



Obama Biden Watch



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The Harry Reid Flap: Democrat Hypocrisy And Desperation

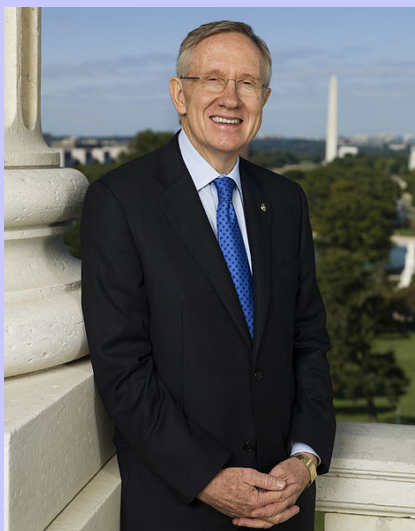
The Democrat establishment from President Obama on down must be furious! Because of the precarious situation they find themselves in over the uncertain state of their health care negotiations, liberals have been left with no choice but to go out and defend Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), and brush off the seriousness of his racially insensitive comments.

It was recently disclosed in a book about the 2008 presidential election that Harry Reid stated Barack Obama could be a successful candidate because he is “light-skinned” and speaks “with no Negro dialect, unless he wanted to have one.” To make matters worse, it has been reported that Reid was told that the interview for the book was off the record. If that’s the case, is this how Senator Reid always talks when he’s “off the record”?

Reid’s divisive choice of words were immediately compared to then-Senator Majority Leader Trent Lott’s 2002 comments in which he praised Senator Strom Thurmond’s 1948 run for president. Lott resigned his leadership post after being criticized by many prominent politicians.

Among the Democrats sounding off at the time was Reid himself and Joe Biden. Reid—then the

Minority Whip of the U.S. Senate—stated, “as closely as I’ve worked with him, I don’t know how in the world I could condone, support or understand his statements...I think what he said is not good for America; it’s repugnant what he said.” Reid later said that Lott had “no alternative” but to resign. Then-Senator Joe Biden (D-DE) stated, “...you cannot be insensitive to race issues from positions of leadership....they’ve got to define for themselves what kind of face they want to put on their party. And my guess is out of their self-interest, they may very well decide that...Trent has to go.”



Harry Reid is on the Brink

The conventional wisdom is that if Reid were forced to resign his position as the most powerful Senator in the country during this critical time in the health care saga, the bill would also likely not survive. This dilemma has left the President of the United States and the vast majority of his caucus with no choice but to adopt a double standard and support Reid. If the Democrats were to fail in their year-long quest to get a health care bill signed into law, it could spell doom for the Obama presidency. Their collective indifference towards Reid’s remarks reeks of desperation.

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What Happened to Transparency?

President Obama campaigned promising to have the most transparent administration in history, going so far as to say that the negotiations over his health care proposal would be televised on C-SPAN. In fact, on eight separate televised occasions, then-presidential candidate Obama promised to televise healthcare negotiations on C-SPAN so that the American people could see who was in the room influencing the legislation and who was cutting deals with whom. Now, even the totally non-partisan cable network called President Obama out on his broken promise.

As *The Associated Press* reports: "In a Dec. 30 letter to House and Senate leaders released Tuesday, C-SPAN chief executive Brian Lamb asked for negotiations on a compromise bill to be opened up for public viewing, as Democrats work to reconcile differences between legislation passed by the two chambers."

Unsurprisingly, the Obama administration and the Democrat-run Congress have rejected all entreaties to open the negotiations to the public and continue to meet behind closed doors. On January 13th and 14th, President Obama summoned the Democrat Congressional leadership to the White House to hold closed-door meetings to cut deals and plot hardball strategy to save the boondoggle of a bill that Senator Chris Dodd claims is "hanging on by a thread."

It's not just President Obama that is breaking the promise of the "most transparent administration in history." Vice President Joe Biden is getting in on the act as well, and keeping in character as the jester of the White House, the gaffe is delightfully ironic. As the *Los Angeles Times* noted on January 14th, the Vice President's daily schedule included a large number of "closed press" meetings (meaning that there would be no media allowed to report on what happened in the meetings), but one in particular caught our eye: Meeting with the Chairman of the Recovery Act Transparency and Accountability Board - "Closed Press."

It just doesn't get any better than that.

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Published By
Citizens United

Editor
David N. Bossie

Managing Editor
J.T. Mastranadi

Contributor
Will Holley

Publication Design
Kirk Risinger
Michael Catts

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Two committee chairmen, one from the House and one from the Senate, each voiced dire concerns about how the negotiations are coming along. Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT) said the bill is “hanging on by a thread” and that “everyone feels, I guess, to some degree who have been for this, that they would have liked something different, and that’s not uncommon when you’re considering an issue of this magnitude.” Similarly, in the House, Representative Charlie Rangel said that Democrats have “a problem on both sides of the Capitol. A serious problem.”

Part of this problem could be Senator Ben Nelson (D-NE). Nelson, who delivered the critical 60th vote to pass the initial version of the bill, said recently that he is not 100 percent certain that he will vote for the conference report, particularly if it contains a public option or watered-down anti-abortion language.

Even if Senator Reid holds on to his leadership post, his popularity in his home state of Nevada is suffering horribly. Recent polling indicates that all three of Reid’s potential Republican challengers would defeat him in a general election match-up in November 2010. According to a Rasmussen poll, Danny Tarkanian beats Reid 50 percent to 36 percent; Sue Lowden beats Reid 48 percent to 36 percent; and Sharron Angle beats Reid 44 percent to 40 percent. Rasmussen also found that only 39 percent of those polled favored the trillion dollar Democrat health plan, and Reid is obviously one of the plan’s leading advocates.

Senator Reid’s unfortunate comments about President Obama are not the first time he’s gotten himself into hot water for saying something inappropriate.

Here are a few of Reid’s “lowlights”:

December 2009: Reid compares opponents of health care bill to slavery defenders.

August 2009: Reid calls town hall activists “evil-mongers.”

August 2009: Reid says that Ted Kennedy’s death will help Democrats pass health care bill.

April 2008: Reid blasts Capitol Hill tourists: “You can always tell when it is summertime because you can smell the visitors.”

June 2007: Reid calls Joint Chiefs Chairman Peter Pace “incompetent.”

April 2007: Reid Says The Iraq War “is lost.”

May 2005: Reid calls President George W. Bush “a loser.”

March 2005: Reid calls Alan Greenspan “one of the biggest political hacks we have in Washington.”

Notable Quotables

Fox News:

“Forty percent of Americans said they were conservative, compared with 36 percent who said they were moderates and 21 percent who professed to be liberals.”

Senator Ben Nelson (D-NE):

“I think it was a mistake to take health care on as opposed to continuing to spend the time on the economy... I would have preferred not to be dealing with health care in the midst of everything else, and I think working on the economy would have been a wiser move.”

Congressman Dan Boren (D-OK):

“I think the House Democratic leadership along with the administration made a very large mistake by focusing on a lot of different pieces of legislation that would not do a lot to help the economy.”

Another Unworthy Candidate

Democrats have spent the weeks since the Christmas Day terror attack complaining that Senator Jim DeMint of South Carolina has been holding up the Obama Administration's nominee for head of the Transportation Security Administration purely for political reasons. Of course, this is merely an attempt by the Obama White House to shift blame for taking their eye off the ball when it comes to the War on Terror to Republicans. But Senator DeMint's hold on the nominee has allowed some further scrutiny into his past, and it looks like Senator DeMint has done America a service.

Initially, Senator DeMint placed a hold on the nomination of Erroll Southers to head the TSA out of concern that Southers would change the rules about unionizing TSA agents. In the intervening weeks, however, new concerns have come to light.

To begin with, when Southers was serving in the FBI, he inappropriately used Bureau resources to run a background check on the boyfriend of his ex-wife. Compounding the problem, *The Washington Post* reports that he "misled Congress" about the incident. At first, Southers claimed that he asked a local police department to investigate the man, and then after his nomination made it out of the Homeland Security Committee, he owned up to running two checks himself and downloading confidential information which he then passed on to a local police department. The act of using confidential law enforcement databases for personal reasons is enough to raise serious questions about Southers' fitness for a position that screens millions of Americans every single day, but his misleading answers to Congress are completely



Is Erroll Southers the man for the Job?

unacceptable. The head of the Transportation Security Administration must be beyond reproach when it comes to trustworthiness. As new and more invasive methods of screening are being employed in the wake of the Christmas Day terror attack, the TSA will have more information on travelers than ever. The person running the TSA must secure not only our safety, but our privacy as well. Is this the man for the job?

Even more concerning, a 2008 interview that Southers gave reveals that he claims that al-Qaeda's desire to attack the United States stems from the "connectivity that we have with countries such as Israel [and] France." While one can understand that the close relationship between the United States and Israel would enrage Islamists who are dedicated to the destruction of that country, does our relationship with France really put us in danger? Is it possible to believe that our connection with France is why al-Qaeda doesn't like us? Such a comment demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding of the threat the Islamist terrorism presents to the United States.

President Obama and the Democrats should stop complaining about Senator DeMint's demand for public and transparent debate in the Senate on this nominee and instead examine what Southers has said and what he believes about the threats posed to this country. If President Obama truly believes that this man is the most fit individual to be in charge of the agency that keeps American air travel safe, he should live up to his pledge of transparency and call for an open debate on Southers' nomination himself.

Obama Agenda Stifles Job Growth

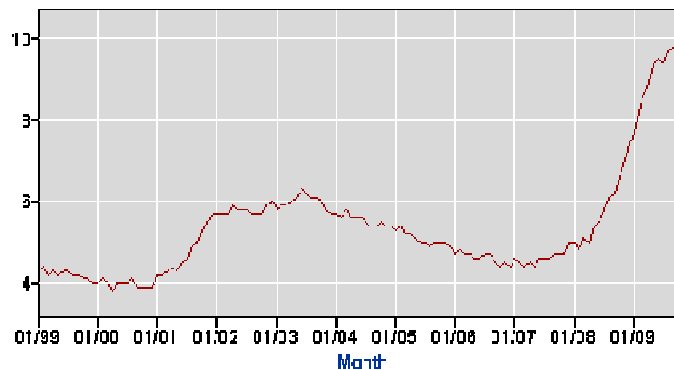
Americans looking for signs of an economic turnaround received another blow on January 14th when the number of people filing for initial unemployment claims jumped to 443,000, adding to the almost 4.6 million Americans filing continuing unemployment claims. Despite billions upon billions of dollars in government spending, people are still losing their jobs. And it's not difficult to understand why.

To begin with, the Democrat "stimulus" bill was utterly ineffective. Much of the funding was directed to so-called "shovel ready" projects that, in reality, were not able to put people to work right away. An analysis by *The Associated Press* which was reviewed by five economists, including some who supported the stimulus when it was being voted on, compared 700 counties that received the most federal "stimulus" dollars with 700 counties that received no money at all. The results? No difference at all. Of course, real-world data on the effects of the first "stimulus" package demonstrating that such spending has very little effect on the average America (aside from saddling them with even more federal debt, of course) has not stopped the Obama Administration from seeking another stimulus package.

Even more critical are the possible effects of anti-growth legislation that the Democrat-controlled Congress and the Obama Administration have on their agenda. None of these pieces of legislation have anything to do with job growth - they are nothing more than political payback for special interests groups that helped the Democrats take over Congress and put President Obama in the White House. Busi-

nesses will not expand their workforce because the health care bill being written behind closed doors may contain huge fines for employers who cannot afford to give a certain level of health insurance to their employees. If a business expands today and a bill is passed next week that requires them to spend a few extra thousand dollars per employee, what do you think will happen to that business?

There is a similar problem occurring with the Obama Administration's push for so-called "Cap and Trade" legislation. Cap and Trade would essentially place a tax on energy. How big? Nobody knows yet. And because nobody knows, businesses cannot buy large manufacturing equipment or make other large expenditures that would spur job growth because they do not know what kind of an energy tax they will be forced to pay next year or the year after.



Unemployment Chart through December 2009

The fundamental problem with the Obama Administration and the Democrat-controlled Congress is that they've been too busy taking care of the special interests that put them in office to pursue an effective agenda that will create jobs in this country. America needs health care reform, but only if it actually cuts costs instead of running up a trillion-dollar tab that our grandchildren will have to pick up. America needs to end her dependence on foreign oil, but not in a way that taxes the very businesses that we're depending on to create jobs. There is a lack of common sense in the Democrats' agenda. It remains to be seen if the American people are beginning to realize that the Democrats in the White House and Congress haven't stimulated anything but liberal interest groups and the unemployment rate. Maybe by November, they'll finally begin to understand.

National Dems Push Panic Button In Bay State

The special election to fill the U.S. Senate seat in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that was previously held by the late Senator Edward M. Kennedy has become an unmitigated nightmare for the Democrats.

State Attorney General Martha Coakley was supposed to cruise to an easy victory in the liberal bastion Bay State over little known Republican State Senator Scott Brown. After all, at the present time, Democrats control the Massachusetts Governor's Mansion, its two U.S. Senate seats (Kennedy and John Kerry had served together since 1985), and all ten congressional districts! President Obama carried Massachusetts in the 2008 presidential election with a commanding 62 percent of the vote.

To recap, Coakley raised the necessary amount of funds to comfortably outspend her underdog opponent on television commercials, and also gobbled up all the critical endorsements that usually pave the way for a Democrat to win big in Massachusetts. But things haven't worked out according to the plan. Polling data, which once showed Coakley with an enormous lead, have suddenly crept within the margin of error. A miracle victory by Brown would give Republicans a 41st vote in the U.S. Senate and could effectively stop the liberal's trillion dollar quest to socialize medicine in the United States. The media has framed this contest as a de facto referendum on the Obama health care plan. Even if Brown gets close to a victory—say within five points—it will speak volumes about the unpopularity of huge portions of the Obama agenda.



Mass. AG Martha Coakley

Instead of getting to save their limited resources for the critical races shaping up across the country this November, the Democratic National Committee, Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, various labor unions and liberal interest groups have been forced to spend huge amounts of money in Massachusetts of all places!

Because of this fact alone, Republicans have already won in Massachusetts, regardless of the final outcome of the race. To date, this is what the various Democrat groups have spent for the Massachusetts special election:

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) - \$685,000

SEIU Local 1199 - \$74,250

Patriot Majority (527 Group) - Undisclosed Amount

Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC) - Nearly \$1,000,000

Citizens For Strength And Security (527 Group) - \$278,000

Democratic National Committee/Massachusetts Democratic Party - \$880,000

AFL-CIO - Sending out hundreds of thousands of leaflets in the mail

It's safe to say that these dollar figures will continue to grow between now and election day. The question for the Democrats is a tough one: Has the damage already been done? A recent headline from the *Washington Examiner* sounded quite pessimistic: "Massachusetts: 'Bottom has fallen out' of Coakley's poll numbers; Dems prepare to explain defeat, protect Obama." We'll keep you posted.

Which Path Will He Choose?

President Obama has indicated that he intends to push for comprehensive immigration reform before the 2010 midterm elections. If this is the case, Americans should brace for another brutally divisive national debate, perhaps more so than the 2009 battle over nationalized health care (which is still ongoing). To be clear, a vast majority of U.S. citizens agree that our immigration system has completely malfunctioned. What they have huge disagreements on is whether illegal immigrants in this country should be granted amnesty. President Obama supports a pathway to citizenship which is code for amnesty and rewarding illegal behavior.

Politically speaking, President Obama would be wise to hold off on immigration reform for a while, and instead finally concentrate on jobs and the economy. One way to do this would be to reach out to Republicans and work together to create new jobs through an innovative energy policy. In order to do this, Mr. Obama and

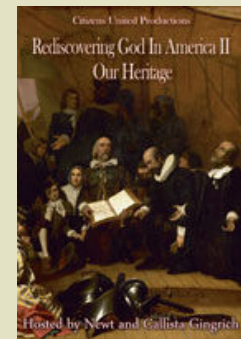
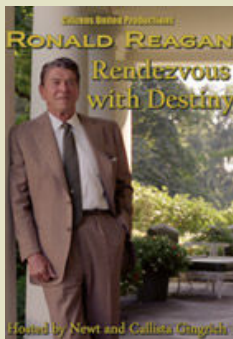
Speaker Pelosi would have to be willing to compromise. This means they would have to allow offshore drilling for oil and gas, and open up drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). In exchange for that, Republicans would agree to appropriate the funds necessary to build and develop the infrastructure for meaningful wind and solar power programs. All of this has the potential to create millions of new jobs and would finally wean us off our addiction to foreign oil.



With his poll numbers dropping weekly, Mr. Obama would be wise to seriously consider some bipartisanship, like he promised way back in 2007 and 2008. Another divisive debate would harm America and Obama's political future.

Citizens United Productions Presents

2009 was the most successful year in Citizens United Productions' history. In those 12 months, we collaborated with Fred Thompson and Newt and Callista Gingrich to release three groundbreaking documentaries. Check out CitizensUnited.org to learn more or order your copies today.



2010 promises to be more exciting than last year. Two films are already nearing the end of production and a number of other projects are already underway. Be on the lookout for premieres of *Generation Zero*, Citizens United's look at the financial meltdown, and *Nine Days That Changed The World*, which is a look back on Pope John Paul II's first pilgrimage to Poland and his role in helping to defeat Soviet Communism. Thank you for your interest and support!

A FINAL THOUGHT FROM
CITIZENS UNITED PRESIDENT
DAVID N. BOSSIE

Dear Friends,

After a marathon negotiating session at the White House, union bosses finally got their pay-off for the huge amount of money and effort that they spent to put President Barack Obama in the White House.

In a moment of candor in 2009, Service Employees International Union President Andy Stern said "We spent a fortune to elect Barack Obama -- \$60.7 million to be exact -- and we're proud of it." Vice President Joe Biden, just days after Stern's remarks replied, "we owe you." And now it seems that the unions are cashing in their markers.

After it was reported that the closed-door negotiations on the health care reform bill had settled on a so-called "Cadillac Tax" on high-cost insurance policies, unions were apoplectic. While the tax was politically targeted at what the Obama Administration deems to be "rich people," due to the success unions have had in reaping huge benefits from employers, their plans fell under the tax as well.

In what might be the most crassly political maneuver of his first year in office, President Obama decided to simply exempt union workers from the tax until 2018 (when, if Democrats are in power, the exemption will likely be extended). The White House could not offer any reasonable policy explanation for the exemption - likely because this is no more than political payback for the millions upon millions that unions have pumped into Democratic campaigns over the decades.

The worst part about this is that the costs will

now fall most heavily on the middle class that President Obama repeatedly promised not to raise taxes on. According to the Chief of Staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation, "some people would be subject to the penalty excise tax when everything shakes out we would expect that some would have incomes less than \$200,000 dollars." This breaks one of the most oft-repeated of President Obama's campaign promises - not to raise taxes on anyone making less than \$250,000 per year.



What's even worse is the effect that this approach will have on non-unionized workers' health care plans. According to Kaiser Health, "two-thirds of employers would raise deductibles, change insurers or scale back coverage to avoid the so-called Cadillac tax on high-cost benefits." So anyone who isn't lucky enough to be a member of an organization that contributed tens of millions to President Obama's campaign is likely to have their health benefits cut in order to avoid a tax that breaks one of the fundamental promises of President Obama's campaign.

Over the last year, we've seen President Obama go from the idealistic candidate who promised to change the way things work in Washington to a liberal who gives handouts to the unions that put him in office. Voters in 2008 were sold a bill of goods that doesn't match up with reality, and as the President's plummeting approval rating has demonstrated, those voters are paying attention.

Sincerely,

David N. Bossie