com, “In January 2011, under Adebile’s leadership as President of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, attorneys voluntarily sought out and took over the case of convicted cop killer Mumia Abu-Jamal and assumed the cause of Abu-Jamal inside and outside the courtroom. The case was chosen by Adebile and the NAACP LDF on the basis of race. Abu-Jamal was unanimously convicted in 1982 of murdering Faulkner and was given the death penalty. Adebile was successful in getting that penalty overturned. If confirmed, Adebile will be in charge of bringing charges against law enforcement officers and agencies as the head of the DOJ Civil Rights Department.”) [54348, 54380, 54824]

James Clapper, director of National Intelligence, tells the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence that “Syria has become a huge magnet for extremists. First those groups who

are engaged in Syria itself, some 1600 different groups. We estimate somewhere in the neighborhood of between 75,000 and 110,000 of which about 26,000 we grade as extremists. We estimate at this point in excess of 7,000 foreign fighters have been attracted from some 50 countries, many of them in Europe and the Mideast. There is tremendous concern here for those extremists who are attracted to Syria, engage in combat, get training, and we're seeing now the appearance of training complexes in Syria to train people to go back to their countries, and, of course, conduct more terrorist acts. So this is a huge concern to all of us." (Some may wonder why, if it is a "huge concern," that the Obama administration is supporting the anti-Assad forces.) [54332, 54333]

Iranian Defense Minister Hossein Dehghan says, "Iran... is ready to confront any hostile measure from any aggressor... and will cause any belligerent enemy to regret his actions. [Secretary of State John] Kerry's statements [that a "military option" is "available" should Iran not comply with the Geneva agreement] are nothing but a political bluff... The Americans know themselves that they are unable [to] take any insolent step against Iran, and are well aware of Iran's defense capabilities... The continued uttering of ill-considered statements such as these increases the hatred of the Iranian nation and the nations of the region and the world against the U.S., and poisons the atmosphere ahead of future [nuclear] talks... It is puzzling that those who ostensibly [champion]... democracy and diplomacy still talk of using methods from the Middle Ages, and think they can safeguard their interests by means of force, oppression and aggression, disregarding the fact that the [medieval] era has ended. The use of this ill-considered rhetoric accelerates the U.S.'s decline." [54334]

Iran's Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi states that Secretary of State John Kerry has "become a despicable slave of Israel" and "the West's ridiculous threats distance the Iranian nation from it and increase [this nation's] hatred for it. ...The hatemongering and ugly statement of the U.S. State Secretary, which was full of threats against Iran, displeased many, due to his insolent rhetoric. People are wondering how a man who does not know how to speak was appointed Secretary of State." [54334]

Several House Democrats form a "Full Employment Caucus." Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX) says the new group will focus on drafting executive orders for Obama to sign. Jackson Lee—reportedly one of the worst members of Congress to work for because her foul mouth, hot temper, and abuse of staffers—states, "We will be answering the call of all of America because people need work and we're not doing right by them by creating work [sic]. I believe this caucus will put us on the right path and we'll give ...Obama a number of executive orders that he can sign with pride and strength. In fact, I think that should be our number one agenda. Let's write up these executive orders... and ask [Obama] to stand with us on full employment." (Jackson Lee and many of her fellow House Democrats are apparently happy that Obama's unilateral and illegal actions are making them irrelevant.) [54556, 54558, 54560, 54619]

On *The Five*, Greg Gutfeld calls Obama's State of the Union address "the speech version of an air guitar."

Fact-checkers point out the errors in several of Obama's State of the Union claims. Although he stated, "Upward mobility has stalled," the Associated Press reports, "The most recent evidence suggests that mobility hasn't worsened. A team of economists led by Harvard's Raj Chetty released a study last week that found the United States isn't any less socially mobile than it was in the 1970s. Looking at children born between 1971 and 1993, the economists found that the odds of a child born in the poorest 20 percent of families making it into the top 20 percent hasn't changed." (That does not mean the economy is in great shape. It means only that the ability to move out of poverty still exists for those willing to persevere.) [54212, 54222, 54246]

Obama's claim that since October 1, 2013 "More than 9 million Americans have signed up for private health insurance or Medicaid coverage" is immediately criticized. Although he did not say the enrollments were "because of ObamaCare," he certainly *implied* that they were—and that is a falsehood. Obama's figure includes Medicaid enrollments, most of which have nothing to do with ObamaCare. (In any given three month periods there will be millions of recurring Medicaid enrollments.) [54212, 54222, 54246]

Obama also noted, "A manufacturing sector that's adding jobs for the first time since the 1990s." *The Washington Post* responds, "The low point for manufacturing jobs was reached in January 2010, and there has been a gain of 570,000 jobs since then. But BLS [Bureau of Labor Statistics] data show that the number of manufacturing jobs is still 500,000 fewer than when Obama took office in the depths of the recession—and 1.7 million fewer than when the recession began in December 2007. The gain in manufacturing actually has begun to stall a bit in the past year. The only reason Obama can tout a gain in manufacturing jobs 'for the first time since the 1990s' is because, before the recession, manufacturing had been on a slow decline for many years." (Manufacturing job gains have been in spite of Obama's actions, not because of them.) [54212, 54222, 54246]

Obama's claim, "The more than eight million new jobs our businesses have created over the past four years," is also a bit disingenuous. The economy has created millions of new jobs, but it has also shed millions of other jobs. There are still about 1.7 million fewer jobs than in December 2007. [54212, 54222, 54246]

Obama also misled with this statement: "Because of this [health care] law, no American can ever again be dropped or denied coverage for a preexisting condition like asthma, back pain or cancer. No woman can ever be charged more just because she's a woman. And we did all this while adding years to Medicare's finances, keeping Medicare premiums flat, and lowering prescription costs for millions of seniors." (Medicare premiums have, in fact, increased—from \$99.90 in 2012 to \$104.90 in 2013. Additionally, ObamaCare is not "adding years to Medicare's finances." Medicare spending has been reduced in order to use those funds to help pay for ObamaCare. Medicare remains in dire fiscal straits. With regard to pre-existing conditions, knowing one cannot be turned down for coverage may mean little to someone whose policy has been canceled because of ObamaCare and who now faces the reality of much higher

premiums to replace that policy. Lastly, there is a good reason why insurers, on average, charge women higher rates than men: women incur maternity costs. That is no less unreasonable than charging smokers more than non-smokers. To “solve” the problem, insurers are not lowering the premiums of women; they are simply raising the premiums of men to make them “equal.”) [54222]

On CNN Congressman Steve King (R-IA) says, “This threat that [Obama’s] going to run the government with an ink pen and executive orders, we’ve never had [someone] with that level of audacity and that level of contempt for his own oath of office. We have a minimum wage. Congress has set it. For [Obama] to simply declare, ‘I’m going to change this law that Congress has passed’ is unconstitutional. He’s outside the bounds of his Article Two limitations. ... This Congress should lay out the violations that [Obama’s] had, and they are many. It goes through the immigration piece, No Child Left Behind, Welfare to Work. Many of those components—ObamaCare itself is probably the clearest one. When [Obama] extended the employer mandate for a year, clearly, it’s unconstitutional because the law says that the employer mandate shall commence in each month after December of 2013. So we need to lay that all out. I think we should bring a resolution to the floor and say so and restrain [Obama] from his extra-constitutional behavior.” [54229]

CNSNews.com asks Senator John McCain (R-AZ), “Does ... Obama have the constitutional authority to act on climate change, for example, without congressional approval?” McCain replies, “I don’t believe so, certainly not [in] the spirit of the Constitution and I think [he] violated the letters [of the law] we’re finding out in the NLRB [National Labor Relations Board] case. The problem is, the challenging of these actions takes a very, very long time wending its way through the courts. So I guess that’s what he relies on.” (Grammar aside, McCain is correct. Obama knows that legal challenges to his Constitutional abuses will drag through the courts for years. He also knows that Congress does not have the courage to impeach him. That leaves him to say, “I dare you to try and stop me.”) Congressman Louis Gohmert (R-TX) responds to the same question: “It depends on what he does. If he sends a nice letter saying climate change is real, which I believe, climate change is real. Absolutely, it’s a fact. It’s a fact of life. Four times a year we have climate change, it’s a real thing. So if [Obama] sends letters saying, I believe in climate change, that’s fine, but if he intends to legislate from the executive mansion, it is wrong, it’s unconstitutional.” Congressman John Fleming (R-LA) answers, “Well, no I don’t [think Obama has that authority]. Again, I find it amazing that [Obama], representing one branch of government, would go to Congress, the other branch of government, and inform them that he is going to usurp their powers and he’s going to do an end-run. And I do believe he will attempt to do that, and he may have some success. Why? Because the attorney general, Eric Holder, does his bidding for him, and so does [Senate Majority Leader] Harry Reid, and the Congress cannot stop what [Obama] does, it’s illegal, without both chambers being involved. So the leader of the Senate is failing in his responsibility to jealously guard the power of the Congress in the checks and balances of government. So he, as well as [Obama], as well as Eric Holder, are all acting unconstitutionally and unlawfully to do that. ... You know, my life goes back to Eisenhower, and I think that much of what [Obama] has done in terms of

targeting people, in terms of lawlessness, would certainly make Richard Nixon blush if he were still alive.” [54231, 54231, 54232, 54244]

The Dow Jones Industrial Average closes down 190 points after the Federal Reserve announces it will reduce its federal bond buying by another \$10 billion, from \$75 billion to \$65 billion per month. (The decline demonstrates the reality that many are unwilling to accept: the stock market has been kept afloat through the Federal Reserve’s inflation of the money supply, rather than any real economic recovery.) [54214, 54215]

By a vote of 251–166 the House of Representatives passes a pork-filled farm bill that will cost the taxpayers more than \$950 billion over 10 years. It reduces food stamp spending by a mere one percent, but roughly 80 percent of the bill’s cost covers the food stamp program. (Congress chose not to eliminate the loophole that allows millionaires to receive food stamps. Under the law, eligibility is based on income and does *not* take assets into consideration. If a Hollywood star is in between movies and without an income stream, he or she can still receive food stamps—despite owning a Beverly Hills mansion. The legislation also calls for the imposition of a tax on Christmas trees.) Leftists immediately excoriate the cuts. Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) says “Congress has lost its way” and calls the bills “reverse Robin Hood legislation that steals food from the poor.” By criticizing such a minor cut in the food stamp budget, of course, the Democrats are essentially arguing that the Obama economy is not going to improve over the coming few years—not even enough to lift a few thousand Americans out of poverty. [54217, 54226, 54267, 54268, 54419]

Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) says, “I voted against the farm bill essentially because it contains \$8 billion in cuts to the food stamp program. ... That’s just immoral, frankly. I don’t see how we can do that. Not in this recession, where people can’t find jobs, we’re not extending unemployment insurance, and now we want to starve people? That’s wrong. ... Any program, humans beings will find a way to have some fraud. We have plenty of protections to minimize the fraud. If Republicans wanted to say, let’s put in this extra protection, that extra protection, that would be something else. They’re just using that as an excuse. They just want people to starve, and it’s disgusting.” (At HotAir.com Erika Johnsen later comments, “There you have it: The either/or moral choice between more food stamps, or more starvation. That’s it. Those are literally your only two options. Thank you, Rep. Jerrold Nadler, for putting things in such stark, intellectually bankrupt, and demagogic terms.”) [54940]

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) comments on Obama’s call to raise the minimum wage: “When you look at African Americans and Hispanics, they’re the people who never have the chance to get on the economic ladder. It’s bad policy and it will hurt the very people [Obama] purports to want to help.” [54238]

On *Hannity*, Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) says that if Obama wants to create jobs he doesn’t need “a pen and a phone... he needs an eraser” to remove regulations that keep businesses from starting and expanding and creating jobs.

Breitbart.com reports, “Though former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin was not included in a Public Policy Polling survey of potential 2016 Republican presidential contenders, she was still overwhelmingly the most liked person among Republican primary voters. According to Public Policy Polling: ‘The best liked person we tested on this poll with Republican primary voters is actually Sarah Palin who has a 70/20 favorability rating. She’s followed by [Mike] Huckabee at 64/18, [Paul] Ryan at 58/18, [Rand] Paul at 58/21, [Jeb] Bush at 56/18, [Ted] Cruz at 45/20, and [Chris] Christie at 40/38. Most of those numbers are similar to what they were a month ago but Christie’s seen a substantial drop from +18 at 47/29 a month ago to his new +2 net favorability.’” Although it is too early for the poll results to be very meaningful, Huckabee leads the 2016 presidential candidacy race with 16 percent, followed by Bush (14), Christie (13), Paul (11), Cruz (8), Rubio (8), Ryan (8), Scott Walker (6), and Bobby Jindal (5). On the Democrat side, Hillary Clinton leads with 67 percent, followed by Joe Biden (7), Elizabeth Warren (7), and Cory Booker (2), Andrew Cuomo (2) Kirsten Gillibrand (1), Martin O’Malley (1), Brian Schweitzer (1), and Mark Warner (1). [54247, 54263, 54286]

The *Daily Mail* reports it has gained access to 1991 court documents related to the 1986 murder of Raymond “Gay Ray” Boyer, Obama’s high school “Choom Gang” pot dealer. Boyer’s lover, male prostitute Andrew Devere, “killed Boyer on New Year’s Day 1986 because: Boyer was killing a friend of his by supplying that friend with drugs; Boyer embarrassed Devere and put him down in front of other people; Boyer had developed a habit of farting in Devere’s face; Boyer once attacked Devere with a knife, slicing Devere’s finger; Boyer made Devere beg for drugs.” (Whether Boyer also farted in Obama’s face is not revealed. Devere, despite being sentenced to life in prison, “is now free and living on the mainland.”) [54233]

At NationalJournal.com James Oliphant notes that Obama “stuff[ed] his administration with like-minded denizens of the Ivy League,” but claims Obama “got there [Harvard] the hard way.” (There is no evidence whatsoever that Obama got into Harvard “the hard way.” In fact, as *Timeline* readers know, it appears that the skids were greased for his entry. Obama received a letter of recommendation to attend Harvard Law School from Percy Sutton, who had been Malcolm X’s attorney. It was Khalid Abdullah Tariq al-Mansour (aka William Ayers’ pal Donald Warden), a radical Muslim and vitriolic anti-Semite, mentor of Black Panther Party founders Huey Newton and Bobby Seale, close associate of Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan, and friend of Obama, who asked Sutton to write the letter. Sutton stated that al-Mansour had raised money for Obama. Al-Mansour is believed to have been the main financial backer and planner for Obama for as long as 25 years, and is the principal financial advisor to Prince al-Waleed bin Talal—nephew of Saudi Arabia’s King Abdullah—the world’s 19th wealthiest person, worth \$29.5 billion, who donated \$20 million to Harvard to fund Islamic studies—as well as cover Obama’s education. It is unclear why a wealthy financial advisor to one of the world’s richest men would have an interest in promoting and funding the education of the young Obama, whose grades at Occidental College had been less than stellar because he was more interested in drugs than studying. A Harvard letter of recommendation for Obama was also written by John McKnight, who served on the Gamaliel Foundation’s Board of Directors as well as the board of National People’s Action, yet another Alinsky-

inspired activist group. It is unclear how, academically, Obama got into Harvard Law School. HLS has exceptionally high admissions standards, with applicant LSAT scores expected in the 98 to 99 range, and a grade point average of 3.8 or higher. It is assumed that if Obama had such scores and grades his campaign would have bragged about them. It did not, and Obama still refuses to release any of his school records. Obama denies knowing al-Mansour, but al-Mansour, in an interview with *Newsmax* reporter Kenneth Timmerman, admits he had spoken with Obama and told him he would keep a “low profile” during the campaign in order to avoid embarrassing the candidate.) [41, 43, 56, 211, 230, 259, 264, 267, 315, 380, 381, 382, 408, 524, 526, 558, 1095, 2271, 2668, 2669, 54254]

Politico writes, “With Democrats’ grasp on the Senate increasingly tenuous—and the House all but beyond reach—some top party donors and strategists are moving to do something in the midterm election as painful as it is coldblooded: Admit the House can’t be won and go all in to save the Senate. Their calculation is uncomplicated. With only so much money to go around in an election year that is tilting the GOP’s way, Democrats need to concentrate resources on preserving the chamber they have now. Losing the Senate, they know, could doom whatever hopes Barack Obama has of salvaging the final years of his [White House stay].” (The Senate “race” in New Hampshire demonstrates the problems faced by Democrats. According to a recent poll, Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) and Scott Brown are tied with 44 percent each—and Brown, a former U.S. Senator from Massachusetts, has not only not announced his candidacy, he has yet to establish permanent residency in the Granite State. According to a Rasmussen poll, Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA) trails GOP challenger Bill Cassidy by four points (44–40). [54255, 54296, 54301, 54311, 54321, 54404, 54495]

MSNBC sends a Twitter message that reads, “Maybe the rightwing will hate it, but everyone else will go awww: the adorable new Cheerios ad w/biracial family.” (That would be the same MSNBC whose leftists hosts ridiculed Mitt Romney’s Christmas card because its family photo showed his black, adopted grandchild.) MSNBC then deletes the tweet and states, “The Cheerios tweet from msnbc was dumb, offensive and we’ve taken it down. That’s not who we are at msnbc.” Katie Pavlich writes at Townhall.com, “Don’t be fooled by MSNBC’s bogus apology. This is exactly who they are and precisely what they represent. They’re not sorry. Openly mocking and degrading conservatives, particularly on the issue of biracial families, is exactly what the people over at MSNBC are all about.” Republican National Committee chairman Reince Priebus calls for a boycott of MSNBC and states, “While we understand MSNBC will go to great lengths to discredit Republicans and conservatives, this kind of attack on the millions of Americans who identify with the political right is offensive and unacceptable. Unfortunately, this tweet is just the latest in a pattern of poor statements by MSNBC and its hosts. ...Until [MSNBC president Phil Griffin] takes internal corrective action and personally apologizes—not just to the RNC but to all right-of-center Americans—I’m banning all RNC staff from appearing on, associating with, or booking any RNC surrogates on MSNBC. As an elected official, strategist, or surrogate, I’m asking for you to agree to the same. We can have our political disagreements with MSNBC, but using biracial families to launch petty and ridiculous political attacks is low, even by MSNBC’s standards. It

only coarsens our political discourse. ...MSNBC hosts—including Alec Baldwin, Martin Bashir, Melissa Harris-Perry, Alex Wagner, and Ronan Farrow just to name a few—have had a troubling streak in the last several weeks of making comments that belittle and demean Americans without furthering any thoughtful dialogue. Perhaps it’s time for the executives at MSNBC to consider whether their network is upholding a meaningful journalistic mission. This is more than just a tweet or an offhand comment. This is part of a pattern of behavior that has gotten markedly worse, and until Phil Griffin personally apologizes and takes corrective action, we cannot be part of this network’s toxic programming.” (MSNBC’s ratings have plummeted, and the more its hosts bash conservatives and promote Obama, the more they fall. The network—which later issues an apology, its 19th in two years—is trying to attract viewers with outrageousness, and failing.) [54260, 54261, 54273, 54274, 54322, 54339, 54340, 54347, 54353, 54382, 54420]

WashingtonExaminer.com reports, “Obama’s 43-point State of the Union speech and second term agenda laid out to Congress on Tuesday will cost taxpayers nearly \$40 billion more annually if fully implemented with over half—\$20.2 billion—just to reform immigration, according to the National Taxpayers Union Foundation.” [54318]

Pittsburgh’s WTAE reports on how ObamaCare will impact on blue collar employees of an auto repair business—with cameras in the room as shocked employees are given a summary of the new insurance coverage that will replace their canceled prior policy. The reporter says, “Look at the numbers. Jeff and Dave used to have a \$1,250 deductible. Since Obamacare went into effect, it’s now jumped 60 percent to \$2,000. That’s nothing compared to Brian, Kristi, and Judy who have kids. they are going to pay twice that, four grand.” One worker says, “I don’t know how ...Obama thinks he’s helping us because we can’t afford this; we can’t afford to pay these co-pays; to pay these deductibles on what we’re making.” Another worker says, “They call it the affordable health plan. There’s nothing affordable about it. I can’t afford it.” [54315, 54343, 54350, 54362, 54446, 54511]

On January 30 Walter E. Block writes at LewRockwell.com, “The ‘Rand Paul problem’ from the point of view of the *New York Times* and other such ‘progressives’ is that he is far too clean. He does not shut down traffic lanes leading to the George Washington Bridge. He has no mistresses nor any love children. He has not stolen vast amounts of money; heck no money at all. He has not put his foot in his mouth regarding witches or rape or ‘read my lips’ or anything else for that matter. These people greatly fear a Rand versus Hillary confrontation in 2015 [and 2016]. The former could ‘out-left’ the latter on war, imperialism, victimless crimes, and ‘out-right’ her on economic liberty, the second amendment and private property rights. Rand has a better shot at beating Hillary than any other plausible Republican candidate, and, it would appear, the time to grease the skids is now upon us.” (Block notes that the *Times*, eager to help Hillary Clinton but unable to smear Paul directly, has essentially chosen to smear anything and anyone Paul has ever had anything remotely to do with. The *Times* has already started, with a front page attack on the Ludwig von Mises Institute.) [54256, 54257, 54258]

According to Townhall.com's Katie Pavlich, Maryland gun manufacturer Baretta USA will be "expanding its operations to Tennessee where the company will open up a new plant, creating 300 new jobs. ...Last year Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley signed into law extreme gun control measures despite strong objections from the public. Now, lawmakers are concerned Beretta's decision to expand operations in Tennessee, rather than Maryland, is an indication new gun control measures are stifling business and job growth in the state." [54259, 54278]

Twenty-term leftist Congressman Henry A. Waxman (D-CA), who *The New York Times* states was "instrumental in writing" the Affordable Care Act, announces his retirement at the end of the current session of Congress. (Waxman defeated his independent opponent 54–46 percent in 2012, his lowest winning percentage in 40 years—because redistricting placed a few more non-Democrats in his district. He did not have a Republican opponent in 2012, but there will certainly be a Republican candidate in 2014.) TheHill.com notes, "Waxman is a longtime ally of Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA), and his decision to retire—following fellow Pelosi lieutenant Rep. George Miller's (D-CA) announcement earlier this year—will be taken as a sign Democrats are not confident about taking back the House this fall. The twin retirements also raise new questions about Pelosi's future, and about who might succeed Waxman as the senior Democrat on the House Energy and Commerce Committee." One report suggests that infamous "social justice advocate" Sandra "I demand free birth control" Fluke is "strongly considering" running for Waxman's vacant seat. Inasmuch as an actual Republican will run in 2014 and the district is now less liberal, perhaps her opponent could give her a run for (someone else's) money. [54264, 54265, 54266, 54297, 54325, 54328, 54329, 54370, 54371, 54381, 54497, 54498, 54510]

According to a CNN poll, only 30 percent of Americans—mostly Democrats—want Obama to issue executive orders to get around Congress. [54272]

More than 200,000 signatures are gathered at a WhiteHouse.gov petition calling for the deportation of lawbreaking Canadian entertainer Justin Bieber. The petition reads: "We the people of the United States feel that we are being wrongly represented in the world of pop culture. We would like to see the dangerous, reckless, destructive, and drug abusing, Justin Bieber deported and his green card revoked. He is not only threatening the safety of our people but he is also a terrible influence on our nations [sic; nation's] youth. We the people would like to remove Justin Bieber from our society." [54276, 54277]

The Commerce Department reports that the Gross Domestic Product increased by a mere 1.9 percent in 2013, down from 2.8 percent in 2012. [54300, 54341]

Obama campaigns for his agenda at a General Electric gas engine plant in Waukesha, Wisconsin. DailyCaller.com describes his gaffe: "After extolling his own economic policies at some length, Obama observed that 'manufacturing jobs typically pay well' in the United States. 'We want to encourage more of them,' he said. Then, he began to speak—apparently extemporaneously—about the benefits of working in America's ever-diminishing manufacturing sector. 'A lot of parents, unfortunately, maybe when they saw

a lot of manufacturing being offshored [sic], told their kids, ‘You don’t want to go into the trades, you don’t want to go into manufacturing because you’ll lose your job,’ [he] opined. ‘Well, the problem is that what happened—a lot of young people no longer see the trades and skilled manufacturing as a viable career.’ So far, so good. Then, however, Obama went on the offensive against America’s most useless major that doesn’t have the word ‘studies’ or ‘gender’ in it. ‘But I promise you, folks can make a lot more, potentially, with skilled manufacturing or the trades than they might with an art history degree,’ Obama declared. [He] seems to have caught himself pretty quickly. ‘Now, nothing wrong with an art history degree—I love art history... so I don’t want to get a bunch of emails from everybody.’” (It does not take long for Linda Downs, executive director of the College Art Association, to issue a statement: “It is worth remembering that many of the nation’s most important innovators, in fields including high technology, business, and even military service, have degrees in the humanities. Humanities graduates play leading roles in corporations, engineering, international relations, government, and many other fields where their skills and creating [sic; creative] thinking play a critical role.”) After being criticized by art history professor Ann Collins for his “useless major” remark, Obama writes her a letter to apologize for his “off-the-cuff remark” and states art history was one of his “favorite subjects.” (Interestingly, Obama finds it necessary to apologize to an art history teacher for suggesting—correctly—that teaching art is not exactly a lucrative career, yet he refuses to apologize to Americans for his many ObamaCare lies. *The Obama Timeline* offers \$1,000 to the charity of Obama’s choice if he releases all of his school records to prove that he even took art history.) [54414, 55253, 55282]

TheBlaze.com posts a brilliant editorial criticizing the State of the Union address that is spot on—and was written in 1948. The remarks by Henry Hazlitt in *Newsweek* are still relevant, sixty-six years later. He wrote, “President Truman’s annual message to Congress was primarily a campaign document. It seems to have been written chiefly in fear of losing extreme leftist votes to Henry Wallace. The basic philosophy it embodies is unmistakable. It is the philosophy of the welfare state, the doctrine of salvation through bureaucracy. Free enterprise, free markets, and free prices are no longer to be trusted to stimulate and guide production and consumption. Everything is to be in charge of omniscient and omnipotent bureaucrats. Everyone is promised economic security, regardless of what he contributes to production. We are to have bigger job insurance, bigger old-age benefits, bigger survivors’ benefits, bigger education. The government is to subsidize our medical care and our housing. It is also to reclaim land, replant forests, build more TVA’s. On top of this, it is to spend in fifteen months on European aid alone as much as it used to spend in the same period before the war for all its purposes combined. Mr. Truman, by some miracle, is at the same time for ‘economy.’ ‘Government expenditures have been and must continue to be held to the lowest safe levels.’ But the proposals he makes would immeasurably increase even present expenditures. And the Federal government is already spending in one year as much as it took it five years to spend just before the war. Of course all this money is to be taken in taxes only from ‘the rich.’ What Mr. Truman forgets is that the entire wealth and welfare of the country depends upon production.” [54317]

“The total amount of the [gross] national product is far more important to the average family than any possible redistribution of it. Yet Mr. Truman’s schemes and taxes would undermine, discourage, and disrupt production. It would destroy incentives. The producers would not be permitted to enjoy the fruits of their production, and others would be handed the fruits whether they produced anything or not. Mr. Truman’s speech is a tissue of self-contradictions. He is for ‘free enterprise’ and ‘free competition,’ but demands price fixing. He wants to ‘continue price supports for major farm commodities.’ But he declares that the price of food is too high and that it must be reduced by government edict. While prices are to be held down, costs of production are to be forced up. The minimum wage is to be increased from 40 to 75 cents an hour. This would be a wage boost of 87-1/2 percent. All workers above the minimum would of course insist on the maintenance of their existing differentials. Production costs and prices would be forced up enormously, and this might cause heavy unemployment even in spite of monetary inflation. If we can raise wages just by passing a law, and do it without such harmful consequences, why not \$1 an hour or \$2 an hour? Why stop anywhere?” [54317]

“We must enlarge our industrial capacity, continues Mr. Truman: ‘At least \$50,000,000,000 should be invested by industry to improve and expand our productive facilities over the next few years.’ But such funds could only be provided out of past profits and would only be invested if there were an inviting prospect of future profits. Yet Mr. Truman is shocked by existing profits, even though, as a percentage of the national income (especially when proper allowance is made for depreciation and inventory replacement) corporate profits today are not at all abnormally high. Mr. Truman wishes to increase taxes precisely where the increase would do most damage to production—on the corporations that are the very means of the workers’ livelihood. He would do this in order to free some 10,000,000 voters in an election year from all income taxes, and to create the short-lived illusion that present enormous government expenditures can be paid for only by a minority, by ‘the rich,’ by ‘somebody else.’ Candidate Truman’s program is demagoguery run riot. It is a blueprint for disruption. He asks this country to imitate slavishly all the disastrous economic policies that have brought Europe to its present critical state, and he wants us to call this process American ‘leadership.’” [54317]

BizPacReview.com reports, “A group of black Chicago activists, also known as community organizers, were asked for their opinion... after [Obama] delivered his State of the Union address Tuesday. Their answers, unlike those from MSNBC, were brutally honest.” Mark Carter, an activist with Voices of the Ex-Offenders (VOTE), says, “you know, we’d probably be better off with you [Obama] cutting your [administration] off right now. Just quit! Because if this what you call helping us, then stop helping us.” J. R. Fleming, founder of the Chicago Anti-Eviction Campaign, says, “The reason why our economy is dying, is because [Obama’s] approach has always been to place blame on the corporate world—to place blame on the rich. The problem is patronage, nepotism and cronyism.” One woman notes Obama’s “lack of involvement, the lack of concern for our community. He doesn’t care.” Another says that Obama “has been more hurtful to the black race than he has been helpful. For a lot of symbolic reasons a lot of people accept that—or should I say, most well-to-do blacks or those that think they’re better off—they

accept that for symbolic reasons. But those of us at the bottom of the ladder, they don't accept that." One young man remarks, "In Chicago, there's no Republicans, no Tea Partiers. This is one of the most Democratic cities. But it's one of the largest cities where they're starving our people out. I say to [Obama] that you have done a grave disservice to us, and you'd be better—just go ahead and step down." [54351, 54354 54406]

The New York Times reports, "The Justice Department wants low-level drug criminals who were sentenced under tough laws from the days of the crack epidemic to ask [Obama] for early release from prison. In an unprecedented move, Deputy Attorney General James M. Cole asked defense lawyers on Thursday to help the government locate prisoners and encourage them to apply for clemency. The clemency drive is part of the Obama administration's effort to undo a disparity that flooded the nation's prison system and disproportionately affected black men. Offenses involving crack, which was more commonly used in black communities, carried more severe penalties than crimes involving powder cocaine, which was usually favored by affluent white users. In some cases, crack crimes resulted in a 100-to-1 sentencing disparity. Congress reduced that disparity in 2010. In December, ...Obama commuted the sentences of eight federal inmates who received sentences under the old rules. 'There are more low-level, nonviolent drug offenders who remain in prison, and who would likely have received a substantially lower sentence if convicted of precisely the same offenses today,' Mr. Cole said at a New York State Bar Association event. 'This is not fair, and it harms our criminal justice system.' Congress is considering a bill that would make the new sentencing guidelines retroactive, which could make up to 12,000 prisoners eligible for reduced sentences. ...Prison officials will also spread the word among inmates that low-level, nonviolent drug offenders might be eligible to apply for clemency. About 30,000 inmates—roughly 15 percent of the prison population—were serving crack sentences at the end of 2011, according to federal data." [54320, 54357]

According to the Department of Labor, first-time claims for unemployment benefits rose to 348,000 in the week ending January 25—up 19,000 from the prior week. [54324, 54341]

The Department of Justice announces that it will seek the death penalty for Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. (Pamela Geller asks, "Why was this even a question? To The boy who is dead, the mom who is dead, the man with no legs—allahu akbar. ...This is a face-saving gesture. The clueless, politically correct, willfully ignorant Feds discounted intel they received from Russia about Tamerlan Tsarnaev, and failed to investigate the mosque the Tsarnaev brothers attended in Boston, despite the fact that it has numerous ties to jihad terrorists. Now, when it is far too late, they're trying to look tough on jihad terror." Author Brad Thor tweets, "When Boston bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev gets convicted, he should have to run the marathon route, never knowing at what point death will come.") [54330, 54331, 54342, 54364, 54492]

FoxNews.com reports, "House Republican leaders on Thursday endorsed a limited path to legal status for some illegal immigrants, in a move Democrats said could open the door to a deal on comprehensive immigration legislation. The position was included in a

document released by party leaders during their annual retreat in Maryland. The ‘standards for immigration reform’ document ruled out a special path to citizenship for illegal immigrants. Instead, it said immigrants living here illegally could remain and live legally if they pass background checks, pay fines and back taxes, learn to speak English and understand U.S. civics, and can support themselves without access to welfare.” (The GOP is mistaken if it thinks such a deal will help them win Hispanic votes; what it will do is cause it to lose conservative votes. On the other hand, the Democrats are unlikely to support legislation that does not include citizenship for illegal immigrants. Republicans will be fortunate if the legislation goes nowhere. Although Democrats and labor unions will heavily criticize the GOP proposal, much of their rhetoric will be for show and to please the far left and Hispanic voters. But the Democrats will have no problem working with “establishment” Republicans on the issue, because in the long run they know they will get what they want: millions more registered Democrat voters.) [54326, 54346, 54363, 54372, 54454]

At NationalReview.com Quin Hilyer writes, “The Buchananite Right is against doing immigration reform this year. National Review’s editors are against it. William Kristol is against it. Unions have historically opposed the idea—and most union and non-union laborers other than the illegals themselves still do. The Heritage Foundation is against it. Most conservative grassroots activists groups are against it. The always-wise Peter Kirsanow of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is against it. The talk radio hosts are against it. Leading conservative (and centrist) bloggers—Michelle Malkin, and the folks at RedState, and Mickey Kaus—are against it. The libertarian Jack Kemp disciple Deroy Murdock is against it. Polls consistently show the public as a whole ranks immigration reform way down the list of priorities. Polls consistently show that most Republican voters oppose any immigration reform that doesn’t require absolutely secure our borders before any other reforms are considered. And the experience of President George W. Bush’s attempt at reform, which split the Republican party so badly that it played a big role in causing the loss of Congress in 2006, argues heavily against it. If the House leadership wants its members to have their phone lines jammed with angry callers, their e-mail inboxes full of furious messages, their town meetings featuring absolutely toxic atmospheres, and (if anything actually is signed into law) their voters stay home in droves in November, then the leadership will continue to pursue this idea. Or they could back off from immigration reform, focus on Obamacare, offer free-market fixes for the health-care system, and sail to victory in the fall. Seems like an easy choice to me.” [54360]

Meanwhile, Congressman Steve King (R-IA) warns, “Every day we discuss immigration is a day that helps Barack Obama change the topic from Obamacare. ...If you wonder what [Obama] is doing when he presents minimum wage, the unemployment extension, and the immigration issue, he is changing the topic from Obamacare.” [54349]

According to the Pentagon, Obama plans to appoint Navy Vice Admiral Mike Rogers to be the next director of the National Security Agency, replacing retiring General Keith Alexander. NSA chief operating officer Richard Ledgett will become the next deputy director. [54327]

Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz says in an interview with Reuters that U.S. oil production has increased so rapidly it has outpaced the ability to transport it. He says, “The core approach, really, is that our infrastructure needs to build out. Here we have a case, especially with the production in North Dakota, where the Bakken shale [output] zoomed from essentially nothing to past one million barrels a day. There’s not the pipe infrastructure for moving the product out... you have a slight mismatch in terms of how we add infrastructure to handling our new production.” (Moniz does not mention the possibility that the Keystone XL pipeline could help handle the increased output.) [54365, 54366]

According to a Kaiser Family Foundation survey, “47 percent of the uninsured said they hold unfavorable views of the [ObamaCare] law while 24 percent said they liked it. These negative views have increased since December, when 43 percent of the uninsured panned the law and 36 percent liked it. ... Among all Americans, the sentiment was also negative, with 50 percent holding unfavorable views of the law and 34 percent supporting it.” (Inasmuch as the whole point of the Affordable Care Act was to get uninsured Americans covered, it can hardly be considered good news for the White House that roughly half of its target audience does not even support the scheme. The poll results suggest that a fair number of the people who supported ObamaCare perhaps did so only because they did not yet realize how much it would cost them.) [54373, 54374]

The Mayo Clinic announces reductions in health insurance coverage for its own employees effective 2015—as a result of ObamaCare. KTTC reports, “‘For folks that use no medical care beyond primary care visits and preventative services, their premiums could go down, or stay the same,’ [company CEO Dr. Robert] Nesse said. ‘But folks who need more care will be responsible for more of the cost of that care.’ That’s bad news for folks who have diseases like diabetes. We could not find any Mayo employee willing to speak on camera, but one who spoke with us anonymously says the cost of his insulin co-pay has more than doubled just this year. He says he and other diabetic Mayo retirees have had to stop taking some of their medication. He fears the changes in 2015 will make it even more expensive.” [54457, 54458, 54459]

Dr. Kristin S. Held writes Aetna, stating, “I will no longer serve as a physician for Aetna patients under the terms of our contractual agreement, which you most recently unilaterally changed. ... [H]ealth insurance has evolved such that insurers and government have inserted themselves smack-dab in the middle of the once sacred patient-doctor relationship. I am [now] called a provider—not a doctor. My patient is now yours—not mine. What I can do as a physician now has strangulating strings and nonsensical numbers attached—to you and government and money—not the best interests of the patients. ObamaCare, the ‘law of the land,’ contains ever-changing-at-the-whim-of HHS, politically-expedient mandates, rewards, penalties, rules and regulations with which I cannot rationally or morally treat my patients and run a practice, much less interpret, implement, or comply. ... Only by logging in [to Healthcare.gov] as a prospective patient did my office manager and I discover that Aetna was selling plans for which I am a provider—effectively selling my services without even asking, much less informing me that my services would be sold on such a site, under the auspices of new

terms with which I will not comply. ...Accept this as my official written notice that the changes you have unilaterally made to our contract are unacceptable to me and make our contract null and void. You must explain this to your patients. You must tell them that they have purchased a product that was misrepresented to them and that you cannot deliver. It saddens me to think of the decreased access to care from actual physicians and the shockingly increased costs Aetna patients will now experience because of your choice to collude with big government rather than collaborate with patients and physicians.” [54407, 54451, 54452, 54490]

According to a Public Policy Polling survey, “Fox News is both the most trusted and least trusted name in news. 35% of Americans say they trust Fox News more than any other TV news outlet, followed by 14% for PBS, 11% for ABC, 10% for CNN, 9% for CBS, 6% each for Comedy Central and MSNBC, and 3% for NBC. It [Fox] leads the way because of its continuing near total support among Republicans as the place to go for news—69% of Republicans say it’s their most trusted source with nothing else polling above 7%.” (MSNBC actually does very little “hard news” reporting. It’s scheduling consists mostly of opinion programs.) “Meanwhile Democrats are split between a lot of different outlets when it comes to who they have the most faith in—PBS at 21%, CNN and ABC at 18%, and CBS and MSNBC at 12% all poll in double digits. It’s interesting that while Fox News and MSNBC are often thought of as equivalent, Fox News is by far and away the most trusted source of GOP voters while MSNBC is only tied for 4th among Democrats. Fox News also leads the ‘least trusted’ list in our annual poll. 33% give it that designation to 19% for MSNBC, 14% for Comedy Central, 11% for CNN, 5% for ABC, 4% for CBS, and 2% each for NBC and PBS. That’s largely because 57% of Democrats give it their least trusted designation, with only Comedy Central at 18% also hitting double digits with them. MSNBC leads the way among Republicans at 38%, but CNN at 17% and Comedy Central at 13% both hit double digits as well.” [54345]

CNSNews.com reports, “The president of a South Dakota-based financial services company says he was startled to hear ...Obama call his new government-sponsored retirement program ‘MyRA’ in Tuesday’s State of the Union address because that’s the same name as his firm’s four-year-old ‘keynote’ investment product.” Doug Lawson, president and CEO of Kingdom Trust, states, “Being a founder of the company, when you hear your first product out the door’s name—and it was the basis for what you kind of started on—it caught my attention, to say the least.” (The name is trademarked and no one in the Obama administration asked Lawson for permission to use it.) [54358]

Time.com reports that Christian leaders in Syria are begging the Obama administration to stop supporting the rebels who oppose the regime of President Bashar al-Assad—because those rebels are committing atrocities against Christians as well as Assad forces. “The Syrian Christian churches are not publicly calling for outright support of the Assad regime. Doing so would further endanger their followers and hurt the moral component of their case, given the regime’s alleged use of chemical weapons against civilians. Instead, they’re meeting privately with law makers, diplomats and think tanks. Sunday evening [January 26], they spoke with Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA) at St. John the Beloved Catholic church in nearby McLean [Virginia]. On Monday, they held court at the

Heritage Foundation and Catholic University of America. On Tuesday, they met with Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Rep. Robert Aderholt (R-AL) and Rep. Louie Gohmert (R-TX), and then met with leaders of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Wednesday's lineup included Sen. Lindsay Graham (R-SC), Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV), State Department officials including Lawrence Silverman, Near East Affairs deputy acting secretary, and Uzra Zeya, acting assistant secretary for the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, and then a final stop at the U.S. Institute for Peace." [54437, 54438]

On *Special Report*, syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer comments, "You can have executive orders that implement already existing laws. What Obama has done, in the DREAM Act... essentially, he passed a law by executive order that the Congress had rejected, that wouldn't pass. That is unbelievably unconstitutional. It's as if a Republican ran and said, 'I don't like the capital gains tax.' Congress rejects an abolition of that tax, and then he orders the IRS not to collect it. People would be up in arms and would be impeaching. He's done that over and over again on immigration, drug laws, climate change, and of course, on ObamaCare, which he has unilaterally altered lawlessly at least 15 times." [54387, 54388, 54481, 54732]

On January 31 Katie Pavlich writes at Townhall.com that the House Republican outline for immigration reform "looks eerily similar to the [Senate's] gang of eight amnesty legislation. ...As usual, the outline (which will be used to develop legislation) is full of promises for border security first, with a fix in the immigration system second." (*The Obama Timeline* suggests that *nothing* be done *other than* enforce existing immigration laws. It is a false choice to argue, "Well, we *have to* grant illegal immigrants citizenship because we can't deport 10-20 million people!" It is, of course, theoretically possible but logistically impossible to deport 20 million people. But that does *not* mean citizenship must be granted. A viable alternative to citizenship and deportation is to simply *do nothing*. Some illegal immigrants have been in the United States illegally for decades, not having been granted citizenship. That they might live another few decades without citizenship is no worse a fate. "We need to get them out of the shadows" is also a false argument. The illegal immigrants entered those "shadows" of their own free will, and can get out of the shadows any time they wish by returning to their homelands. The choice to remain in the United States illegally and always be on the lookout for ICE agents is theirs to make.) [54346, 54378]

Reporters laugh when White House press secretary Jay Carney claims, "Comprehensive immigration reform... uh, would, uh, significantly reduce our deficit, would expand economic growth, would raise, uh, wages, uh, and would enhance our, uh, uh, you know, the, the creation of innovative, uh, businesses..." [54394]

The Wall Street Journal reports, "An Obama administration analysis of the Keystone XL pipeline application shows the project wouldn't likely change the amount of oil ultimately removed from Canadian oil sands, suggesting that building the pipeline would have little impact on global climate change. The report found that the 'approval or denial of any single project is unlikely to significantly affect the rate of extraction of the oil in

the oil sands, or the refining of heavy crude on the U.S. gulf coast,' a State Department official told reporters Friday." Politico calls the State Department report "a body blow to environmentalists but does nothing to change ...Obama's two eventual choices and the fact that either one will be unpopular. Approve Keystone and he angers his liberal base—and donors. Reject it and it remains a thorn in the administration's side for three more years. The State Department report only reinforces the conventional wisdom is that Obama will eventually approve the Canada-to-Texas pipeline. ...The political pros and cons for Obama are anything but simple. And his decision—by no means imminent—will affect his legacy, the prospects for congressional Democrats and the future of the liberal environmental movement, for starters." (Among the opponents of the pipeline is billionaire hedge fund manager Tom "Daddy Greenbucks" Steyer, who has pumped millions of dollars into Democrat campaigns and "green" organizations. Whether Obama cares more about creating pipeline jobs or Democrat candidates cashing checks from Steyer remains to be seen.) [52455, 54367, 54368, 54369, 54384, 54385, 54422]

At HotAir.com Erika Johnsen writes, "[E]ven the Obama administration only has so much power to continually deny brazen facts, and the department's Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement released on Friday afternoon was destined to conclude more or less the same thing that their last version did: That the construction of Keystone XL will have only a negligible impact on climate change. Canada is planning on developing and transporting their oil sands come hell or high water, and if it isn't going to get done with the United States' pipeline partnership, then it will just have to happen by rail, by sea, and through their own volition. ...The report actually concludes that Canada's oil sands will emit about 17 percent more greenhouse gases than conventional crude, but again, that isn't even the point here: The point is that those oil sands are coming out of the ground either way. As for jobs, the report again concludes: 'During construction, proposed Project spending would support approximately 42,100 jobs (direct, indirect, and induced), and approximately \$2 billion in earnings throughout the United States.'" The State Department report now means *yet another* "comment period" during which both sides on the issue can again argue their points. "And the final step, of course, comes down to ...Obama himself. If his own administration is having trouble coming up with any valid reasons why they should keep frustrating the pipeline—because, sorry eco-radicals, but just sticking it to fossil fuels because you don't like fossil fuels is not a serious, real-world option—I don't know how he'll be able to spin an ultimate 'no.'" [54367, 54368, 54369, 54384, 54385]

WeeklyStandard.com notes a KING-TV report about Seattle Children's Hospital, which has faced 125 patients who are technically not entitled to care at the facility because it is not in the ObamaCare provider network. (The hospital has treated some of the children anyway, but obviously cannot continue to do so without reimbursement.) [54376]

Politico reports, "Several individuals close to ...Obama on Friday launched the Barack H. Obama Foundation, which will oversee the planning process for his presidential library. The leaders of the effort are Obama friend Marty Nesbitt, former Obama fundraiser Julianna Smoot and J. Kevin Poorman. The group will handle the selection process that aims to select a site for the future library by early 2015. 'I'm humbled and honored that

...Obama has entrusted me to lead this effort,' Nesbitt said in a statement. '[Obama's] future library will one day serve as an important part of our nation's historical record, and our mission is to build a library that tells ...Obama's remarkable story in an interactive way that will inspire future generations to become involved in public service.'" (Politico does not explain how a new organization can be given the same name as the foundation set up by Obama's half-brother, Malik Obama. Politico does not offer any clues as to which of the 57 states will have the honor of hosting the library.) [54208, 54252, 54386, 54852]

FoxNews.com reports, "No longer facing the imminent threat of a U.S. military strike, the Assad regime is dragging its feet on relinquishing its chemical weapons—leaving U.S. officials scrambling to pressure the Syrian government to honor the terms of last year's deal. The Obama administration acknowledged on Thursday that the regime has shipped out less than 5 percent of its chemical arms. The country is weeks behind schedule, and may miss next week's deadline to ship all its chemical agents out of the country. This, despite ...Obama declaring in his State of the Union address that Syria's chemical weapons 'are being eliminated' thanks to American diplomacy. The administration still hopes diplomacy will prevail. It also may have few other options, with little appetite in Congress for military intervention. White House Press Secretary Jay Carney said Friday that officials are working with partners to 'keep up the pressure' on the regime." (Syria will likely withstand the pressure, because Bashar al-Assad knows the odds of Obama using military force are close to zero.) [54390]

According to a filing with the Federal Elections Commission, the Obama for America organization has \$230,914.21 cash on hand but debt of \$2,957,924.88. The Romney campaign still has \$1.18 million cash on hand and no debt. The Republican National Committee raised \$80.6 million in 2013, to the Democrat National Committee's \$62.2 million. The DNC also has \$15.6 million in debt. [54408, 54409, 54410]

According to TimesofIsrael.com, "US representatives in peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians offered Ramallah a 'lease' deal for West Bank settlements that lie outside the major settlement blocs. The Palestinian Authority rejected such a deal outright. Palestinian sources who spoke to The Times of Israel Friday said the offer referred to large settlements, particularly those in the area of Ramallah, including Eli, Ofra and Beit El. Other sources, however, claimed that the proposal referred to all settlements outside the major blocs, including those that are considered isolated." (Why the Obama administration believes it can give away Israeli land without the consent of the Israelis is not explained. Pamela Geller writes, "Judea and Samaria are Jewish land. Who died and made Obama the landlord of Jewish land ?" Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu has stated, "I do not intend to remove a single settlement; I do not intend to displace a single Israeli.") [54439]

During a Google sponsored Internet "town hall meeting," Obama is asked by Covington, Kentucky resident Rebecca Stewart, "My question regards Obamacare, which I think probably has a general consensus right now that the rollout perhaps was premature. I'm probably not the only one whose had really a panicked experience lately trying to figure

out if my 10-year-old son can continue with his specialist or not. And I know that I cannot keep my plan, which I liked, but as I'm trying to decide what to do going forward, I spent weeks with days on the phone, getting confidently delivered wrong answers, conflicting answers and it's becoming quite obvious to me that a lot of agencies, almost everyone I've talked to, is having a lot of trouble figuring out the new rules. So I'm afraid that perhaps average Americans who haven't had the time or ability to do the legwork that I've been able to do are perhaps going to be blind-sided by this. And I'm wondering, my question for you is what are you doing to fix this or simplify what seems to be such a complicated process?" Obama replies, "Well, Rebecca, first of all, it sounds like you were in the individual market, so you already had some sort of insurance plan and the—so, your concern is, in terms of this transition, how does it affect you and your kids? What I'll do first right away is make sure that somebody out of here, this White House calls you directly. And I promise you, not only will they be confident, but it will be the right answer." [54417]

"But," continues Obama. "more generally, what we've been able to do, and you don't have to pussyfoot around, the rollout was a problem because the website wasn't working properly. I will say that in all these big programs, whether it was the prescription drug plan, or Medicare, every time this happens—this is a big country with a lot of complications and millions of people involved—there are going to be some glitches involved. What we have done is—first of all, the website's working: Healthcare.gov. The first place for folks to look to see whether they qualify for a tax credit, whether they can get cheaper insurance through these exchanges, is to go to healthcare.gov, where you do not have to wait anymore. And generally speaking, for the majority of people, certainly if you don't have health insurance, this will be a good deal for you. If you already have health insurance—for the majority of folks like you who do, Rebecca, typically your prices will be lower or comparable. And you have better health insurance because the insurance companies won't be able to drop you when you need it most. There aren't going to be lifetime limits, so that suddenly you find yourself with a huge bill at the end. And you may qualify for tax credits." [54417]

"If, though, after you look at that, it appears that you still are going to have a tough time, or if you have a particular specialist, you haven't found that specialist in the network, of the exchange that's offered in Kentucky, then we are looking at rules to make sure that somebody who is actively being treated, for example, can remain with their specialist for the duration of their treatment. [Obama does not explain why that situation was not considered *before* the legislation was written.] That's what I'll try to provide more information about. For people who are generally watching, who have very specific questions like this, Rebecca, we have set up help lines, and what I would suggest is that everybody who's listening, if you have a particular question on this that is not answerable over the internet through healthcare.gov, call up one of the call centers, and in the case of the state of Kentucky, they've got a pretty good operation there. Call up them and find out what exactly your problem is and hopefully get a good answer. But you, Rebecca, since you're talking to [me] directly, will get, I guarantee you, a firm answer by the end of the day." Stewart begins to respond to Obama's reference to the help lines, "Yes, and I *have* called..." and is cut off by the moderator. [54417]

Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), in an interview with WKXL Concord News Radio, arrogantly addresses the problem of people who have lost their doctors and hospitals because of ObamaCare: “At least for people who are willing to pay more, that they have that option of going to their doctor and hospital no matter what their insurer does.” (In other words, “You may have lost the insurance coverage you liked and your doctor may not be in the ObamaCare network, but you can always pay cash to see your old doctor.”) Asked if she would have voted for ObamaCare knowing what she knows now, she responds, “I would’ve designed it differently had I been designing it. I wasn’t the person who was writing the law. Hindsight is 20/20.” (In other words, “I didn’t read the bill; I only voted for it.”) [54505, 54506, 54526]

At ChicagoMag.com Carol Felsenthal writes about Obama’s closest advisor and friend, Valerie Jarrett. Felsenthal notes, “In a recent book on the 2012 campaign, Jonathan Alter writes that Rahm Emanuel, on agreeing to become Obama’s chief of staff, recognized that Jarrett would wield such outsized power that he tried unsuccessfully to finesse her into Obama’s senate seat. (Alter also speculates that Valerie Jarrett was one reason why Rahm hightailed it out of DC in late 2010 into the relative ease of the Fifth Floor [Chicago mayor’s office].) ...Others in media and Washington circles portray Jarrett, who held top positions in Chicago government and business, as a brilliant strategist and thinker who practically runs both wings of the White House and who did as much or more than anyone to put the Obamas there. ...The reality is that [Jarrett’s] power stems from friendship with the first couple, forged by after-hour access, total trust that her only motive is to protect the first couple’s images and advance their interests. Valerie Jarrett is not powerful because she creates and implements policy, but because she’s the last person [Obama] and/or [his wife] talk to, sometimes over dinner in their private dining room. ...There’s always the historical analysis to come, but so far she is considered to have a spotty record, especially on the key portfolio item—serving as the administration’s liaison to business. ...[A]s the *Washington Post*’s Dana Milbank has written, ‘current and former White House officials ...raised questions about Jarrett’s effectiveness and judgment.’ *Politico*’s Mike Allen and Jim VandeHei write that Obama’s ‘...relations with business leaders could hardly be worse.’ ...Jason Horowitz, then writing about Jarrett for the *Washington Post*, described ‘disgruntled Obama donors in the financial industry...[who] have cast Jarrett as insufficiently sophisticated on economic issues and incapable of brooking any dissent about Obama. ‘I have always thought she was a liability,’ said one prominent investor and donor... ‘I’ve talked to people in the White House about it, and they have agreed with me, but they are scared to say anything.’” [54665]

Felsenthal continues, “In his latest book, Jonathan Alter writes that the oft-told story of Obama insisting on interviewing Jarrett before allowing his girlfriend to take a job in Daley’s administration did not ‘amuse’ [then Chicago Mayor] Rich Daley. According to Alter, Daley was no fan of Jarrett, finding her ‘indecisive as city planning commissioner’ and refusing to promote her to chief of staff. Alter also writes that a CEO who visited the White House remarked, ‘When we go to the White House we talk to people we wouldn’t hire.’ In their book on the 2012 campaign, Mark Halperin and John Heilemann write that

Wall Streeters ‘disparaged Obama’s team for lacking anyone with a meaningful background in the private sector. When Jarrett would huff, ‘Well I have one,’ they rolled their eyes; they considered her a political hack, ineffectual and entitled.’ ...Jonathan Alter’s reporting revealed... ‘Staffers feared her, but didn’t like or trust her. At meetings she said little or nothing, instead lingering afterwards to express her views directly to [Obama], creating anxiety for her underlings and insulting them by saying, ‘I don’t talk just to hear myself talking.’ Derogatory nicknames abound for Jarrett: ‘Keeper of the Essence,’ ‘Night Stalker’ (because of her access after hours to the Obamas in their private quarters), ‘personal custodian of [Obama’s] lofty motives and gifts.’ ... Jarrett will continue to harness her future to the Obamas’. Just as she helped with their transition to the White House, she’ll help with their transition out of it. She’ll be a key player in every aspect of the Obama Library and Museum, from pushing for it to be located at the University of Chicago, where she has deep ties, to helping to choose an architect, to raising money, to articulating and polishing the details of Barack Obama’s legacy. As Jodie Kantor told me, ‘I don’t think Valerie’s ever leaving [the Obamas]. ...She has thrown her entire life into their cause, and she’s made it very clear that she would happily run in front of a speeding truck for them... She has taken [Obama’s] and [Michelle Obama’s] success as the defining mission of her being.’ [54665]