



More Holes Emerging In Obama's Libya Timeline

Obama's "Best Information" Is Not Good Enough

THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION FOCUSED ON NON-EXISTENT PROTESTS FOR OVER A WEEK AFTER THE ATTACK IN BENGHAZI

Immediately Following The Deadly Attack In Benghazi, The Obama Administration Denied That It Was Anything More Than A Protest Gone Awry

On September 14, White House Press Secretary Jay Carney Insisted That The Attack Was In Reaction To The Film, Despite Being Told That The Pentagon Had Briefed The Senate That The Attacks In Benghazi Were Staged By Terrorists. ABC's JAKE TAPPER: "While we were sitting here, Secretary Panetta and the vice chair of the joint chiefs briefed the Senate Armed Services Committee, and the senators came out and said their indication was that this – for the attack on Benghazi – was a terrorist attack organized and carried out by terrorists, that it was premeditated, a calculated act of terror. Levin said – Senator Levin, I think it was a planned premeditated attack, the kind of equipment that they had used. There is evidence it was a planned premeditated attack. Is there anything more you can – now that the administration is briefing senators on this, is there anything more you can tell us?" WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY JAY CARNEY: "Right. Well, I think we wait to hear from administration officials. Again, it's actively under investigation, both the Benghazi attack and incidents elsewhere, you know. And my point was that at – we don't have and did not have concrete evidence to suggest that this was not in reaction to the film." (Jay Carney, White House Press Briefing, [Washington, DC](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/09/14/jay-carney-white-house-press-briefing), 9/14/12)

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On September 16, U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice Said The Administration Viewed The Benghazi Attack As "Almost A Copycat Of The Demonstrations Against Our Facility In Cairo, Which Were Prompted Of Course By The Video." NBC's DAVID GREGORY: "You talked about this as spontaneous. Can you say definitively that the attacks that killed Ambassador Stevens and others there was spontaneous? Was it a planned attack? Was there a terrorist element to it?" AMBASSADOR SUSAN RICE: "The best information we have at present, first of all, there's an FBI investigation that's ongoing and we look to that investigation to give us the definitive word as to what transpired. But putting together the best information that we have available to us today, our current assessment is that what happened in

Benghazi was in fact initially a spontaneous reaction to what had just transpired hours before in Cairo. Almost a copycat of the demonstrations against our facility in Cairo, which were prompted of course by the video. What we think then transpired in Benghazi is that opportunistic extremist elements came to the consulate as this was unfolding. They came with heavy weapons, which unfortunately are readily available in post revolutionary Libya and it escalated into a much more violent episode. Obviously, that's our best judgment now. We'll await the results of the investigation, and the president has been very clear we'll work with the Libyan authorities to bring those responsible to justice." (NBC's "Meet The Press," 9/16/12)

- **Rice Claimed That Extremists Had "Hijacked" Protests Outside The Benghazi Compound.** U.N. AMBASSADOR SUSAN RICE: "We believe that folks in Benghazi, a small number of people came to the embassy to - or to the consulate, rather, to replicate the sort of challenge that was posed in Cairo. And then as that unfolded, it seems to have been hijacked, let us say, by some individual clusters of extremists who came with heavier weapons, weapons that as you know in - in the wake of the revolution in Libya are - are quite common and accessible. And it then evolved from there. We'll wait to see exactly what the investigation finally confirms, but that's the best information we have at present." (ABC's "This Week," 9/16/12)
- **Rice Said That The Attack In Benghazi Was "A Direct Result Of A Heinous And Offensive Video."** U.N. AMBASSADOR SUSAN RICE: "First of all, let's be clear about what transpired here. What happened this week in Cairo, in Benghazi, in many other parts of the region..." ABC's JAKE TAPPER: "Tunisia, Khartoum..." RICE: "...was a result - a direct result of a heinous and offensive video that was widely disseminated, that the US government had nothing to do with, which we have made clear is reprehensible and disgusting." (ABC's "This Week," 9/16/12)
- **Rice: "We Don't See At This Point Signs This Was A Coordinated Plan, Premeditated Attack."** U.N. AMBASSADOR SUSAN RICE: "The information, the best information and the best assessment we have today is that in fact this was not a preplanned, premeditated attack. That what happened initially was that it was a spontaneous reaction to what had just transpired in Cairo as a consequence of the video. People gathered outside the embassy and then it grew very violent and those with extremist ties joined the fray and came with heavy weapons, which unfortunately are quite common in post-revolutionary Libya and that then spun out of control. But we don't see at this point signs this was a coordinated plan, premeditated attack. Obviously, we will wait for the results of the investigation and we don't want to jump to conclusions before then. But I do think it's important for the American people to know our best current assessment." (Fox News' "Fox News Sunday," 9/16/12)

U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice Denied That U.S. Security Should Have Been Stronger In Benghazi After A String Of Attacks Over The Summer. FOX NEWS' CHRIS WALLACE: "All right. And the last question, terror cells in Benghazi had carried out five attacks since April, including one at the same consulate, a bombing at the same consulate in June. Should U.S. security have been tighter at that consulate given the history of terror activity in Benghazi?" U.N. AMBASSADOR SUSAN RICE: "Well, we obviously did have a strong security presence. And, unfortunately, two of the four Americans who died in Benghazi were there to provide security. But it wasn't sufficient in the circumstances to prevent the overrun of the consulate. This is among the things that will be looked at as the investigation unfolds and it's also why -" WALLACE: "Is there any feeling that it should have been stronger beforehand?" RICE: "It's also why we increased our presence, our security presence in Tripoli in the aftermath of this, as well as in other parts of the world. I can't judge that, Chris. I'm -- we have to see what the assessment reveals." (Fox News' "Fox News Sunday," 9/16/12)

After Its Initial Denial, Administration Officials Began To Admit That The Benghazi Attack Was An Act Of Terrorism, Though Obama Himself Did Not

After Focusing On The Protests Against The Video For The First Week After The Attack, The Obama Administration Finally Reached The “Belated Conclusion” That It Was A Coordinated Assault By Terrorists With Connections To Al Qaeda. “For days after the attack, intelligence officials and the Obama administration said it was likely the outgrowth of protests sparked by an anti-Islamic video made in the U.S. Intelligence officials now believe the attack was carried out by local militants who were in contact with regional members of al Qaeda-affiliated groups, using the eruption of protests elsewhere as an opportunity to mount an assault on U.S. installations. That belated conclusion has raised questions about the adequacy of intelligence and security preparations at U.S. diplomatic posts abroad as they confront both old and newer risks.” (Siobhan Gorman And Matt Bradley, “Militant Link To Libya Attack,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/1/12)

- **On September 19, National Counterterrorism Center Director Matt Olsen Told The Senate Homeland Security Committee That Ambassador Stevens Had Been “Killed In The Course Of A Terrorist Attack On Our Embassy.”** SEN. JOSEPH LIEBERMAN (ID-CT): “So, let me begin by asking you whether you would say that Ambassador Stevens and the three other Americans died as a result of a terrorist attack.” NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER DIRECTOR MATT OLSEN: “Certainly on that particular question, I would say yes, they were killed in the course of a terrorist attack on our embassy.” (Homeland Security And Governmental Affairs Committee, U.S. Senate, Hearing, 9/19/12)
- **On September 20, White House Press Secretary Jay Carney Said It Was “Self-Evident” That The Benghazi Attack Was An Act Of Terrorism.** WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY JAY CARNEY: “It is, I think, self-evident that what happened in Benghazi was a terrorist attack. Our embassy was attacked violently, and the result was four deaths of American officials. So, again, that’s self-evident. I would point you to a couple of things that Mr. Olsen said, which is that at this point it appears that a number of different elements were involved in the attack, including individuals connected to militant groups that are prevalent in Eastern Libya.” (Jay Carney, White House Press Briefing, [Washington, DC](#), 9/20/12)
- **On September 21, Secretary Of State Hillary Clinton Confirmed That “What Happened In Benghazi Was A Terrorist Attack.”** SECRETARY OF STATE HILLARY CLINTON: “Yesterday afternoon when I briefed the Congress, I made it clear that keeping our people everywhere in the world safe is our top priority. What happened in Benghazi was a terrorist attack, and we will not rest until we have tracked down and brought to justice the terrorists who murdered four Americans. And we are taking aggressive measures at all of our posts to protect our staffs and their families along with locally employed people who provide so many important contributions to the work of our missions.” (Secretary Of State Hillary Clinton, Remarks With Pakistani Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar, [Washington, DC](#), 9/21/12)

But On September 20, Obama Contradicted His Administration When He Said We Still Did Not Know If Terrorists Had Attacked The Benghazi Compound, Claiming, “What We Do Know Is That The Natural Protests That Arose Because Of The Outrage Over The Video Were Used As An Excuse By Extremists...” QUESTION: “We have reports that the White House said today that the attacks in Libya were a terrorist attack. Do you have information indicating that it was Iran, or al Qaeda was behind organizing the protests?” OBAMA: “Well, we’re still doing an investigation, and there are going to be different circumstances in different countries. And so I don’t want to speak to something until we have all the information. What we do know is that the natural protests that arose because of the outrage over the

video were used as an excuse by extremists to see if they can also directly harm U.S. interests –”

QUESTION: “Al Qaeda?” OBAMA: “Well, we don’t know yet.” (President Barack Obama, Remarks At The Univision Town Hall, [Miami, FL](#), 9/20/12)

On September 24, Obama Appeared On The View And Again Refused To Call The Attack Terrorism, Only Saying That The Attack “Wasn’t Just A Mob Action.” “President Barack Obama said Monday that the Sept. 11 attack that claimed the life of the U.S. ambassador to Libya and three other Americans ‘wasn’t just a mob action,’ but he stopped short of explicitly labeling the assault as an act of terrorism. Obama’s comments came as he taped an interview with ‘The View’ during a brief trip to New York to address the annual United National General Assembly. He had been asked whether the attack on the U.S. Consulate compound in the city of Benghazi was a terrorist act.” (Olivier Knox, “Obama: Libya Attack ‘Wasn’t Just A Mob Action,’” [Yahoo News’ The Ticket](#), 9/24/12)

NOW THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION IS STRUGGLING TO DEFEND ITS INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY FAILURES

On October 9, The State Department Admitted That It Knew All Along That There Was No Protest Before The Benghazi Attack

The State Department Revealed That “Prior To The Attack On The U.S. Mission In Benghazi Late In The Evening On Sept. 11, There Was No Protest Outside The Compound.” “Prior to the attack on the U.S. mission in Benghazi late in the evening on Sept. 11, there was no protest outside the compound, a senior State Department official confirmed today, contradicting initial administration statements suggesting that the attack was an opportunistic reaction to unrest caused by an anti-Islam video. In a conference call with reporters Tuesday, two senior State Department officials gave a detailed accounting of the events that lead to the death of Amb. Chris Stevens and three other Americans. The officials said that prior to the massive attack on the Benghazi compound by dozens of militants carrying heavy weaponry, there was no unrest outside the walls of the compound and no protest that anyone inside the compound was aware of.” (Josh Rogin, “State Department: No Video Protest At The Benghazi Consulate,” [Foreign Policy’s The Cable](#), 10/9/12)

- **“The State Department Says It Never Concluded That An Attack That Killed The U.S. Ambassador To Libya Was Simply A Protest Gone Awry, A Statement That Places The Obama Administration’s Own Foreign Policy Arm In Sync With Republicans.”** “The State Department says it never concluded that an attack that killed the U.S. ambassador to Libya was simply a protest gone awry, a statement that places the Obama administration’s own foreign policy arm in sync with Republicans. That extraordinary message, appearing to question the administration’s initial description of the attack on the U.S. Consulate in Benghazi, came in a department briefing Tuesday — a day before a hearing on diplomatic security in Libya was to be held by the Republican-led House Oversight and Government Reform Committee.” (Larry Margasak and Bradley Klapper, “State Dept. Description Of Attack In Sync With GOP,” [The Associated Press](#), 10/10/12)

The State Department’s Statement Raises “Further Questions About Why The Obama Administration Initially Used That Explanation After Assailants Killed Four Americans There.” “A senior State Department official says his department never concluded that the consulate attack in Libya stemmed from protests over an American-made video ridiculing Islam, raising further questions about why the Obama administration initially used that explanation after assailants killed four Americans there. Briefing reporters Tuesday, officials provided a more detailed rundown of the Sept. 11 attack in Benghazi. They said the attack came without warning and involved multiple groups of men armed with weapons such as machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades. But asked about the administration’s initial

explanation linking the violence to the video, one official said, 'That was not our conclusion.' The official called it a question for 'others' to answer." (Larry Margasak, "State Department: We Didn't Link Libya Attack To Video," [The Associated Press](#), 10/9/12)

On October 10, State Department Personnel Came Forward With Details Of The Deteriorating Security Situation In Libya Before The Attacks

On October 10, State Department Officials Told Congress That They Had Rejected Requests For Increased Security Personnel In The Months Before The 9/11 Benghazi Attack. "Senior State Department officials acknowledged to Congress on Wednesday that they had turned down requests to send more U.S. military personnel to guard diplomatic facilities in Libya shortly before the Sept. 11 attack that killed the U.S. ambassador and three other Americans. ... Wood's team left Libya in August after Lamb had refused to approve extending its assignment for a second time. She said the State Department planned to turn over most basic protective duties to a Libyan guard force, part of a decade-long shift away from using U.S. Marines to protect embassies. Lamb said the mix of State Department officers, Libyan guards and militiamen 'could do the same function' as the U.S. military." (Ken Dilanian and Kathleen Hennessey, "U.S. Declined Requests To Boost Security In Libya, Congress Told," [Los Angeles Times](#), 10/10/12)

- **Less Than Two Months Before The Benghazi Attack, The State Department Determined That "The Risk Of U.S. Mission Personnel, Private U.S. Citizens And Businesspersons Encountering An Isolating Event As A Result Of Militia Or Political Violence Is HIGH."** "Less than two months before the fatal attack on the U.S. diplomatic mission in Benghazi, Libya, the State Department concluded that the risk of violence to diplomats and other Americans in Libya was high and that the weak U.S.-backed government in Tripoli could do little about it. 'The risk of U.S. Mission personnel, private U.S. citizens and businesspersons encountering an isolating event as a result of militia or political violence is HIGH,' a State Department security assessment from July 22 concludes." (Anne Gearan, "Before attack on U.S. mission in Libya, State Dept. concluded risk of violence was high," [The Washington Post](#), 10/9/12)
- **U.S. Security Officials Repeatedly Warned The State Department That More U.S. Security Personnel Were Needed In Libya.** "The former head of a Special Forces 'Site Security Team' in Libya tells CBS News that in spite of multiple pleas from himself and other U.S. security officials on the ground for 'more not less' security personnel, the State Department removed as many as 34 people from the country in the six months before a terrorist attack in Benghazi that killed Ambassador Chris Stevens and three others. Lt. Col. Andy Wood will appear this week at a House Oversight Committee hearing that will examine security decisions leading up to the Sept. 11 terrorist attack on the U.S. compound in Benghazi. Speaking to CBS News correspondent Sharyl Attkisson, Wood said when he found out that his own 16-member team and a six-member State Department elite force were being pulled from Tripoli in August - about a month before the assault in Benghazi - he felt, 'like we were being asked to play the piano with two fingers. There was concern amongst the entire embassy staff.' He said other staffers approached him with their concerns when the reduction in security personnel was announced." ("Ex-U.S. Security Team Leader In Libya: 'We Needed More Not Less' Security Staff," [CBS News](#), 10/8/12)
- **Security Officers Testified Before Congress That The State Department Responded To Their Requests For Additional Security In Libya With Cutbacks.** "The State Department scaled back U.S. security staff in Libya in the weeks and months before the Sept. 11 attack in Benghazi that killed four Americans, despite requests for additional personnel, former U.S. security officials told

a politically charged congressional hearing.” (Jay Solomon and Dion Nissenbaum “Security Cut Before Libya Raid,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/10/12)

“The Hearing Highlighted The Obama Administration’s Continued Difficulty Presenting A Consistent Explanation About What Happened In The Benghazi Attack.” (Jay Solomon and Dion Nissenbaum “Security Cut Before Libya Raid,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/10/12)

The Next Day, Biden Said He Was Not Aware Of The Security Failures In Benghazi

Biden: “We Weren’t Told They Wanted More Security. We Did Not Know They Wanted More Security There.” (Vice Presidential Debate, [Danville, KY](#), 10/11/12)

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“Biden Seemed Unaware” That “The Administration Had Been Implored To Beef Up Security At The U.S. Consulate In Libya Before The Deadly Terrorist Attack There.” Anyone who paid attention to a hearing in Congress this week knew that the administration had been implored to beef up security at the U.S. Consulate in Libya before the deadly terrorist attack there. But in the vice presidential debate Thursday night, Joe Biden seemed unaware.” (Calvin Woodward, “Fact Check: Slips In Vice President’s Debate,” [The Associated Press](#), 10/12/12)

- **Biden’s Comment Came After “The State Department Has Made Clear” That They Were Aware Of Diplomat’s Calls For More Security.** “Biden was soaring along on foreign policy at the start of the debate, making a clear argument in response to a question about what happened in Benghazi ... until he said that the administration didn’t know that diplomats there had wanted more security. In fact, the State Department has made clear they did, which is among the many issues at play in the investigation into what happened in the violence that left four Americans dead.” (Maggie Haberman, “7 Takeaways From The Danville Debate,” [Politico](#), 10/12/12)

Politifact Rated Biden’s Comment “Mostly False,” Noting That Even If He Was Not Directly Aware Of The Request, “It Was Made In The State Department, Which Is Part Of The Obama Administration.” “Vice President Biden said ‘We weren’t told they wanted more security.’ That statement is accurate only if you define ‘we’ to mean ‘people at the White House.’ A State Department officer in Libya said that he requested additional guards and was turned down by at least one other official in the State Department. The White House said Biden meant that the security requests had not been conveyed to him and others in the executive office. It’s possible that Biden and Obama were unaware of that request. Still, it was made in the State Department, which is part of the Obama administration. Even if it didn’t make its way up through the bureaucracy, a request was made. We rate the statement Mostly False.” (Jon Greenberg, “Biden Says ‘We Weren’t Told’ About Libya Security Requests,” [PolitiFact](#), 10/12/12)

Biden’s Comments Also Raised Questions About What Had Been Included In The President’s Briefing On The U.S. Security Posture The Day Before The 9/11 Anniversary. FOX NEWS’ ED HENRY: “And so, then on September 10th, you put out a press release that said that the President himself was briefed -- not the State Department -- the President was briefed about consulates and other installations around the world, and the security posture ahead of the 9/11 anniversary. So are you now also saying that in that briefing, the President was not told about security problems at Benghazi, a consulate that had been targeted? He was not briefed that day?” WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY JAY CARNEY: “I can tell you absolutely that there was no actionable intelligence that suggested there would be an attack at the Benghazi facility. Absolutely, categorically, that is a fact.” HENRY: “So what was he briefed on that day? This is a consulate that was targeted several times. He was not told the day before the 9/11 --” CARNEY:

“Ed, it an anniversary in advance of which this administration, just like the previous administration, took action to prepare for potential acts against the United States or our allies that might take place as part of the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks in 2001. What I can say is that there was no actionable intelligence indicating there would be an attack at the Benghazi facility.” HENRY: “That’s different, though. What I’m asking is, actionable intelligence -- I understand that distinction. But you’re saying the President, on 9/10, was not told, broadly, about the consulate in Benghazi being targeted several times, there being problems, there being concerns about it, the ambassador wanting more security? He wasn’t told about any of that?” CARNEY: “Ed, again, I cannot get into the specific details of a classified briefing and a classified document. What I can tell you --” HENRY: “Right, but the Vice President last night said he was not told. So I just want to be clear. You can’t --” CARNEY: “You’re conflating a lot of things.” HENRY: “No I’m not. He said they were not told.” CARNEY: “What I’m saying is that there was no actionable intelligence, and I think that is pretty clear. What I’m saying and what I obviously cannot discuss in detail is covert -- I mean, rather, classified information.” (White House Press Briefing, [Washington, DC](#), 10/12/12)

Now The White House Has Doubled Down On Biden’s Defense And Claimed That Diplomatic Security Decisions Are Not Under Its Control

White House Press Secretary Jay Carney “Reinforced” Biden’s Comments By Saying The State Department, Not The White House, Was Responsible For The Security Decisions Made In Libya.

“White House press secretary Jay Carney on Friday doubled down on charges by the Obama campaign that Republicans are politicizing the raid in Benghazi. ... Carney reinforced Vice President Joe Biden’s assertion during Thursday’s debate that neither Biden nor the president was informed about requests for additional security in Benghazi ahead of the attack on Sept. 11. And he said decisions about security levels there -- and at thousands of other U.S. missions around the world -- are ‘appropriately’ made by security professionals at the State Department.” (Donovan Slack, “Carney Finds GOP Worries About Diplomatic Security ‘Rich,’” [Politico’s Politico 44](#), 10/12/12)

White House Press Secretary Jay Carney Refused To Say That The Buck Stops With Obama In Matters Of Diplomatic Security. FOX NEWS’ ED HENRY: “Can you say on Libya, that basically the buck stops with the State Department on security then, it doesn’t stop at the White House?” WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY JAY CARNEY: “Well that’s an unartful, made for television phrasing, Ed. But the fact of the matter...” HENRY: “So you’re saying it’s up to the State Department, that the President can’t, that basically, he doesn’t make those assessments, is what you said the first time.” CARNEY: “There are thousands of diplomatic personnel across the world. There are countless facilities around the world. And I am saying when it comes to the number of personnel who are in place at consulates and embassies and other diplomatic facilities around the world, those decisions are appropriately made at the State Department by security personnel. When it comes to funding, yeah, this president fights to make sure that embassy security and diplomatic security is adequately funded and make sure that that funding is restored when efforts on Capitol Hill are made principally by House republicans, including Congressman Ryan to slash it in order to cut taxes for the wealthiest 2% in this country. You bet that’s the President’s responsibility and he has demonstrated that he’s kept that responsibility.” (White House Press Briefing, [Washington, DC](#), 10/12/12)

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FLASHBACK - Obama: “As President Of The United States, It’s Pretty Clear To Me That I’m Responsible For Folks Who Are Working In The Federal Government And You Know, Harry Truman Said The Buck Stops With You.” OBAMA: “Well, here’s what I know, we were just talking about responsibility and as president of the United States, it’s pretty clear to me that I’m responsible for folks

who are working in the federal government and you know, Harry Truman said the buck stops with you.” (“President Obama Says Romney Should Answer Bain Capital Questions,” [WJLA](#), 7/13/12)

OBAMA'S REACTION TO THE ATTACKS HAS BEEN TO STONEWALL AND BLAME OTHERS

***The Wall Street Journal*: “Rather Than Accept Responsibility, The Administration Has Tried To Stonewall And Blame Others.”** “Four Americans lost their lives in Benghazi in a terrorist attack that evidence suggests should have been anticipated and might have been stopped. Rather than accept responsibility, the Administration has tried to stonewall and blame others. Congress should call hearings to hold someone accountable for this debacle.” (Editorial, “The Libya Debacle,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 9/26/12)

- **NBC’s David Gregory:** “They’re just sowing more confusion about this rather than resolving the issue, which is creating more of an issue.” (MSNBC’s “Andrea Mitchell Reports,” 10/12/12)

CNN’s John King Said That The Obama Administration Was “Public Scolding, Publicly Blaming Others For What Happened In The Administration.” CNN’s WOLF BLITZER: “And there’s the whole notion of throwing the intelligence community under the bus saying ‘that’s what they were telling us, we were only reporting what they were telling us,’ which is awkward for a vice president to do that.” CNN’s JOHN KING: “It’s awkward for anybody. If you talk to people in the intelligence community and now at the State Department, they’re not happy. They’re not happy. The leaders of the administration, in their view, Jay Carney speaks for the president, so that’s the President of the United States, the Vice President last night, on stage last night, essentially publicly scolding, publicly blaming others for what happened in the administration. Those people don’t like that.” (CNN’s “[The Situation Room](#),” 10/12/12)

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