



Obama's Bungled Benghazi Response

Newly Released Emails Put Obama & Clinton On The Defensive Over Benghazi

ABC News Headline: "Benghazi Talking Points Underwent 12 Revisions, Scrubbed Of Terror Reference" (Jonathan Karl, "Benghazi Talking Points Underwent 12 Revisions, Scrubbed Of Terror Reference," [ABC News](#), 5/10/13)

Despite Claims By The White House That Benghazi Talking Points Were From Intelligence Sources, White House Emails Show That There Was "Extensive Input From The State Department." "When it became clear last fall that the CIA's now discredited Benghazi talking points were flawed, the White House said repeatedly the document were put together almost entirely by the intelligence community, but White House documents reviewed by Congress suggest a different story. ABC News has obtained 12 different versions of the talking points that show they were extensive edited as they evolved from the drafts first written entirely by the CIA to the final version distributed to Congress and to U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Susan Rice before she appeared on five talk shows the Sunday after that attack. White House emails reviewed by ABC News suggest the edits were made with extensive input from the State Department." (Jonathan Karl, "Benghazi Talking Points Underwent 12 Revisions, Scrubbed Of Terror Reference," [ABC News](#), 5/10/13)

- **Edits Included Removing References To An Al Qaeda-Affiliated Group And CIA Warnings About Terrorist Threats In Benghazi.** "The edits included requests from the State Department that references to the Al Qaeda-affiliated group Ansar al-Sharia be deleted as well references to CIA warnings about terrorist threats in Benghazi in the months preceding the attack." (Jonathan Karl, "Benghazi Talking Points Underwent 12 Revisions, Scrubbed Of Terror Reference," [ABC News](#), 5/10/13)

White House And State Department Emails Show "The State Department Had Extensive Input Into The Editing Of The Talking Points." "Summaries of White House and State Department emails — some of which were first published by Stephen Hayes of the Weekly Standard — show that the State Department had extensive input into the editing of the talking points." (Jonathan Karl, "Benghazi Talking Points Underwent 12 Revisions, Scrubbed Of Terror Reference," [ABC News](#), 5/10/13)

OBAMA'S WHITE HOUSE & CLINTON'S STATE DEPARTMENT BOTH PLAYED ROLES IN EDITING OUT REFERENCES TO AL QAEDA LINKS

State Department Spokeswoman Victoria Nuland Objected To Talking Points Referencing CIA Warnings About Al-Qaeda Threats In Benghazi. “State Department spokesman Victoria Nuland raised specific objections to this paragraph drafted by the CIA in its earlier versions of the talking points: ‘The Agency has produced numerous pieces on the threat of extremists linked to al-Qa’ida in Benghazi and eastern Libya. These noted that, since April, there have been at least five other attacks against foreign interests in Benghazi by unidentified assailants, including the June attack against the British Ambassador’s convoy. We cannot rule out the individuals has previously surveilled the U.S. facilities, also contributing to the efficacy of the attacks.’ In an email to officials at the White House and the intelligence agencies, State Department spokesman Victoria Nuland took issue with including that information because it ‘could be abused by members [of Congress] to beat up the State Department for not paying attention to warnings, so why would we want to feed that either? Concerned ...’ The paragraph was entirely deleted.” (Jonathan Karl, “Benghazi Talking Points Underwent 12 Revisions, Scrubbed Of Terror Reference,” [ABC News](#), 5/10/13)

- **Nuland Also Objected To Naming An Al Qaeda-Affiliated Group That The CIA Said Participated In The Attacks.** “Like the final version used by Ambassador Rice on the Sunday shows, the CIA’s first drafts said the attack appeared to have been ‘spontaneously inspired by the protests at the U.S. Embassy in Cairo’ but the CIA version went on to say, ‘That being said, we do know that Islamic extremists with ties to al-Qa’ida participated in the attack.’ The draft went on to specifically name the al-qaeda-affiliated group named Ansar al-Sharia. Once again, Nuland objected to naming the terrorist groups because ‘we don’t want to prejudice the investigation.’” (Jonathan Karl, “Benghazi Talking Points Underwent 12 Revisions, Scrubbed Of Terror Reference,” [ABC News](#), 5/10/13)

Nuland Ensured That The Talking Points Were Edited To Resolve The “Issues” Raised By Her “Buildings Leadership.” “After the talking points were edited slightly to address Nuland’s concerns, she responded that changes did not go far enough. ‘These changes don’t resolve all of my issues or those of my buildings leadership,’ Nuland wrote.” (Jonathan Karl, “Benghazi Talking Points Underwent 12 Revisions, Scrubbed Of Terror Reference,” [ABC News](#), 5/10/13)

- **White House Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes Ensured That The State Department’s Concerns Were Addressed.** “In an email dated 9/14/12 at 9:34 p.m. — three days after the attack and two days before Ambassador Rice appeared on the Sunday shows – Deputy National Security Advisor Ben Rhodes wrote an email saying the State Department’s concerns needed to be addressed. ‘We must make sure that the talking points reflect all agency equities, including those of the State Department, and we don’t want to undermine the FBI investigation. We thus will work through the talking points tomorrow morning at the Deputies Committee meeting.’ After that meeting, which took place Saturday morning at the White House, the CIA drafted the final version of the talking points – deleting all references to al Qaeda and to the security warnings in Benghazi prior to the attack.” (Jonathan Karl, “Benghazi Talking Points Underwent 12 Revisions, Scrubbed Of Terror Reference,” [ABC News](#), 5/10/13)

FLASHBACK: THE WHITE HOUSE AND CLINTON BOTH DOWNPLAYED ANY CHANGES TO THE BENGHAZI TALKING POINTS

White House Spokesman Jay Carney: The White House & State Department Only Made One Change To The Talking Points

Jay Carney, In November 2012: Talking Points Originated From The Intelligence Community And Only Contained A Single Adjustment From The White House And State Department. “That would appear to directly contradict what White House Press Secretary Jay Carney said about the talking points

in November. 'Those talking points originated from the intelligence community. They reflect the IC's best assessments of what they thought had happened,' Carney told reporters at the White House press briefing on November 28, 2012. 'The White House and the State Department have made clear that the single adjustment that was made to those talking points by either of those two institutions were changing the word 'consulate' to 'diplomatic facility' because 'consulate' was inaccurate.'" (Jonathan Karl, "Benghazi Talking Points Underwent 12 Revisions, Scrubbed Of Terror Reference," [ABC News](#), 5/10/13)

- **Carney, On The Talking Point Revisions: "The Single Adjustment That Was Made To Those Talking Points ... Were Changing The Word 'Consulate' To 'Diplomatic Facility' ..."**
"The White House and the State Department have made clear that the single adjustment that was made to those talking points by either of those two -- of these two institutions were changing the word 'consulate' to 'diplomatic facility,' because 'consulate' was inaccurate. Those talking points originated from the intelligence community. They reflect the IC's best assessments of what they thought had happened." (Jay Carney, [White House Press Briefing](#), 11/28/12)

Carney, This Week: "The Only Edits Made By Anyone Here At The White House Were Stylistic And Non-Substantive." "I think what remains the case is that the intelligence community, CIA, drafted these talking points and redrafted these talking points. The fact that there are inputs is always the case in a process like this. But the only edits made by anyone here at the White House were stylistic and non-substantive." (Jay Carney, [White House Press Briefing](#), 5/8/13)

Secretary Clinton: The Intelligence Community Was The "Principal Decider" About What Went In The Benghazi Talking Points

Secretary Clinton, In January 2013 On The Talking Points: "It Was An Intelligence Product."
CLINTON: "It was an intelligence product. They are, as I again understand it, working with their committees of jurisdiction to try to unpack that. But I will say that all of the senior administration officials, including Ambassador Rice, who spoke publicly to this terrible incident, had the same information from the intelligence community." REP. MO BROOKS: "If I might interject -- I appreciate your response so far. But if you're not familiar with any compelling evidence that would support the statements made by Ambassador Rice, who would know?" (Secretary Hillary Clinton, [Testimony](#), House Committee On Foreign Affairs, 1/23/13)

Secretary Clinton: "The Intelligence Community Was The Principal Decider About What Went Into Talking Points." CLINTON: "Well, there -- there was evidence, and the evidence was being sifted and analyzed by the intelligence community, which is why the intelligence community was the principal decider about what went into talking points. And there was also the added problem of nobody wanting to say things that would undermine the investigation. So it was much more complex than I think we're giving it credit for, sir." (Secretary Hillary Clinton, [Testimony](#), House Committee On Foreign Affairs, 1/23/13)