



And Chicago Says TGIF

For Obama, What A Week: 5 Downers In 5 Days

#1: REVELATIONS THAT SENIOR WHITE HOUSE ADVISER DAVID PLOUFFE ACCEPTED MONEY FROM A FIRM THAT HAD TIES WITH IRAN, SYRIA, AND WAR CRIMINAL CHARLES TAYLOR

***The Washington Post* Headline: "Obama Associate Got \$100,000 Fee From Affiliate Of Firm Doing Business With Iran."** (Tom Hamburger and Peter Wallsten, "Obama Associate Got \$100,000 Fee From Affiliate Of Firm Doing Business With Iran," [The Washington Post](#), 8/6/12)

Plouffe Accepted A Speaking Engagement From A Company "That Has Come Under Intensified Scrutiny Because Of Its Activities In Iran And Syria." "Since Plouffe's speeches, MTN Group has come under intensified scrutiny from U.S. authorities because of its activities in Iran and Syria, which are under international sanctions intended to limit the countries' access to sensitive technology. At the time of Plouffe's speeches, MTN had been in a widely reported partnership for five years with a state-owned Iranian telecommunications firm." (Tom Hamburger and Peter Wallsten, "Obama Associate Got \$100,000 Fee From Affiliate Of Firm Doing Business With Iran," [The Washington Post](#), 8/6/12)

MTN Is Suspected Of Being "Fully Owned" By The Iranian Revolutionary Guard. "MTN is in business with Irancell, which according to a 2006 American government cable obtained by the group WikiLeaks is 'fully owned' by the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, considered a central instrument of repression in Iran." (Peter Baker, "Aide's Fee Draws Critics and, Then Defenders," [The New York Times](#), 8/7/12)

- **According To United Against Nuclear Iran, MTN "Carried Out Orders From The Regime To Shut Off Text Messaging And Skype During Times Of Political Protest ..."** "According to a nonpartisan advocacy group called United Against Nuclear Iran, MTN 'carried out orders from the regime to shut off text messaging and Skype during times of political protest, and reportedly has a floor in its Tehran headquarters where Iranian military officials compile and access tracking data. That data has been used to track, apprehend, torture and kill regime opponents.' 'Simply put,' the group said in a statement, 'MTN has blood on its hands.'" (Peter Baker, "Aide's Fee Draws Critics and, Then Defenders," [The New York Times](#), 8/7/12)

Obama's Secretary Of Defense Signed A Letter From United Against Nuclear Iran That Attacked MTN For Claiming To Be A "Liberating Force" In Iran While It Carried Out Orders From The Regime To Suppress Dissent. "In addition, given MTN's relationship with the regime, MTN's assertion that it is a 'liberating force,' 'enriching the lives' of Iranians is completely untenable. MTN cannot

reasonably assert that the substantial profits it earns from its growing role in the Iranian telecommunications market are merely a byproduct of a larger altruistic goal to empower the citizens of Iran and the developing world. If MTN was truly interested in empowering the Iranian people, it would not partner with the regime that oppresses them, and it would surely not carry out orders from the regime to shut off communications during times of popular protest.” (Letter To Sifiso Dabengwa, President and CEO Of MTN Group, [United Against A Nuclear Iran](#), 2/29/12)

Prior To Plouffe’s Decision To Speak At MTN, U.N. Investigators Suspected That MTN’s Liberia Subsidiary Was A Continuing Source Of Income For Convicted War Criminal Charles Taylor. “They have pressed in Liberian courts for information about the entwined companies PLC Investments and Lonestar Communications, suspecting they could be a continuing source of income for Mr. Taylor. Lonestar, the nation’s leading cellphone company, was essentially a monopoly for four years, controlled by two Taylor financial advisers through PLC, a holding company, a U.N. report says. They sold 60 percent of Lonestar to a Lebanese group, Investcom, which in turn was acquired by a South African cellphone company, MTN Group, in 2006.” (Doreen Carvajal, “As Liberian Stands Trial, Investigators Lose Scent In Hunt For Missing Millions,” [The New York Times](#), 6/6/10)

- **Charles Taylor’s Former Vice-President Testified That Taylor Became A Secret Part Owner Of MTN’s Liberian Subsidiary.** “Mr. Taylor’s former vice president, Moses Blah, and other former ministers testified before the government’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission that Mr. Taylor became a secret part owner in Lonestar and granted it an exclusive license to run a mobile network, dismissing officials who urged an open market.” (Doreen Carvajal, “As Liberian Stands Trial, Investigators Lose Scent In Hunt For Missing Millions,” [The New York Times](#), 6/6/10)

#2: A “DISGUSTING” NEW OBAMA AD FAILS

Priorities USA Has An Ad Featuring A Former Steelworker Who “Appears To Blame Romney For the Death Of His Wife.” “Joe Soptic, a former steelworker, makes yet another appearance in a pro-Obama ad, this time for the Super PAC Priorities USA Action. We have examined this case before, and for the benefit of readers we repeat our main points from an earlier column that awarded the Obama campaign One Pinocchio for the use of this case study against presumptive GOP nominee Mitt Romney. Most controversially, Soptic this time appears to blame Romney for the death of his wife after he lost his health insurance when the steel plant closed.” (Glen Kessler, “New Anti-Romney Ad: Same Steelworker, Tougher Message,” The Washington Post’s [FactChecker](#), 8/7/12)

- **The Washington Post’s FactChecker: “Four Pinocchios.”** (Glen Kessler, “New Anti-Romney Ad: Same Steelworker, Tougher Message,” The Washington Post’s [FactChecker](#), 8/7/12)
- **CNN: “Ad Linking Romney To Death Of The Wife Of A Laid Off Steelworker Inaccurate.”** (Brianna Keilar, “Ad Linking Romney To Death Of The Wife Of A Laid Off Steelworker Inaccurate.” [CNN](#), 8/7/12)

NOW: “Asked About The Ad On Tuesday And Wednesday, Obama Campaign Officials Refused To Comment.” “Asked about the ad on Tuesday and Wednesday, Obama campaign officials refused to comment, saying the legal separation between campaigns and super PACs meant they had no part in the spot’s production.” (“Pro-Obama Super PAC Defends Controversial Ad,” [CNN](#), 8/8/12)

- **THEN: In 2007, Obama Called Upon His Opponents To Own Up To Outside Group Expenditures On Their Behalf.** OBAMA: “[Y]ou can’t say yesterday, you don’t believe in ‘em, and today, you’re having three-quarters of a million dollars being spent for you. You can’t just talk the talk.” (Sen. Barack Obama, Remarks At A Campaign Event, [Oskaloosa, IA](#), 12/22/07)

- **THEN: Obama: “I Don’t Just Talk The Talk; I Walk The Walk.”** OBAMA: “I don’t just talk the talk; I walk the walk. ... I’ve been doing this all my life.” (Sen. Barack Obama, Remarks At A Campaign Event, [Oskaloosa, IA](#), 12/22/07)

Former Bill Clinton Adviser Lanny Davis: Priorities USA’s Ad Is “Disgusting.” “On @WMALMornings, Lanny Davis calls PrioritiesUSA cancer ad ‘disgusting,’ says Obama should repudiate it.” (Steven Portnoy, [Twitter Feed](#), 8/9/12)

MSNBC’s Mika Brzezinski: “They’re Not Telling The Truth.” “There’s no price to pay, because they can say, ‘Well, I don’t know the details.’ You know what, at least on this show, that’s just not going to pass. They’re not telling the truth.” (MSNBC’s [“Morning Joe,”](#) 8/9/12)

MSNBC’s Joe Scarborough: “This Is So Short-Sighted And Stupid.” ““This is so short-sighted and stupid that I can’t believe an organization that is this good has allowed themselves to be caught in such petty lies over the last 24 hours,’ added Scarborough.” (MSNBC’s [“Morning Joe,”](#) 8/9/12)

CNN’s Brianna Keilar: “It’s Not Accurate.” “A new attack ad by a Super PAC backing President Obama appears to blame Mitt Romney for a woman’s death from cancer after his company, Bain Capital, shut down the steel mill where the woman’s husband worked. ... It’s a very heart-wrenching story, but it’s not accurate. Here is the actual timeline...” (Brianna Keilar, “Ad Linking Romney To Death Of The Wife Of A Laid Off Steelworker Not Accurate,” [CNN](#), 8/7/12)

Time’s Michael Crowley: “The Ad Is Scurrilous.” “It is at once the most dishonest and substantive ad of the summer. Narrowly judged, the ad is scurrilous.” (Michael Crowley, “That Priorities USA Ad: Dishonest But Important,” [Time](#), 8/8/12)

#3: NEWLY RELEASED EMAILS SHOW OBAMA TOOK AN INTEREST IN SOLYNDRA’S LOAN PROGRAM BECAUSE IT CAME UP AT “POLITICAL EVENTS”

Emails Show That Obama Requested A Briefing On The Energy Department’s Loan Program Because It Came Up At “Political Events.” “An Energy staffer explained that the president ‘wants to know its status’ so he could be prepared when the loan program came up ‘at official events and political events where he interacts with [the] business community and Congressional members.’” (Carol D. Leonnig and Joe Stephens, “E-Mails About Clean-Energy Loans Provide New Details On White House Involvement,” [The Washington Post](#), 8/8/12)

- **The Emails Also Noted That “Many People Attending Such Gatherings ‘Have Some Affiliation Or Interest In The Numerous Applications Received That Involve Substantial Funds.’”** “The e-mail from the department’s chief of staff, Brandon Hurlbut, went on to say that many people attending such gatherings ‘have some affiliation or interest in the numerous applications received that involve substantial funds.’” (Carol D. Leonnig and Joe Stephens, “E-Mails About Clean-Energy Loans Provide New Details On White House Involvement,” [The Washington Post](#), 8/8/12)

“The Leading Investors In Solyndra Were Two Investment Funds With Ties To George B. Kaiser, A Major Campaign Fundraising ‘Bundler’ For Obama.” (Carol D. Leonnig And Joe Stephens, “Solyndra Employees: Company Suffered From Mismanagement, Heavy Spending,” [The Washington Post](#), 9/21/11)

And Four Out Of Four Obama Chiefs Of Staff Knew That Solyndra Might Not Be The Best Bet For American Taxpayers

BILL DALEY KNEW: According To Kelly Colyar Of The OMB, Then-White House Chief Of Staff Bill Daley Had Been Briefed About OMB’s “Reservations About The Prospects Of The Company And DOE’s Proposal” To Restructure The Solyndra Loan. “You may recall that DOE announced in March

that they had restructured the Solyndra loan. Prior to this restructuring, OMB staff expressed reservations about the prospects of the company and DOE's proposal. The issue was discussed with the NEC and the Chief of Staff." (Kelly T. Colyar, [E-mail To Richard A. Mertens Et. Al.](#) f. 732, 8/11/11)

RAHM EMANUEL KNEW: After Rahm Pressured The OMB To Speed Up The Approval Of Solyndra's Loan, A Staffer Responded "I Would Prefer That This Announcement Be Postponed. . . This Is The First Loan Guarantee And We Should Have Full Review With All Hands On Deck To Make Sure We Get It Right." "In one e-mail, an assistant to Rahm Emanuel, then White House chief of staff, wrote on Aug. 31, 2009, to OMB about the upcoming Biden announcement on Solyndra and asked whether 'there is anything we can help speed along on OMB side.' An OMB staff member responded: 'I would prefer that this announcement be postponed. . . This is the first loan guarantee and we should have full review with all hands on deck to make sure we get it right.'" (Joe Stephens and Carol D. Leonnig, "White House Pressed On \$500 Million Loan To Solar Company Now Under Investigation," [The Washington Post](#), 9/13/11)

JACOB LEW KNEW: Lew Let The "Refinancing Move Forward Without Intervening," Despite Warning From OMB Analysts That The Solyndra Restructuring Plan "Might Violate The Law." "The House energy committee is expected to release the results of its 18-month investigation into Solyndra this week. Its report, parts of which were obtained by The Washington Post, suggests that then-OMB Director Jack Lew let the refinancing move forward without intervening, even though some OMB analysts thought a refinancing plan that favored private investors might violate the law. Lew is now White House chief of staff." (Joe Stephens and Carol D. Leonnig, "White House Analyst Warned Saving Solyndra Could Cost More Than Letting It Fail," [The Washington Post](#), 8/1/12)

PETE ROUSE KNEW: In February 2011, A Former Obama Campaign Adviser Wrote To Pete Rouse That Solyndra Could Erupt Into A Political Scandal Requiring Secretary Chu To Step Down. "On Friday, the release of a new round of White House documents added more details, showing concerns among senior advisers earlier this year that Solyndra might erupt into a political scandal requiring the replacement of Chu and his agency team. A former Obama campaign adviser wrote to presidential counselor Pete Rouse in February suggesting that Chu be replaced immediately with a manager who could better direct Energy Department funds. Rouse circulated it among other senior officials, asking for feedback." (Carol Leonnig and Joe Stephens, Solyndra: Energy Department Failed To Sound Alarm As Solar Company Sank, [The Washington Post](#), 11/11/11)

#4: A123 SYSTEMS, A STIMULUS RECIPIENT THAT OBAMA BOASTED ABOUT, GETS TAKEN OVER BY A CHINESE FIRM

After Significant Government Assistance, Obama Predicted That A123 Systems Would Create 3,000 Jobs, But Has Only 690 Employees And Has Announced Forced Layoffs. "A123 Systems, a battery maker that received \$380 million in government support, announced recently that declining orders had forced layoffs. Instead of up to 3,000 new Michigan jobs as Obama and the company had predicted, it now has 690 employees." (Carol D. Leonnig, and Joe Stephens, "For Obama's Green-Car Revolution, Fits And Starts," [The Washington Post](#), 12/7/11)

In July 2011, Obama Touted A123 Systems As A Job-Creating Company With Soaring Demand For Its Vehicle Components. OBAMA: "As these companies look for ways to boost efficiency, they'll be conducting research and development on test tracks. They're going to look to startups working on biofuels and new engine technologies. They're going to continue to invest in advanced battery manufacturing. They're going to spur growth in clean energy. And that means new jobs in cutting-edge industries all across America. I'll give you a couple of examples. There's a company called Celgard in

North Carolina that's expanding its production line to meet demand for advanced batteries. And they've hired 200 employees and they're adding 250 more. There's A123, a clean-energy manufacturer in Michigan that just hired its 1,000th worker as demand has soared for its vehicle components. Companies like these are taking root and putting people to work in every corner of the country." (President Barack Obama, [Remarks By The President On Fuel Efficiency Standards](#), Washington, DC, 7/29/11)

China's Wanxiang Plans To Invest \$450 Million In Obama-Funded A123 Systems ,Taking An 80 Percent Stake. "China's largest automotive parts supplier is poised to take control of U.S. battery maker A123 Systems (AONE.O), which received \$249 million green-technology grant from the Obama administration in 2009. China's Wanxiang Group Corp plans to invest up to \$450 million in A123 Systems, taking an 80 percent stake in the U.S. company, A123 said on Wednesday." (A. Ananthalakshmi and Paul Lienert, "China's Wanxiang To Take Control Of Battery Maker A123," [Reuters](#), 8/8/12)

- **Wanxiang Is "One Of The Largest Non-Government-Owned Companies In China" And Has A U.S. Subsidiary Based Outside Chicago.** "Wanxiang, one of the largest non-government-owned companies in China, with annual revenue of more than \$13 billion, has an electric vehicles subsidiary in Hangzhou and a U.S. subsidiary based outside Chicago. The parent company supplies auto parts to many of China's largest automakers." (A. Ananthalakshmi and Paul Lienert, "China's Wanxiang To Take Control Of Battery Maker A123," [Reuters](#), 8/8/12)

After Receiving Taxpayer Dollars, A123 Warned Last Month It Only Has Enough "Cash To Fund Its Operations For Only The Next Four To Five Months." "A123 warned last month that it had cash to fund its operations for only the next four to five months. A123 received more than \$200 million from venture investors before raising \$378 million in a 2009 initial public offering. That same year, it was awarded a grant under the Obama administration's \$2.4 billion Electric Drive Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative." (A. Ananthalakshmi and Paul Lienert, "China's Wanxiang To Take Control Of Battery Maker A123," [Reuters](#), 8/8/12)

#5: EXPENDITURE REPORTS SHOW THAT, MUCH LIKE HIS WHITE HOUSE, OBAMA'S CAMPAIGN IS BURNING THROUGH CASH FASTER THAN THEY CAN REPLACE IT

Obama Has Spent More Campaign Cash More Quickly Than Any Incumbent In Recent History. "President Obama has spent more campaign cash more quickly than any incumbent in recent history, betting that heavy early investments in personnel, field offices and a high-tech campaign infrastructure will propel him to victory in November." (Nicholas Confessore and Jo Craven McGinty, "Record Spending By Obama's Camp Shrinks Coffers," [The New York Times](#), 8/4/12)

Obama And The Democrats Have Spent \$400 Million Between The Beginning Of 2011 And June 30. "Since the beginning of last year, Mr. Obama and the Democrats have burned through millions of dollars to find and register voters. They have spent almost \$50 million subsidizing Democratic state parties to hire workers, pay for cellphones and update voter lists. They have spent tens of millions of dollars on polling, online advertising and software development to turn Mr. Obama's fallow volunteers corps into a grass-roots army. The price tag: about \$400 million from the beginning of last year to June 30 this year, according to a New York Times analysis of Federal Election Commission records, including \$86 million on advertising." (Nicholas Confessore and Jo Craven McGinty, "Record Spending By Obama's Camp Shrinks Coffers," [The New York Times](#), 8/4/12)

"Mr. Obama's Cash Needs — He Spent \$70.8 Million In June Alone, More Than Half On Advertising And Far More Than He Raised — Have Brought New Urgency To His Campaign's Fund-Raising Efforts." (Nicholas Confessore and Jo Craven McGinty, "Record Spending By Obama's Camp Shrinks Coffers," [The New York Times](#), 8/4/12)

Some Democrats Are "Worried" That The Obama Campaign's Overhead Costs "Will Prove

Impossible To Sustain. “But some Democrats worry that the overhead built by the Obama camp over the past 15 months will prove impossible to sustain. Unless fundraising picks up, the Obama campaign may enter the season's final stretch confronting hard choices: paring salaries, scaling back advertising or pulling out of swing states in a bid to control costs, these Democrats say.” (Danny Yardon and Peter Nicholas, “Obama’s Burn Rate Worries Some Democrats,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 7/22/12)