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# AIM REPORT

For Fairness, Balance  
and Accuracy in News  
Reporting

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## The Deceitful Selling of Obamacare

By Roger Aronoff

**M**IT Professor Jonathan Gruber's comments regarding the "stupidity of the American voter" necessitating legislators to craft the Obamacare law in such a way that voters wouldn't understand its impact have sparked outrage, mostly from conservatives. But while Americans are focusing on comments that Gruber has now retracted, they should also pay attention to the real misinformation that he has been peddling about the signature health care legislation all along.

"He called you stupid," writes Ron Fournier for National Journal. "He admitted that the White House lied to you. Its officials lied to all of us—Republicans, Democrats, and independents; rich and poor; white and brown; men and women," and that "the law never would have passed if the administration had been honest about the fact that the so-called penalty for noncompliance with the mandate was actually a tax."

"Liberals should be the angriest," said Fournier. He said that he has "to admit, as a supporter, that Obamacare was built and sold on a foundation of lies. No way around it." We say, welcome to Obamaland. It's not just Obamacare, it's pretty much everything they are selling. But it's good to see someone from the mainstream media acknowledging this, however belated it may be. Actually, Fournier has been one of the more honest members of the liberal media. Hopefully, this will help inform his judgment on other issues as well, such as the IRS and Benghazi scandals.

But Gruber's initial comments about this legislation's authors deceiving voters haven't generally received attention in the mainstream media. Most have ignored it. Howard Kurtz, host of the Fox News Channel's "Media Buzz" went on "The O'Reilly Factor" and called it a "virtual blackout," and "inexcusable" how the media have ignored this story. Others are trying to spin it to help the Obama administration. The Washington Post, for example, has praised Gruber as "the man who's willing to say what everyone else is only thinking about Obamacare." And New York Times writer Josh Barro went on MSNBC and justified Gruber's comments, saying, "So, the public puts politicians in a position where the only thing they can do to make the public happy is lie and so, people lied." Apparently, the ends justified



the means for Barro. Anything to get the President's signature health reform through Congress.

As Rush Limbaugh said, imagine how the media would have reacted if a former George W. Bush adviser had said they had lied about weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq, because Americans were too stupid to otherwise support going to war to remove Saddam Hussein from power.

Gruber backed away from his "stupidity of the American voter" contention in an appearance on "The Ronan Farrow" show on MSNBC, saying he spoke "off the cuff" at an academic conference and "inappropriately." But this isn't the first time he's used that excuse.

"I think what's important to remember politically about this is, if you're a state and you don't set up an exchange, that means your citizens don't get their tax credits," Gruber said to a small audience in 2012 during a controversy that erupted this July, according to The Washington Post. "But your citizens still pay the taxes that support this bill. So you're essentially saying to your citizens, you're going to pay all the taxes to help all the other states in the country."

"The comments, which were made during a question-and-answer session two years ago, appeared to corroborate a claim by the law's detractors that the federal government intentionally coerces the states into creating their own exchanges by withholding funding if states fail to do so," reports Jose A. DelReal for The Washington Post. Gruber claimed at the time his comments were "off-the-cuff" and therefore should be dismissed, just like

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# AIM in the News

**AIM Editor Roger Aronoff** appeared again on the Philadelphia, PA **Conservative Commando** radio show, this time to talk about his article, "Obama and the Media Attempt to Distance Gruber from Obamacare."

He spoke about how **MIT Professor Jonathan Gruber** provoked national controversy with his comment that **Obamacare** was written in a tortured manner to take advantage of the "stupidity of the American voter." **Aronoff** had exposed in two recent articles that the MIT economist has consistently misled the public about **Obamacare's** effects, and has repeatedly derided American voters' economic and political intelligence.

Incredibly, nearly a week after the story broke, **President Obama** claimed in a press conference that **Gruber** was "an adviser who was never on our staff," and that he had just heard about **Gruber's** comments, which he disagreed with.

**Aronoff** pointed out that **President Obama** was clearly not telling the truth about his history with and knowledge of **Gruber**.

In addition, **Gruber** visited the White House more than a dozen times between 2009 and 2014; and received close to \$6 million from various government entities.

## Editor's Message



### Dear Fellow Media Watchdogs:

One of the remarkable aspects of the Obama administration is how often and effortlessly they lie to the American people, and are allowed to get away with it. While it may be true that his lies are often exposed on Fox News or talk radio, the rest of the media seem to accept them, even encourage them. It's as if they appreciate it as a slap at the Republicans. This attitude has only been heightened since the recent elections brought in a solid majority of Republicans to run the Senate, increased numbers in the House, and continued dominance at the state level. This, as we have often been told, came after Republicans had supposedly shut the government down, were marginalized as too extreme and anti-immigrant, and were too out of touch with middle America, and at war with themselves. The pollsters and the pundits largely failed to recognize the way the electorate viewed Obama and the Democrats.

According to the historian and journalist Victor Davis Hanson, "Every statistic that President Obama has produced on Obamacare enrollment, deportation, unemployment and GDP growth is in some ways a lie. Almost everything he has said about granting amnesty was untrue, from his own contradictions to the congressionally sanctioned small amnesties of prior presidents. Almost every time Obama steps to the lectern we expect two things: he will lecture us on our moral failings and what he will say will be abjectly untrue."

On top of that, the firing of Chuck Hagel—the one Republican in his cabinet—proved to be another defining moment. As the President was praising him for his time as Secretary of Defense, while announcing his "resignation," the President's minions were tossing Hagel under the bus as weak and indecisive. They told The New York Times that they just didn't think he was quite up to the task. Hagel served his intended purpose: Republican cover for social engineering in the military, deep cuts, disastrous policies and tactical decisions.

Can anyone step up and defend what has happened during this administration? The plan to defeat the Islamic State (IS) is to train 5,000 members of Free Syrian Army (once they're vetted) in Saudi Arabia, bring them back to fight in Syria in about nine months, defeat the IS, which is now estimated to have over 50,000 jihadists in its sinister and murderous grip, and then move on to defeat Syrian dictator Bashar Assad. In the meantime, the U.S. is fighting to preserve Iranian hegemony over Iraq, Syria and beyond. Toward that end, both the U.S. and Iran are bombing the IS in Iraq, though the administration claims there is no coordination. Finally, the U.S. is dangerously close to accepting a deal that allows Iran to continue enriching uranium, develop ballistic missiles, and ultimately nuclear weapons, if they don't have one already. They're measuring the size of the fig leaf to cover this fiasco. The confirmation hearings for Hagel's replacement should be very revealing. •

**For Accuracy in Media**

**Roger Aronoff**

## Your Letters

To the Editor:

Something else that really bothers me. The president is an elected official. He is crowned or installed. When he was asked about knowing Gruber, he should have been called out for lying. Barack Obama is the first president in history that lies in the face of documented reality. Now I ask you, why is that?

*John*

*Please send Letters to the Editor to:*

Accuracy in Media

Attn: Letters to the Editor

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Bethesda, MD 20814

or email to [info@aim.org](mailto:info@aim.org)

*Please keep your submissions to 50 words or less. Letters may be edited for length.*

## AIMREPORT

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this time.

In explaining his most recent gaffe during the MSNBC appearance, Gruber said, “This is something we see going back, actually, through the Clinton and Bush presidencies, which is that public policy that involves spending is typically less politically *palatable* than policy that involves doing things through the tax code.”

Gruber’s MSNBC appearance was artfully done, a clearly scripted performance, likely using a teleprompter. His eyes appeared to read left to right as he butchered the word “palatable” on television, in a performance reminiscent of Debbie Wasserman Schultz’s “myzled” gaffe from last year, when she was caught misreading an answer from a teleprompter on MSNBC. Has MSNBC sunk so low that it rehearses statements with high-profile favored guests like Gruber to ensure that their speakers’ messages get out properly and they don’t mess up spontaneously on air?

There can be no other explanation for Gruber’s pronunciation of palatable as pu-LATE-able, other than that he was reading it from a teleprompter. After all, he is an MIT professor. One might call such shenanigans the delivery of packaged press releases instead of news. Or perhaps helping to walk back an ideological ally from going off the ledge, and taking Obamacare with him.

Gruber moved on to comment to Farrow about the Supreme Court’s recent decision to take up *King v. Burwell*, calling the debate over whether the law allows the federal government to allocate subsidies through the federal exchanges as based upon a “typo.” “It’s not really tortured language, it’s just a typo,” he argued. He blamed former Senator Scott Brown’s (R-MA) election for gridlock and the inability to put the Senate bill through conference. Therefore, he argues, the “typos” in the law were not eliminated before the Senate version was passed.

Accuracy in Media predicted earlier this year that this debate over federal subsidies could go to the highest court in the land. This is not just about whether this lawsuit “guts” Obamacare, but whether law will be interpreted based upon its plain language, making it a more than appropriate subject of inquiry for the Supreme Court.

The liberal New York Times columnist Paul Krugman, on the other hand, accuses the judges of political corruption for taking up the case in the first place.

“Judges who support this cruel absurdity aren’t stupid; they know what they’re doing,” he writes. “What they are, instead, is corrupt, willing to pervert the law to serve political masters. And what we’ll find out in the months ahead is how deep the corruption goes.”

Krugman’s argument is also based upon the idea that this is just a “typo” in the law. Slate Magazine classifies it as just a “glitch.” “That could change on account of a glitch in the ACA, which can be read to say that you can only get a subsidy if you signed up on a state-managed exchange,”

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reports Slate. “If the Supreme Court signs off on this interpretation, the federal government cannot subsidize insurance for the less well-off in any state that has declined to set up its own exchange.”

“Subsidies, in the form of tax credits, are a crucial element of the Affordable Care Act,” reported The New York Times earlier this year. “Without them, insurance would be unaffordable to millions of Americans.”

What these subsidies are, in reality is a form of taking from the rich or the healthy to give to the poor or the sick. If that’s what the backers of the law wanted, they should have said so, and gone ahead and passed it honestly, instead of through a series of known-to-be lies.

And the allocation of subsidies to citizens within states without exchanges is hardly a debate about a typo, argues Professor Jonathan Adler of Case Western University. “The one appellate court to agree with Krugman conceded ‘there is a certain sense to the plaintiffs’ position’ that subsidies are only for states with exchanges, writes Adler. “Yet, according to Krugman, only those who are ‘hostile’ and ‘corrupt’ could reach such a conclusion.”

Adler roasts Krugman, and pundits who call the plaintiffs’ case based upon a “typo.”

“This is a popular argument among pundits, but it’s not made by the government or more knowledgeable legal experts—and for good reason: It’s a weak argument,” writes Adler. “The government’s strongest argument is not that there is a typo, but that the entire statute, construed

as a whole, allows for what the IRS did, even if only because the text is sufficiently ambiguous to allow for the IRS’s interpretation.”

But the reality is that the language is in there for one specific reason. It was demanded by then-Senator Ben Nelson (D-NE), for his 60th vote to pass the legislation. He saw it as a way to incentivize states to form exchanges, and not rely on the federal government’s exchange. So it wasn’t a typo—which is when you type something by mistake—it was a concession.

Another popular talking point for pundits is the idea that 10 million people have gotten health care under Obamacare so far. This is a highly deceptive number, as it takes into account the Medicaid expansion, as well as counting those people who lost (or left) their private and employer health insurance to join the exchange. In other words, some of the counted persons were already insured, and now get their insurance under Obamacare instead.

Gruber continued the myth that 10 million people had gained health insurance in his MSNBC appearance, as well. But the Heritage Foundation’s Daily Signal estimates that there is a “net increase in private-sector coverage” of 2.46 million people. That’s a long way from 10 million.

Besides, how many people are paying higher premiums, higher deductibles, have lost their network or primary care doctor, have had to accept a part-time job instead of a full-time job because that is what the perverse incentives of Obamacare have created? And what about the 30 to 40 million who were uninsured when this process started?

There have also been reports since enrollment opened again that serious computer problems remain, including basic security. And don’t forget the 20,000-plus pages of “regulations” and taxes piled onto Obamacare after the bill became law.

To add to the Democrats’ embarrassment, former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)—who said during the legislative process that “We have to pass the bill to find out what’s in it”—is now denying even knowing who Jonathan Gruber is, and saying that he didn’t help write the law. But thanks to videotape and the Internet, Fox News has shown that Pelosi’s office issued a press release that cited Gruber by name for his analysis, and she referred to him during a press conference. It’s pos-

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sible that she just forgot, but either way, it added to Obamacare's very bad week.

As Gruber admits, pundits, architects, and supporters of Obamacare tried to deceive the American voter through obtuse,

tortured legislative language at the time of its passage. But the decision to conceal the real failures of Obamacare didn't stop when the law passed; such efforts are ongoing. •

*Roger Aronoff is the Editor of Accuracy in Media, and a member of the Citizens' Commission on Benghazi.*

## Desinformation, Iran, and a Russian-sponsored Nuclear Deal

By Cliff Kincaid

**T**his is a story about how politics makes strange bedfellows. Medea Benjamin of Code Pink is in bed with the Koch Brothers, in an emerging alliance designed to make it acceptable for Iran to develop nuclear weapons. The stakes are high for the U.S., but even more so for Israel.

First, some background.

President Obama on Wednesday was asked directly by the press if he intended to circumvent Congress on a nuclear deal with Iran. He said that while the Iranians "have negotiated seriously around providing assurances that they're not developing a nuclear weapon for the first time," there is no deal just yet. He said that Russia has "worked with us cooperatively in trying to find ways to make sure that we can verify and have confidence going forward that Iran doesn't have the capacity to develop a nuclear weapon..."

One late report indicates that Obama will accept a deal whereby Russia will somehow safeguard some of the Iranian nuclear material and make sure it doesn't get used for Iranian nuclear weapons development. Vladimir Putin must be considered reliable and trustworthy by the White House. A new report from The Wall Street Journal indicates Obama has even written Iran's Ayatollah Khamenei about a nuclear deal, in exchange for help against ISIS, in a development we predicted. This, too, has been engineered by Russia, to divert attention from Putin's ongoing invasion of Ukraine and increasing nuclear threats toward NATO members.

Not having directly answered the question, Obama was asked at his news conference whether he has "the power unilaterally to relax sanctions [on Iran], to implement an agreement." He went into another long answer, saying at first, "Yeah, there are a series of different sanctions. There are multilateral sanctions, there are U.N. sanctions. There are sanctions that have been imposed by us, this administration, unilaterally. And I think it's different for each of those areas." The

implication was that, if he gets a deal, he could lift some of those sanctions on his own, without getting Congressional approval. But he never said he would submit the deal itself to Congress for approval. Apparently, he will be content to get Russia's approval.

The coverage of this convoluted "answer" has failed to note that in the past Obama has cited an alleged fatwa, or Islamic edict, against nuclear weapons, supposedly issued by the Iranian Ayatollah. He didn't mention that on Wednesday, perhaps because he has subsequently been informed it doesn't really exist.

We have demonstrated through an analysis of the evidence that the alleged fatwa does not exist, and that talk about the document was an Iranian disinformation ploy, probably concocted with the help of Iran's Russian sponsors. One of the sources of the disinformation was a New York Times column, "We Do Not Have a Nuclear Weapons Program," by Javad Zarif, the Iranian ambassador to the United Nations from 2002 to 2007, who declared, "Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the leader of the Islamic Republic, has issued a decree against the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons."

If that's the case, then why should we have a problem with the Iranian nuclear program? Of course, nobody believes the Iranians. The bottom line is that the fatwa was not written down, and nobody in the West has seen it. Even if it does exist somewhere, why should it be accepted as a genuine expression of Iranian intent?

This deceptive claim has surfaced again, buried in a footnote to another footnote of a new book, *Restraint: A New Foundation for U.S. Grand Strategy*. The author is Barry R. Posen, who wrote his own New York Times column under the title of "We Can Live With a Nuclear Iran."

Posen, an MIT professor, states cat-



egorically (on page 77) that Ayatollah Khamenei "issued a fatwa, revealed in 2005, against the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons (although the purpose of this fatwa is opaque)."

It's not clear what he means about the purpose being opaque. However, his footnote for this claim is an academic paper, "Assessing Iran's Nuclear Program," by Mark Fitzpatrick, and dated autumn 2006. The paper includes the statement, "Those who argue that Iran's intentions are peaceful point to Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's fatwa against the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons." The paper has a footnote to The New York Times article by Javad Zarif.

What's opaque in all of this is Posen's failure to be absolutely clear that his passage borrows directly from the Fitzpatrick paper, and that Fitzpatrick's paper in turn was based on a dubious Iranian source. Checking one footnote against another is the only way to determine that this sequence of connections leads to nothing of substance.

Yet, Posen claims in his book that the fatwa was "revealed" to exist, as if it had leaked out and proved the Iranians were peaceful after all.

What is also fascinating is that Posen's book was promoted at an October 29 Koch Institute event, "Restraint and U.S. Foreign Policy: A Conversation" with Barry R. Posen. William Ruger, vice president of research and policy at the Charles Koch Institute, introduced Posen and engaged in a friendly give-and-take, designed to provide a platform for his views. No op-

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posing views were presented. Later, Posen entertained a group of prominent foreign policy thinkers at a private dinner.

Among other things, his book claims, “The evidence that Iran is governed by religious fanatics bent on martyrdom does not stand up well to close scrutiny.”

He also argues in the book (which apparently went to press before the Russian invasion of Ukraine) that Russia is not “poised for a renewal” of its past and “is not a rising power.”

For those who may have missed the significance, this is the Koch Institute of “Koch Brothers” fame. This institute bears the name of one of the Koch Brothers—Charles Koch, a libertarian thinker in foreign affairs. It turns out that both of the billionaire brothers are pro-free enterprise in their economic outlook, which makes them enemies of the left, but their foreign policy views are far outside of the conservative mainstream. William Ruger of the Koch Institute favorably reviewed the Posen book for *The American Conservative* magazine, which despite its name has become a mouthpiece for the view that Vladimir Putin is a force for good in the world and a Christian statesman.

The *American Conservative* also favorably reviewed Gareth Porter’s book, *Manufactured Crisis: the Untold Story of the Iran Nuclear Scare*, which insists Iran is not developing nuclear weapons. The review quoted some kind comments from Paul Pillar, a former top CIA official also in the Koch Institute audience to hear Posen’s presentation.

The Koch sponsorship of Posen and his book became even more interesting as I was making my way into the event and happened to notice Medea Benjamin of Code Pink, the well-known Marxist, pro-Muslim agitator, going in as well. “What are you doing here?” I asked. “This is a Koch Institute event.”

I learned that Benjamin, who rubs elbows with various enemies of the United States and Israel, ranging from the late Hugo Chavez to Cuban communists to Hamas officials, was not there to disrupt the event or make a scene by shouting, as she usually does. She was there under her original name, “Susan Benjamin,” and her classic pink outfit was somewhat hidden under a tan blazer. She was there to learn first-hand how the far-left could find common cause with those on the libertarian right. It was a serious and solemn occa-

sion for her that should be eye-opening for traditional Reagan-style foreign policy

A regime sponsoring a conference like this is supposed to be believed when it comes to an alleged fatwa against nuclear weapons?

conservatives.

She told me candidly that she was there because she thought she would agree with Posen on foreign policy matters. She must have been familiar with his writings on Iran. She also told me that Koch Industries’ business dealings with Russia and China didn’t bother her. (Koch Industries also did business with Iran at one point). After the event was done, and Posen had made his case for U.S. “restraint” in foreign policy, I understood what she was talking about. I noticed that she was engaged in friendly conversation with the professor.

Benjamin, a vocal opponent of U.S. aid to Israel, had just returned from Iran, where she had participated in a “New Horizon” conference, also dubbed “The 2nd Annual International Conference of Independent Thinkers & Film Makers.”

The topics included “Mossad’s Role in the 9/11 Coup d’Etat,” a reference to the claim that Israel had a role in the terrorist attacks, which were blamed on Muslims to justify the U.S. going to war in the Middle East.

A regime sponsoring a conference like this is supposed to be believed when it comes to an alleged fatwa against nuclear weapons?

The announced themes included:

- Philosophy and False Flags: Neo-conservatism, Zionism and 9/11.
- Mossad-9/11 Links: The Empirical Evidence.
- Zionist Fingerprints on the 9/11 Cover-up.
- 9/11 and the Holocaust as pro-Zionist “Public Myths.”

Benjamin was on a panel titled, “The Gaza War & BDS Movement Strategies against the Zionist Regime.” BDS refers to the movement for a campaign of Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel.

A panel titled, “Manufactured Crisis: The Untold Story of the Iran Nuclear Scare,” featured the aforementioned Gareth Porter. A veteran academic leftist, he

has quite a record of demonstrating an inability, or unwillingness, to recognize evil in the world. He was identified in James L. Tyson’s 1981 book, *Target America*, as “one of the most active defenders of the bloody Pol Pot regime in Cambodia as well as the Vietnamese communists.” The Pol Pot regime killed about two million Cambodians, in what became known as the “killing fields,” after Vietnam fell to the Communists.

In his book, *Far Left of Center: The American Radical Left Today*, Harvey Klehr notes that Porter was an associate fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, a Marxist research group in Washington, D.C., and achieved notoriety for being among “the most ardent defenders” of the Pol Pot regime. Porter had argued in his book, *Cambodia: Starvation and Revolution*, that the Pol Pot regime had found “a collective framework designed to release the creative energies of the people.”

Porter, who has never apologized for his views on communism, seems to have shifted to defending the regime in Iran.

Like Barry Posen, he also accepts the idea of an Iranian fatwa against nuclear weapons—despite the lack of evidence for its actual existence. Even though critics argue that “no published text of the fatwa can be found,” Porter says it may have been issued orally.

When Glenn Kessler of *The Washington Post* attempted to verify its existence, he reported that Caitlin Hayden, a spokeswoman for the White House National Security Council, said that “the Iranian government was the best source for information” about it. He said an Iranian website did not provide the text of the original fatwa, but cited “Western news reports as evidence that Khamenei has reiterated it on several occasions.”

This is classic disinformation, using the Western press to “confirm” something that does not in fact exist.

It’s easy to see how someone like Gareth Porter or Medea Benjamin would fall for such a ploy. But a Koch-sponsored academic scholar such as Posen? However, with a billionaire in his corner, one who has a lot of influence over the Republican Party, Posen’s notion of U.S. foreign policy “restraint” in the face of the Iran nuclear weapons program cannot be dismissed or ignored. •

*Cliff Kincaid is the Director of the AIM Center for Investigative Journalism.*

## Far-Left Media Looking for a Clinton Challenger

By Don Irvine



**T**here may be many in the mainstream media who are looking forward to a presidential run by Hillary Clinton, but the far-left media, which has never been crazy about Hillary, is actively seeking someone else to become the Democratic Party standard bearer in 2016, according to *Politico's* Maggie Haberman and Hadas Gold.

The anti-Clinton drumbeat from the left includes Mic.com, a relatively new website aimed at progressive millennials, and left-wing magazines *In These Times* and *The Nation*.

For the anti-Clinton activists, names being tossed about include former Virginia Senator Jim Webb, Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, Socialist Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and their top choice, Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who is the darling of the far left.

O'Malley has been testing the presidential waters with visits to Iowa and New Hampshire, while Warren ruled out a run last December but may reconsider after the Democratic wipeout in the midterms.

Katrina vanden Heuvel, editor and part owner of *The Nation*, told *Politico* that they hope to drive a message of economic populism in 2015 and 2016, and that Clinton has never been associated with that wing of the Democratic Party. She said that the party and her candidacy would be better served by competition. That message of economic populism is exactly what makes Warren such a favorite of the left.

Democrats recognized Warren's growing popularity by giving her a slot in the new Senate minority leadership today and upping her profile in the process.

Clinton's problems with the left stem mainly from her vote for the Iraq War in 2002, but she has also stumbled with the electorate as a whole for her infamous "What difference does it make?" statement when testifying about Benghazi, and her

comments about being "dead broke" after she and Bill left the White House in 2001.

It's still early in the 2016 presidential campaign cycle, but thanks to the Democrats' big loss in the midterms—with Hillary campaigning hard for many of the losing candidates—it has raised speculation that she isn't invincible. A Washington Post political reporter recently stated that the "old Clinton magic doesn't really work."

Hillary may still claim the Democratic presidential nomination in 2016, but the far left in the media won't make it easy. •

## White House Spin on Midterm Elections Stuns Reporters

By Don Irvine

**T**he White House Press Corps expects some spin from Press Secretary Josh Earnest, but they were stunned by his inability to admit just how devastating the midterm elections were for the Democrats.

It all started when American Urban Radio Networks reporter April Ryan asked Earnest whether he would describe the recent election results as "a big loss for Democrats." He replied by saying that answering that was more in line with "punditry"—which is something he wasn't going to do:

"There are lots of people who get paid a lot more money than I do who are responsible for offering up analysis and spinning the elections, and I'm not going to do that. What I'm focused on here and what everybody here is focused on is figuring out on what we can do to work with Republicans and move the country forward. And those are the lessons from the election and that's what we're here to talk about."

That answer didn't deter ABC News' Jon Karl and Talk Radio News Service's Ellen Ratner, who continued to press Earnest on whether or not the elections were bad for Democrats. They finally wore him down:

"I'm certainly disappointed with the outcome of the elections—the President is too."

While that wasn't exactly the answer the press was looking for, it was the best one that they were likely to get from a White House that's still in denial that Obama and his policies were largely to blame for the election results—which have left the

Democratic Party in shambles. •

## Lacking Information from Obama, Democratic Senators call MSNBC for White House Updates

By Don Irvine

**A**ppearing on MSNBC's Morning Joe to discuss his new book, *The Stranger: Barack Obama in the White House*, Meet the Press host Chuck Todd confirmed that Democratic senators have called MSNBC to find out what the White House is planning, since President Obama rarely speaks to any of them on a regular basis.

"I actually had a senator—and it happens quite a few times—where senators will call us saying, 'What are you hearing over at the White House? What are they thinking on this bill?'" said host Joe Scarborough. "I'll go, are you kidding me?"

"I've had those conversations..." Todd said.

The charge that Obama has been aloof, or distant, when it comes to relations with members of his own party, has been frequently mentioned almost since the time he was first elected in 2008.

"One of the things that we've all heard from so many people—and it wasn't like six years in, it was like two months in, from the most senior Democrats—senators, on the Hill—'He never calls; he never talks to us,'" Scarborough said.

Scarborough may have been exasperated at the calls from Democrats, but he'd better get used to it. Now that they are in the minority, and with a little over two years left in Obama's term in office, they are likely to keep coming because the President isn't likely to suddenly become more communicative. •

### What You Can Do

Please send the enclosed postcards to:

- Chuck Todd of NBC's Meet the Press about his objectivity towards President Obama, when he calls him "nourishing;"
- Anderson Cooper of CNN for having the courage to criticize President Obama over his flip-flop on executive authority;
- Andrea Mitchell, for being the poster-person for liberal media bias.