



Commander-And-Confused

Obama Was Unaware Of His Record And Not In Command Of The Facts During The Final Presidential Debate

OBAMA WAS UNAWARE THAT HE MADE THE “BIGGEST GAFFE” OF THE NIGHT ON SEQUESTRATION

Obama: “First of all, the sequester is not something that I proposed. It’s something that Congress has proposed. It will not happen.” (President Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Debate, Lynn University, Boca Raton, FL, 10/22/12)

The Wall Street Journal: “By Far The Biggest Gaffe—Or Deliberate Evasion—Of The Evening Was Made By Mr. Obama When He Denied Paternity For The Sequester Defense Cuts Now Set For 2013 And Said They ‘Will Not Happen.’” “By far the biggest gaffe—or deliberate evasion—of the evening was made by Mr. Obama when he denied paternity for the sequester defense cuts now set for 2013 and said they ‘will not happen.’ Mr. Obama’s aides rushed out after the debate to say he meant to say the cuts ‘should not happen.’ But the truth is that Mr. Obama has been using the fear of huge defense cuts as a political strategy to force Republicans to accept a tax increase. As Bob Woodward describes in his recent book, Mr. Obama and the White House helped to devise the defense sequester strategy—no matter the actual risk to defense.” (Editorial, “Commanders In Chief,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/23/12)

Obama “Startled Washington During Monday Night’s Foreign Policy Debate When He Said Billions In Automatic Pentagon Cuts ‘Will Not Happen.’” “President Barack Obama startled Washington during Monday night’s foreign policy debate when he said billions in automatic Pentagon cuts ‘will not happen’ — a line that could weaken his bargaining power during an epic spending and tax fight expected when Congress returns.” (Phillip Ewing, “D.C. Caught Off Guard By Obama Sequester Vow,” [Politico](#), 10/23/12)

- **Obama Has Repeatedly Used Sequestration As A “Bargaining Chip” In Deficit Reduction Negotiations.** “Obama was responding to criticism from Republican rival Mitt Romney that American national security is at risk if the defense cuts are triggered in early January. ‘First of all, the sequester is not something I proposed, it’s something that Congress proposed,’ Obama said. ‘It will not happen.’ The remark stakes new ground for the president, who has said he wants to avert the sequester cuts by taking a ‘balanced’ approach to solving the budget debacle — meaning he will not sign off on a deal that cuts spending, but doesn’t increase revenues. His strongest bargaining chip: the sequester cuts, which he may have just taken off the table.” (Phillip Ewing, “D.C. Caught Off Guard By Obama Sequester Vow,” [Politico](#), 10/23/12)

Immediately After The Debate, Obama's Advisers Worked To Tone Down Obama's Remarks. "After the debate, White House senior adviser David Plouffe toned down the president's remarks, saying that 'everyone in Washington agrees that sequester 'should not happen.'" And Obama's senior campaign adviser David Axelrod also took a less firm stance on sequester, telling CNN that a balanced deal is widely appealing: "There are plenty of people on both sides who want to get that done, and will get that done." (Phillip Ewing, "D.C. Caught Off Guard By Obama Sequester Vow," [Politico](#), 10/23/12)

- **White House Senior Adviser David Plouffe "Softened The Obama Administration's Language On The Sequester After President Obama Insisted That It Would Not Happen."** "White House senior adviser and 2008 campaign manager David Plouffe softened the Obama administration's language on the sequester after President Obama insisted that it would not happen. 'No one wants it to happen,' Plouffe told reporters after the third and final debate on Monday. Reporters pointed out to him that Obama had vowed during the debate that the sequester would not happen — a much stronger statement. 'Listen, you talk to Republicans and Democrats on Capitol Hill. No one thinks it should happen. It was designed so what the parties have to do,' Plouffe said." (Reid Epstein, "Plouffe Softens Sequester Language," [Politico](#), 10/22/12)

Fox News' Bret Baier: "So, Apparently 'Will Not Happen' Has Become 'Should Not Happen.'" FOX NEWS' BRET BAIER: "Megyn you mentioned the sequester earlier, the massive cut to the Defense Department, the Pentagon, that's coming up on January 2. The president said tonight that the sequester will not happen. That was a key moment. And it did make news. Well now, the White House, the campaign is back-peddling. David Plouffe saying in the Spin Room just behind you, pressed on this, he said repeatedly to reporters, everyone in Washington agrees the sequester quote should not happen. And asked again, and he said it should not happen. So apparently 'will not happen' has become 'should not happen.' We'll see what happens with that." (Fox News' ["On The Record,"](#) 10/22/12)

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The Original Idea For Sequestration Came From Obama's White House

Politico Fact Check: "In Fact, The Idea May Have Come In Part From Obama's Current Chief Of Staff, Jack Lew." "In fact, the idea may have come in part from Obama's current chief of staff, Jack Lew. The Washington Post's Bob Woodward reported in his book 'The Price of Politics' that Lew, then-Office of Management and Budget director, and White House Legislative Affairs Director Rob Nabors broached the idea of a defense sequester as a threat to Republicans during negotiations over raising the debt ceiling." (Josh Gerstein and Darren Samuelsohn, "Fact-Checking The Third Presidential Debate," [Politico](#), 10/22/12)

- **White House: "We Have An Idea For The Trigger. ... Sequestration."** "At 2:30 p.m. Lew and Nabors went to the Senate to meet with Reid and his chief of staff, David Krone. 'We have an idea for the trigger,' Lew said. 'What's the idea?' Reid asked skeptically. 'Sequestration.' Reid bent down and put his head between his knees, almost as if he were going to throw up or was having a heart attack. He sat back up and looked at the ceiling. 'A couple of weeks ago,' he said, 'my staff said to me that there is one more possible' enforcement mechanism: sequestration. He said he told them, 'Get the hell out of here. That's insane. The White House surely will come up with a plan that will save the day. And you come to me with sequestration?' Well, it could work, Lew and Nabors explained. What would the impact be? They would design it so that half the threatened cuts would be from the Defense Department. 'I like that,' Reid said. 'That's good. It doesn't touch Medicaid or Medicare, does it?' It actually does touch Medicare, they replied. 'How does it touch Medicare?' It depends, they said. There's versions with 2 percent cuts, and there's versions with 4 percent cuts." (Bob Woodward, *The Price Of Politics*, 2012, pp. 326)

- **The Obama Administration Proposed That Half Of The Cuts In The Sequestration Trigger Should Come From The Defense Budget.** “Lew, Nabors, Sperling and Bruce Reed, Biden’s chief of staff, had initially decided to propose using language from the 1985 Gramm-Rudman-Hollings deficit reduction law as the model for the trigger. It seemed tough enough to apply to the current situation. It would require a sequester with half the cuts from Defense, and the other half from domestic programs. There would be no chance the Republicans would want to pull the trigger and allow the sequester to force massive cuts to Defense.” (Bob Woodward, *The Price Of Politics*, 2012, p. 341)

OBAMA WAS UNAWARE THAT HIS OWN ADMINISTRATION HAD TRIED TO KEEP THOUSANDS OF TROOPS IN IRAQ

Obama Tried To Claim His Failed Status Of Forces Agreement With Iraq Would Not Have Left Thousands Of Troops In Iraq For Years

Obama Tried To Deny That He Proposed A Status Of Forces Agreement That Would Have Left Thousands Of Troops In Iraq. ROMNEY: “You didn’t want a status of forces agreement?” OBAMA: “What I would not have done is left 10,000 troops in Iraq that would tie us down. That certainly would not help us in the Middle East.” ROMNEY: “I’m sorry. You actually -- there was an effort on the part of the president to have a status of forces against, and I concurred in that and said we should have a number of troops that stayed on. That was something I concurred with. That was your posture and mine as well. You thought it should have been 5,000 troops and I thought it should have been more troops.” OBAMA: “Governor, this was done a few weeks ago. A few weeks ago you indicated we should still have troops in Iraq.” ROMNEY: “No, I didn’t. Sorry, I indicated that you failed to put in place a status of forces agreement at the end of the conflict that existed.” (2012 Presidential Debate, Lynn University, Boca Raton, FL, 10/22/12)

- **“Obama Suggested That Mr. Romney Was Mistaken In Seeking To Keep 10,000 American Troops In Iraq. But The Obama Administration Initially Sought To Do Just That.”** “President Obama suggested that Mr. Romney was mistaken in seeking to keep 10,000 American troops in Iraq. But the Obama administration initially sought to do just that — and ultimately never managed to negotiate an agreement to allow any American troops in Iraq.” (Michael Gordon and Scott Shane, “Fact Check: A Status Of Forces Agreement?” [The New York Times](#), 10/22/12)

The Facts Show That Had Obama Successfully Negotiated The Agreement, Thousands Of U.S. Troops Would Have Remained In Iraq After 2011

“Actually, The Obama Administration Tried For Many Months To Win Iraqi Agreement To Keeping Several Thousand American Troops There Beyond 2011 To Continue Training And Advising The Iraqi Armed Forces.” “Obama was suggesting that he had never favored keeping U.S. troops in Iraq beyond the December 2011 withdrawal deadline that the Bush administration had negotiated with the Iraqi government. Actually, the Obama administration tried for many months to win Iraqi agreement to keeping several thousand American troops there beyond 2011 to continue training and advising the Iraqi armed forces. The talks broke down over a disagreement on legal immunity for U.S. troops.” (Calvin Woodward, “FACT CHECK: Missteps In Final Presidential Debate,” [The Associated Press](#), 10/22/12)

- **NBC’s Richard Haass: “Even The Administration I Think Has Kept Open The Possibility Of A So Called Residual Force There.”** NBC’s RICHARD HAASS: “Even the administration I think has kept open the possibility of a so called residual force there, and that was an odd counterpoint to the conversation about Iraq, where it was almost confusing. Governor Romney was saying we should have kept some forces there, and the president was talking about how good it was we had

gotten all of our forces out when in fact, the United States did try to negotiate some sort of an arrangement with the Iraqis where some forces could stay. So I found all of this somewhat, somewhat odd. But again, to me the larger, the larger bottom line of the night was that on foreign policy issues actually, there was much more agreement than disagreement.” (NBC’s [“2012 Presidential Debate,”](#) 10/22/12)

- **“Obama Sought To Negotiate A Status Of Forces Agreement That Would Have Allowed United States Troops To Stay In Iraq After 2011.”** “Mr. Obama sought to negotiate a Status of Forces Agreement that would have allowed United States troops to stay in Iraq after 2011. Initially, the Obama administration was prepared to keep up to 10,000 troops in Iraq. Later, the Obama administration lowered the figure to about 5,000 troops — some 3,500 of which would be continuously based in the country while the remainder would periodically be rotated through. The role of the American forces would be to train Iraqi troops, patrol Iraq’s skies and help Iraqi commandos fight Al Qaeda.” (Michael Gordon and Scott Shane, “Fact Check: A Status Of Forces Agreement?” [The New York Times](#), 10/22/12)
 - **Obama “Tried To Negotiate A Status Of Forces Agreement With The Iraqi Government To Allow A Residual U.S. Force There.”** “Obama also wanted to leave several thousand U.S. troops in Iraq. He tried to negotiate a status of forces agreement with the Iraqi government to allow a residual U.S. force there, but the Iraqi government refused to grant legal immunity to any remaining U.S. troops. The last troops pulled out in December 2011.” (Brooks Jackson, “Homestretch Fact-Stretchers,” [FactCheck.Org](#), 10/22/12)
 - **“Factcheck.Org Notes That Obama Wanted To Leave Several Thousand Troops In Iraq, But The Iraqis Would Have None Of It.”** “FactCheck.org notes that Obama wanted to leave several thousand troops in Iraq, but the Iraqis would have none of it. Romney strongly criticized the Status of Forces agreement with the Iraqi government, saying at a roundtable discussion in November 2011, ‘It is my view that the withdrawal of all of our troops from Iraq by the end of this year is an enormous mistake.’ Romney told Fox News that Obama should have left ‘10-, 20- 30-thousand personnel there.’” (Josh Smith, Sophie Quinton, and Olga Belogolova, “Debate Fact Check: The Third Presidential Debate Between Barack Obama And Mitt Romney,” [National Journal](#), 10/22/12)
 - **“The Obama Administration Says That It Was Willing To Keep Some Troops In Iraq, But The Iraqis, Reflecting Their Concerns Over Sovereignty, Failed To Agree To The Necessary Immunities.”** “The Obama administration says that it was willing to keep some troops in Iraq, but the Iraqis, reflecting their concerns over sovereignty, failed to agree to the necessary immunities. After the talks broke down, the Obama administration withdrew the remaining American troops in December 2011, the deadline set for withdrawing all American forces from Iraq under the Status of Forces Agreement that was concluded by George W. Bush and Mr. Maliki in 2008.” (Michael Gordon and Scott Shane, “Fact Check: A Status Of Forces Agreement?” [The New York Times](#), 10/22/12)
- “Romney’s Right—Obama Did Try To Get A Status Of Forces Agreement, But Could Not Get An Agreement With The Government Of Iraq.”** “Romney’s right—Obama did try to get a status of forces agreement, but could not get an agreement with the government of Iraq. So now he stresses the fact that he has removed all troops from Iraq, while knocking Romney for supporting what he originally had hoped to achieve.” (Glenn Kessler, “Fact Check: Debate Over Iraq Withdrawal,” [The Washington Post](#), 10/22/12)
- **“Mitt Romney Claimed President Obama Was Looking To Keep Some Troops There As Well. ... Our Verdict From What Mitt Romney Says Is Mostly True.”** CNN’s JON BERMAN: “Coming up, this is the important context, on Iraq. Mitt Romney claimed that President Obama was looking to

keep some troops there as well, which the president denied. ...So what are the facts here? Well, Leon Panetta – the Secretary Of Defense - was negotiated to keep 3,000 to 5,000 troops in Iraq, within a so-called ‘Status of Forces’ agreement. This fell apart over the issue of whether U.S. troops would have certain immunity from prosecution. So our verdict here from what Mitt Romney says here is mostly true. The president did seem willing to leave some troops in Iraq under certain conditions, the deal just fell apart. “ CNN’s WOLF BLITZER: “That ‘Status of Forces’ agreement negotiation collapsed, as a result, all U.S. troops out of Iraq.” (CNN’s [Reality Check](#), 10/22/12)

- **MSNBC’s Andrea Mitchell: “Governor Romney Is Right.”** MSNBC’s ANDREA MITCHELL: “So Governor Romney is right, that the administration has tried and failed to get an agreement called Status of Forces Agreement that, in fact, would have allowed a small force of troops to remain for several years in Iraq.” ([NBC](#), 10/22/12)
- **Fox News’ Chris Wallace: “I Think You Have To Give The Points To Mitt Romney On That... Romney Was Right, Obama Was Wrong. Obama Wanted And Failed To Get A Status Of Forces Agreement.”** FOX NEWS’ CHRIS WALLACE: “Well, in fact, I think you have to give the points to Mitt Romney on that, provided as part of the troop withdrawal by George W. Bush and in a deal with the Iraqi Prime Minister is that there would be a status of forces agreement and that there would be a residual force there was talk of it as little as 5,000. The military wanted closer to 20,000. The person put in charge of it was Joe Biden, the Vice President, and at one point he said I will bet you my Vice Presidency, Malaki, the Iraqi prime minister will extend the status of forces agreement. But it all fell apart. They never got it, but it’s clear Romney was right, Obama was wrong. Obama wanted and failed to get a status of forces agreement.” (Fox News, 10/22/12)

OBAMA WAS UNAWARE OF HIS OWN SECRETARY OF STATE’S POSITION ON CHINA

Breaking From His Own State Department, Obama Called China Our Adversary

Obama: “But with respect to China, China’s both an adversary but also a potential partner in the international community if it’s following the rules.” (President Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Debate, Lynn University, Boca Raton, FL, 10/22/12)

“President Barack Obama Called China An ‘Adversary’ Of The United States For The First Time During Tonight’s Debate, Changing His Own Administration’s Messaging On The U.S.-China Relationship And Contradicting His Own Secretary Of State.” “President Barack Obama called China an ‘adversary’ of the United States for the first time during tonight’s debate, changing his own administration’s messaging on the U.S.-China relationship and contradicting his own secretary of state. ‘China is both an adversary, but also a potential partner,’ Obama said during the debate. ‘China is doesn’t have to be an adversary,’ Romney responded.” (Josh Rogin, “Obama Contradicts Clinton, Calls China An ‘Adversary,’” [Foreign Policy’s The Cable](#), 10/22/12)

- **Romney: “We Don’t Have To Be An Adversary In Any Way, Shape Or Form.”** “And so we can be a partner with China. We don’t have to be an adversary in any way, shape or form. We can work with them. We can collaborate with them if they’re willing to be responsible.” (2012 Presidential Debate, Lynn University, Boca Raton, FL, 10/22/12)

“Secretary Of State Hillary Clinton Appears To Agree With Romney, Not Her Boss. She’s Said On Several Occasions That China Is Not An Adversary And Doesn’t Have To Become One.” “Secretary of State Hillary Clinton appears to agree with Romney, not her boss. She’s said on several occasions that China is not an adversary and doesn’t have to become one. ‘Now, some believe that China on the rise is, by

definition, an adversary. To the contrary, we believe that the United States and China can benefit from and contribute to each other's successes,' Clinton said in one her first speeches in office in 2009." (Josh Rogin, "Obama Contradicts Clinton, Calls China An 'Adversary,'" [Foreign Policy's The Cable](#), 10/22/12)

- **In 2009, Secretary Clinton Said That China Was Not Our Adversary.** SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY CLINTON: "Now, some believe that China on the rise is, by definition, an adversary. To the contrary, we believe that the United States and China can benefit from and contribute to each other's successes. It is in our interest to work harder to build on areas of common concern and shared opportunities." (Secretary Of State Hillary Clinton, [Remarks At The Asia Society](#), New York, NY, 2/13/09)

OBAMA WAS UNAWARE THAT HE SPOKE OUT AGAINST GETTING RID OF GADHAFI

Obama Claimed That He "Took Leadership In Organizing An International Coalition" To Oust Libyan Dictator Moammar Gadhafi. OBAMA: "But I think it's important to step back and think about what happened in Libya. Now, keep in mind that I and Americans took leadership in organizing an international coalition that made sure that we were able to -- without putting troops on the ground, at the cost of less than what we spent in two weeks in Iraq -- liberate a country that had been under the yoke of dictatorship for 40 years, got rid of a despot who had killed Americans." (President Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Debate, Lynn University, Boca Raton, FL, 10/22/12)

- **Obama Implied That He Had Been Responsible For Gadhafi's Capture, Saying "Moammar Gadhafi Had More American Blood On His Hands Than Any Individual Other Than Osama Bin Laden. And So We Were Going To Make Sure That We Finished The Job."** OBAMA: "But you know, going back to Libya, because this is an example of -- of how we make choices, you know, when we went into Libya and we were able to immediately stop the massacre there because of the unique circumstances and the coalition that we had helped to organize, we also had to make sure that Moammar Gadhafi didn't stay there. And to the governor's credit, you supported us going into Libya and the coalition that we organized. But when it came time to making sure that Gadhafi did not stay in power, that he was captured, Governor, your suggestion was that this was mission creep, that this was mission muddle. Imagine if we had pulled out at that point. That -- Moammar Gadhafi had more American blood on his hands than any individual other than Osama bin Laden. And so we were going to make sure that we finished the job. That's part of the reason why the Libyans stand with us." (President Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Debate, Lynn University, Boca Raton, FL, 10/22/12)

But In 2011, Obama Called Regime Change In Libya A Mistake Before Joining European Leaders In Calling For Gadhafi's Departure

Obama Said Overthrowing Gadhafi Would Be A Mistake. "In this case, Obama, said, making the ouster of Gadhafi a targeted outcome would have been a mistake. 'If we tried to overthrow Gadhafi by force, our coalition would splinter,' he said. 'We would likely have to put U.S. troops on the ground to accomplish that mission, or risk killing many civilians from the air. The dangers faced by our men and women in uniform would be far greater. So would the costs, and our share of the responsibility for what comes next.'" ("Obama: Not Acting In Libya 'Would Have Been A Betrayal Of Who We Are,'" [CNN](#), 3/28/11)

- **Three Weeks Later, Obama Signed A Letter With French President Sarkozy And British PM Cameron In Calling For Gadhafi To Be Removed From Power.** "However, so long as Gaddafi is in power, Nato and its coalition partners must maintain their operations so that civilians remain protected and the pressure on the regime builds. Then a genuine transition from dictatorship to an inclusive constitutional process can really begin, led by a new generation of leaders." ("Libya Letter By Obama, Cameron And Sarkozy," [BBC](#), 4/15/11)

Obama Was The Only Major Western Leader Who Didn't "Speak Up On Libya" Right Away.

"Governments around the world have been condemning this appalling stance and the terrible slaughter it has caused. The European Union has agreed in principle to impose sanctions, and the Arab League has said Libya will be excluded from its meetings. British Prime Minister David Cameron, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi all condemned the regime's violence. Said French President Nicolas Sarkozy: 'The continuing brutal and bloody crackdown against the Libyan civilian population is revolting. The international community cannot remain a spectator to these massive violations of human rights.' By late Wednesday only one major Western leader had failed to speak up on Libya: Barack Obama." (Editorial, "Why Was President Obama Last To Speak Up On Libya?" [The Washington Post](#), 2/23/11)

- ***The Washington Post: "Mr. Obama Appeared Eager To Make The Point That The United States Was Not Taking The Lead In Opposing Mr. Gaddafi's Crimes."*** (Editorial, "Why Was President Obama Last To Speak Up On Libya?" [The Washington Post](#), 2/23/11)
- ***The Washington Post: "Shouldn't The President Of The United States Be First To Oppose The Depravities Of A Tyrant Such As Mr. Gaddafi? Apparently This One Doesn't Think So."*** (Editorial, "Why Was President Obama Last To Speak Up On Libya?" [The Washington Post](#), 2/23/11)

The Washington Post: "Once Again, An Arab Dictator Is Employing Criminal Violence In A Desperate Effort To Remain In Power - And Once Again, The Obama Administration Has Been Slow To Find Its Voice." (Editorial, "Why Was President Obama Last To Speak Up On Libya?" [The Washington Post](#), 2/23/11)

- ***"Nonetheless, Obama May Be Moving Toward Something Resembling A Doctrine. One Of His Advisers Described The President's Actions In Libya As 'Leading From Behind.'"*** (Ryan Lizza, "The Consequentialist," [The New Yorker](#), 5/2/11)

OBAMA WAS UNAWARE OF AMERICA'S REAL STANDING IN THE WORLD

Obama Claimed He Had Made America Stronger And Improved Relations Around The World But His Leadership Failures Have Left Many Disillusioned

Obama: "The World Needs A Strong America. And It Is Stronger Now Than When I Came Into Office." OBAMA: "America remains the one indispensable nation. And the world needs a strong America. And it is stronger now than when I came into office. Because we ended the war in Iraq, we were able to refocus our attention on not only the terrorist threat but also beginning a transition process in Afghanistan. It also allowed us to refocus on alliances and relationships that had been neglected for a decade. And, Governor Romney, our alliances have never been stronger -- in Asia, in Europe, in Africa, with Israel where we have unprecedented military and intelligence cooperation, including dealing with the Iranian threat." (President Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Debate, Lynn University, Boca Raton, FL, 10/22/12)

Obama Has "Not Managed To Radically Transform America's Standing In The World Through The Illuminating Force Of His Biography Or Personality." "When presidential candidate Barack Obama swept into Europe in 2008, television screens showed massive, adoring crowds. But the latest TV images from abroad are far more ominous: mobs in the Muslim world besieging U.S. embassies, torching American flags and even burning Obama himself in effigy. The two sets of images show a gap between aspirations and reality: A president who is popular overseas has not managed to radically transform America's standing in the world through the illuminating force of his biography or personality." (Josh Gerstein, "World's Obama Fever Cools," [Politico](#), 9/21/12)

Obama's International Popularity "Has Dimmed In Much Of The World." "As Obama prepares to stand for reelection, the surge in good feeling toward the U.S. that he ushered in has dimmed in much of

the world. And evidence is scant that his popularity has advanced U.S. interests with America's allies or its adversaries in a tangible way." (Josh Gerstein, "World's Obama Fever Cools," [Politico](#), 9/21/12)

- **Polling Shows Global Opinion Of Obama's International Policies "Has Declined Dramatically Since 2009."** "Global opinion of President Barack Obama has declined dramatically since 2009, according to a new survey of the president and his policies in 21 countries. Approval of Obama's international policies has dropped from 78 percent to 63 percent in Europe; from 34 percent to 15 percent in Muslim Countries; from 40 percent to 22 percent in Russia; and from 57 percent to 27 percent in China, reports the Pew Global Attitudes Project." (Tim Mak, "World Poll: Chill On Obama Policies," [Politico](#), 6/13/12)

Under Obama, "America's Image Is Again In Decline, Especially In The Middle East." "But while polls show Obama remains personally popular in many parts of the world, America's image is again in decline, especially in the Middle East, the focus of intense personal outreach at the start of the president's term." (Matt Spetalnick, "Obama Foreign Policy Bright Spot Now Looking Dimmer," [Reuters](#), 9/23/12)

- **In The Palestinian Territories, Pakistan, Syria And Even Europe, Obama's Failure To Fulfill Lofty Promises Has Damaged U.S. Standing And Credibility.** "Many add another failure, asking how a president who spoke so movingly about the plight of the Palestinians during his first trip to the Middle East in 2009, and who said he could imagine Palestinian statehood by 2011, seemed to abandon that cause in face of overwhelming opposition. Ask Pakistanis about the signature achievements of the Obama presidency, and they will launch into the subject of civilian casualties from drone strikes. Ask the Syrian opposition, and they will describe an America of double standards that enters wars when they are relatively easy, as in Libya, but ignores carnage when the solutions could put American lives at risk. Even the Europeans, who were so eager to see George Bush return to Texas, and who massed at the Brandenburg Gate to hear candidate Obama in 2008, now grumble that there was more hope than change." (David E. Sanger, *Confront And Conceal*, 2012, p. xviii)
- **Pivotal Nations In The Middle East Have More Hostile Views Of The United States Today Under Obama Than They Did Under President Bush.** "While the U.S. is more popular in many places than it was when Bush left office, American standing never got a huge boost in some critical regions, such as the Mideast. And in two strategically pivotal nations, Pakistan and Egypt, sentiment toward the U.S. is more hostile than it was under Bush — an anger experts attribute to Obama's aggressive campaign of drone strikes against terror suspects and tumult related to the Arab Spring democracy movement." (Josh Gerstein, "World's Obama Fever Cools," [Politico](#), 9/21/12)

Obama's Handling Of Middle East Unrest Is "Calling Into Question Central Tenets Of His Middle East Policy." "The unrest has suddenly become Mr. Obama's most serious foreign policy crisis of the election season, and analysts say it is calling into question central tenets of his Middle East policy. Did he do enough throughout the Arab Spring to help the transition to democracy from autocracy? Has he drawn a hard enough line against Islamic extremists? Did his administration fail to address security concerns? Has his outreach to the Muslim world yielded any lasting benefits?" (Peter Baker and Mark Landler, "U.S. Is Preparing For A Long Siege Of Arab Unrest," [The New York Times](#), 9/15/12)

- **The Wall Street Journal: "The Fires Across The Middle East, From Libya To Syria To Iran, Rage In A Vacuum Created By The Perception That The U.S. Is Withdrawing From The Region."** "The boys in Chicago will keep saying that Mr. Obama has 'strengthened our alliances and restored our standing.' But come again? Ask Israel, Poland or Saudi Arabia how confident they are of America's friendship and resolve these days. The fires across the Middle East, from Libya to

Syria to Iran, rage in a vacuum created by the perception that the U.S. is withdrawing from the region. Weakness emboldens adversaries, as Mr. Romney put it, whether Russia's Vladimir Putin, violent Arab Islamists or Iran's mullahs." (Editorial, "Romney's World," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/8/12)

- **Anti-American Protests "Represent The Most Serious Challenge Yet" To Obama's Attempt To Improve America's Relationship With The Middle East.** "The assault Tuesday evening on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi and an earlier attack on the U.S. Embassy in Cairo represent the most serious challenge yet to Obama's attempt to transform a traditionally anti-American region into one that is more trusting of U.S. intentions and can serve as a counterweight, with Israel, to Iran's ambitions." (Karen DeYoung and Scott Wilson, "Libya Attack Represents Challenge For Obama," [The Washington Post](#), 9/12/12)

OBAMA WAS UNAWARE THAT HE GRANTED 20 WAIVERS FOR SANCTIONS AGAINST IRAN

Obama Touted His Sanctions Against Iran As The Strongest In History, But Didn't Mention The Major Loopholes He Granted Through Waivers To Countries Like China

Obama: "We Then Organized The Strongest Coalition And The Strongest Sanctions Against Iran In History." "I've made that clear when I came into office. We then organized the strongest coalition and the strongest sanctions against Iran in history, and it is crippling their economy." (President Barack Obama, 2012 Presidential Debate, Lynn University, Boca Raton, FL, 10/22/12)

The Obama Administration Has Now Granted Waivers To "All Twenty Of Iran's Major Trading Partners," Including China, For Their Efforts To Reduce Iranian Oil Imports Ahead Of The Sanctions. "Though economic sanctions still haven't slowed or stopped Iran's nuclear drive, the Obama Administration has decided to make them even weaker. The Iran sanctions regime is looking like the U.S. tax code—filled with loopholes. It's so weak, in fact, that all 20 of Iran's major trading partners are now exempt from them. We've arrived at a kind of voodoo version of sanctions. They look real, insofar as Congress forced them into a bill President Obama had to sign in December. The Administration has spoken incantations about their powers. But if you're a big oil importer in China, India or 18 other major economies, the sanctions are mostly smoke." (Editorial, "Obama's Iran Loopholes," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 7/2/12)

- **China Is Iran's Top Oil Customer.** "The American waiver granted to China, Iran's top customer of oil, was regarded as especially significant because it averted a potentially serious collision between China and the United States, which are both members of the group of six big powers that are negotiating with Iran in the nuclear dispute. Under the American law, banks of countries that are Iranian oil importers can be denied access to the American banking system." (Rick Gladstone, "U.S. Exempts Singapore And China On Iran Oil," [The New York Times](#), 6/28/12)
- **"The Problem Is That China's Reduction Is An Apparent Fluke," Driven By A Pricing Dispute With Iran, "Not A Dedicated Effort To Reduce Trade Or Isolate Iran Economically."** "The problem is that China's reduction is an apparent fluke, not a dedicated effort to reduce trade or isolate Iran economically. Imports fell by about 50% in February and March because a Chinese oil giant delayed the start of a contract over a price dispute. Once that was resolved, imports shot back up—by 34% between April and May, and again by 35% between May and June." (Editorial, "Obama's Iran Loopholes," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 7/2/12)
- **After Settling A Pricing Dispute, China Boosted Its Purchases Of Iranian Imports By 17% In June.** "By contrast, Iran has is showing more flexibility when it comes to negotiating prices—a move China has taken advantage of. After a pricing dispute that ended with Beijing getting the

upper hand, the country, long Tehran's largest oil buyer, has reversed a cut in Iranian imports, boosting them by 17% in June. As a result, Iran's oil exports have stabilized in the past two months at about 1.1 million barrels a day and the rate of decline of its production has slowed, according to analysts." (Benoît Faucon, "Iran Barter Bargains To Help Oil Sales," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 8/7/12)

Iran "Portrayed The Exemptions As A Win For Iran," Calling Them An "Overt Retreat" By The U.S. "Iranian officials portrayed the exemptions as a win for Iran, despite the fact that the countries were explicitly exempted because they had begun weaning themselves off Iranian oil. Fars News headlined its story on the sanctions, 'U.S.A. backs down against Iran.' 'Such a move is an overt retreat from their earlier stances,' the head of the parliament foreign policy commission, Aladin Borujerdi, told the Iranian Students News Agency. He said it was 'due to decisive stances taken by the Islamic Republic' defending its nuclear program." ("Iran Claims Victory After U.S. Exempts Countries From Oil Sanctions," [Los Angeles Times](#), 3/21/12)

Fearing Higher Oil Prices And "Political Trouble In An Election Year," The Administration Has Resisted Taking Strong Action Against Iran's Nuclear Program. "Officials fear that too powerful a blow to the world's third-largest oil exporter could cause an oil price increase, damaging the global economic recovery, undermining international support for the sanctions campaign and creating political trouble in an election year." (Paul Richter, "Obama Administration Takes Back Seat On Iran Sanctions," [Los Angeles Times](#), 2/17/12)

- ***The Washington Post*: "The Result Is That President Obama Is Not Even Leading From Behind On Iran; He Is Simply Behind."** "The result is that President Obama is not even leading from behind on Iran; he is simply behind. At the forefront of the Western effort to pressure Tehran is French President Nicolas Sarkozy, who issued a statement Monday calling on the European Union, the United States, Japan, Canada and 'other willing countries' to 'immediately freeze the assets of Iran's central bank' and suspend purchases of Iranian oil." (Editorial, "More Half-Measures From Obama Administration On Iran," [The Washington Post](#), 11/22/11)

OBAMA WAS UNAWARE OF RUSSIA'S REJECTION OF THE NUNN-LUGAR NONPROLIFERATION AGREEMENT

In 2008, Obama Made Nuclear Nonproliferation A Centerpiece Of His Foreign Policy Agenda. "On the broader issue of nuclear proliferation, this is something that I've worked on since I've been in the Senate. I worked with Richard Lugar, then the Republican head of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, to pass the next stage of what was Nunn-Lugar so that we would have improved interdiction of potentially nuclear materials." (Barack Obama, ABC Democrat Presidential Candidate Debate, Manchester, NH, 1/5/08)

- **Obama Called Nonproliferation, "The Most Significant Foreign Policy Issue That We Confront."** "Well, as I said, I've already been working on this. And I think this is the most significant foreign policy issue that we confront." (Barack Obama, ABC Democrat Presidential Candidate Debate, Manchester, NH, 1/5/08)

In The Debate, Obama Didn't Address The Recent Setbacks To The U.S.-Russia Relationship And His Nonproliferation Agenda Posed By Putin's Withdrawal

Now In "The Latest In A Series Of Hitches In Relations," Russia Announced It "Will Not Renew A Decades-Old Agreement With Washington On Dismantling Nuclear And Chemical Weapons When It Expires Next Year." "Russia will not renew a decades-old agreement with Washington on dismantling nuclear and chemical weapons when it expires next year, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov was quoted as saying on Wednesday. The death of the 1991 agreement, which had been renewed twice, is the latest in a series of hitches in relations between the United States and Russia and casts doubt on the

future of the much-vaunted 'reset' in relations between the Cold War-era foes." ("Russia Says It Will Not Renew Arms Agreement With U.S.," [Reuters](#), 10/10/12)

- **Russia Will Not Renew The 21-Year-Old Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Agreement On Nuclear Weapons When It Expires In May 2013.** "Russia has told the United States that it will not extend the Nunn-Lugar weapons reduction and security agreement after it expires at the end of May, saying it no longer needs to receive foreign aid and is concerned about leaks of nuclear security information. The 21-year-old cooperative program was designed to help secure the nuclear and chemical weapons arsenal of the Soviet Union after the bloc's collapse. At a cost of about \$500 million a year, it has ensured the shipment of nuclear weapons out of Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus, deactivated more than 7,600 nuclear warheads, destroyed 902 intercontinental ballistic missiles and 33 submarines and secured 24 nuclear weapons storage sites." (Will Englund, "Russia No Longer Wants U.S. Aid On Nuclear Arms Security," [The Washington Post](#), 10/10/12)

Russia's Refusal To Renew The Nunn-Lugar Agreement Is A "Potentially Grave Setback In The Already Fraying Relationship Between The Former Cold War Enemies." "The Russian government said Wednesday that it would not renew a hugely successful 20-year partnership with the United States to safeguard and dismantle nuclear and chemical weapons in the former Soviet Union when the program expires next spring, a potentially grave setback in the already fraying relationship between the former cold war enemies." (David M. Herszenhorn, "Russia Won't Renew Pact ON Weapons With U.S.," [The New York Times](#), 10/10/12)

- **"The Plan To End The Nunn-Lugar Program Appears To Be The Latest Step By The Russian Government In An Expanding Effort To Curtail American-Led Initiatives."** "The plan to end the Nunn-Lugar program appears to be the latest step by the Russian government in an expanding effort to curtail American-led initiatives, and especially the influence of American money, in various spheres of Russian public policy." (David M. Herszenhorn, "Russia Won't Renew Pact ON Weapons With U.S.," [The New York Times](#), 10/10/12)
- **The Announcement Came Shortly After Russia Expelled USAID And As "The Kremlin Has Been Hewing To A Distinctly Anti-American Tone" In Its Domestic Politics.** "The move comes just a few weeks after Russia announced it was expelling the U.S. Agency for International Development, the American foreign-aid program. Earlier this week, UNICEF also announced that it will wind up its operations in Russia by the end of the year. On Wednesday evening, Interfax quoted Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov as saying there was no connection between the shutdown of the aid programs and the end of the weapons agreement. But the Kremlin has been hewing to a distinctly anti-American tone as it attempts to portray its domestic opponents as agents of the United States." (Will Englund, "Russia No Longer Wants U.S. Aid On Nuclear Arms Security," [The Washington Post](#), 10/10/12)
- **"The Move Comes As The 'Reset' In Relations Between The Obama Administration And The Kremlin Has Reached Either A Turning Point Or The End Of The Road, Depending On Who's Talking."** (Natasha Abbakumova and Will Englund, "Russia Boots Out USAID," [The Washington Post](#), 9/18/12)