



Obama's Misleading Libya Response

Obama Is Now Claiming He Knew All Along That There Was A Terrorist Attack In Benghazi

OBAMA TWISTS HIS WORDS ON THE ROLE OF TERRORISM IN THE BENGHAZI ATTACK

Obama Gave A Misleading Response About His Reaction To The Terrorist Attack In Libya. OBAMA: "Secretary Clinton has done an extraordinary job. But she works for me. I'm the president. And I'm always responsible. And that's why nobody is more interested in finding out exactly what happened than I did (sic). The day after the attack, Governor, I stood in the Rose Garden, and I told the American people and the world that we are going to find out exactly what happened, that this was an act of terror. And I also said that we're going to hunt down those who committed this crime. And then a few days later, I was there greeting the caskets coming into Andrews Air Force Base and grieving with the families." (President Barack Obama, Presidential Debate, Hempstead, NY, 10/16/12)

In Obama's Rose Garden Remarks, "He Did Not Explicitly Refer To The Benghazi Attack As An 'Act Of Terror,' Though He Did Use Those Words." "Romney said during Tuesday night's debate that it took 14 days for Obama to acknowledge that the attack was a terrorist attack, while Obama and CNN's Candy Crowley agreed that Obama said so Sept. 12 in remarks in the Rose Garden. In those remarks, journalists noticed, he did not explicitly refer to the Benghazi attack as an 'act of terror,' though he did use those words. 'No acts of terror will ever shake the resolve of this great nation, alter that character, or eclipse the light of the values that we stand for,' he said." (Josh Rogin, "Obama Did Call Benghazi Attack 'An Act Of Terror' - In Colorado," [Foreign Policy's The Cable](#), 10/16/12)

- **Politico's Mike Allen: In The Rose Garden, Obama Said "Very Generally, We Will Not Let Acts Of Terror Go Unpunished."** POLITICO's MIKE ALLEN: "There's going to be a bunch of fact checks, but just to do a fact check here. When Governor Romney said that Obama had been slow in calling the Libya attack terrorism and the President said 'oh wait a minute, in the Rose Garden, the day after, I referred to an act of terror', Candy Crowley stepped in and said that he was right. It's actually arguable. And I'm looking at the transcript of that White House event the day after and he started by referring to them as selfless acts, which is casted very differently than the sort of very planned action that we now have. Later toward the end, he makes a reference to 9/11 and he says, very generally, we will not let acts of terror go unpunished. So that's going to be an arguable point." (Presidential Debate Wrap-Up, [Politico Live](#), 10/16/12)

- ***The Washington Post's Fact Checker: "From Our Many Years Of Covering Diplomacy We Would Say There Is A World Of Difference" Between Acknowledging Terrorism And Referring To "Acts Of Terror."*** "Note: we added this statement to the timeline after Josh Gerstein of Politico asserted that the phrasing 'acts of terror' showed Obama acknowledged 'terrorism' was behind the attack. From our many years of covering diplomacy we would say there is a world of difference, but readers can draw their own conclusions." (Glenn Kessler, "From Video To Terrorist Attack: A Definitive Timeline Of Administration Statements On The Libya Attack," [The Washington Post's Fact Checker](#), 9/27/12)

FOR WEEKS AFTER THE ATTACK, OBAMA AVOIDED MENTIONING TERRORISM

Obama Focused On The Video, Rather Than Terrorism, As An Explanation For The Attack

PolitiFact: In The Days After Obama's Rose Garden Remarks, "Neither He Nor All The Members Of His Administration Spoke Consistently On The Subject." "Romney said it took the president 14 days before he called the Libya attack terror. In fact, Obama described it in those terms the day after the attack. But in the days that followed, neither he nor all the members of his administration spoke consistently on the subject. There were many suggestions that the attack was part of demonstrations over an American-made video that disparaged Islam. We rate the statement Half True." (Jon Greenberg, "Romney Says Obama Waited 14 Days To Call Libya Attack Terror," [PolitiFact](#), 10/17/12)

- ***After Obama's Rose Garden Reference To "Acts Of Terror...It Took Two Weeks For Obama's Position To Become Clear."*** "What did Obama actually say in the Rose Garden? 'No acts of terror will ever shake the resolve of this great nation, alter the character, or eclipse the light of the values that we stand for,' Obama said at the time. 'Today we mourn four more Americans who represent the very best of the United States of America. We will not waver in our commitment to see that justice is done for this terrible act. And make no mistake, justice will be done.' A top White House official called the incident a terrorist attack seven days after Obama's Rose Garden speech. But it took two weeks for Obama's position to become clear." (Jonathan Allen, "TKO: Crowley Calls Libya For Obama," [Politico](#), 10/17/12)

The Washington Post's Fact Checker: "By Our Count, It Took 8 Days For An Administration Official To Concede That The Deaths In Libya Was The Result Of A 'Terrorist Attack.'" "But the president did not say 'terrorism' — and Romney got tripped up when he repeated the 'act of terror' phrasing. Otherwise, Romney's broader point is accurate — that it took the administration days to concede that the assault on the U.S. mission in Benghazi was an 'act of terrorism' that appears unrelated to initial reports of anger at a video that defamed the prophet Muhammad. By our count, it took 8 days for an administration official to concede that the deaths in Libya was the result of a 'terrorist attack.'" (Glenn Kessler, "Fact Checking The Second Presidential Debate," [The Washington Post's Fact Checker](#), 10/17/12)

- ***"It Is Also True That Obama, After The Rose Garden Speech And Las Vegas Event The Same Day, Refrained From Characterizing The Attack As An Act Of Terrorism."*** ("FactChecking The Hofstra Debate," [FactCheck.org](#), 10/17/12)

On Libya, "The Administration Adopted A Wait-And-See Position..." "The administration adopted a wait-and-see position, deflecting questions until the investigation into the attack could be completed. State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland, for example, was asked in a Sept. 17 press briefing if the administration considered the Benghazi attack an act of terror. She said: 'Again, I'm not going to put labels on this until we have a complete investigation, okay?'" ("FactChecking The Hofstra Debate," [FactCheck.org](#), 10/17/12)

- ***Obama "Did Seem To Suggest In His Rose Garden Speech That A Reason For The Benghazi Attack Was The Video."*** "The president did seem to suggest in his Rose Garden speech that a

reason for the Benghazi attack was the video. Obama said: ‘Since our founding, the United States has been a nation that respects all faiths. We reject all efforts to denigrate the religious beliefs of others. But there is absolutely no justification to this type of senseless violence. None.’” (“FactChecking The Hofstra Debate,” [FactCheck.org](#), 10/17/12)

TIME’s Mark Thompson: “Even As It Became Clear That It Was A Sophisticated Planned Strike By Militias Possibly Linked To Al Qaeda, The Administration Continued To Blame The Video.” “The Administration spent days trying – hoping – that an inflammatory U.S. anti-Muslim video sparked a spontaneous attack. Even as it became clear that it was a sophisticated planned strike by militias possibly linked to al Qaeda, the Administration continued to blame the video. In Tuesday night’s second presidential debate, we also learned that President Obama isn’t beyond twisting what he said then to make him sound better now.” (Mark Thompson, “When ‘No Acts Of Terror’ Actually Means ‘This Act Of Terror,’” [Time’s Battleground](#), 10/16/12)

- **September 14: White House Press Secretary Jay Carney Denied Any Terrorist Link, Saying, “We Don’t Have And Did Not Have Concrete Evidence To Suggest That This Was Not In Reaction To The Film.”** 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](#), 9/14/12)
- **September 16: U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice Said “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.”** 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.” (NBC’s “Meet The Press,” 9/16/12)
- **September 18: White House Press Secretary Carney Said The Administration “Saw No Evidence To Back Up Claims By Others That This Was A Preplanned Or Premeditated Attack.”** QUESTION: “Back to Libya. Ambassador Rice says on Sunday that it was spontaneous, and then we hear from the State Department that there’s not enough information to make the determination. But you’re saying that there is no shift, right?” WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY

JAY CARNEY: "No, I'm saying that based on information that we -- our initial information, and that includes all information -- we saw no evidence to back up claims by others that this was a preplanned or premeditated attack; that we saw evidence that it was sparked by the reaction to this video. And that is what we know thus far based on the evidence, concrete evidence -- not supposition -- concrete evidence that we have thus far." (Jay Carney, White House Press Briefing, [Washington, DC](#), 9/18/12)

- **September 19: White House Press Secretary Carney: "We Have No Evidence Of A Preplanned Or Premeditated Attack."** WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY JAY CARNEY: "I think the FBI is leading an investigation that will encompass all of the information available to the White House and to the intelligence community and to the broader diplomatic community. What I can tell you is that, as I said last week, as our Ambassador to the United Nations said on Sunday and as I said the other day, based on what we know now and knew at the time, we have no evidence of a preplanned or premeditated attack." (Jay Carney, White House Press Briefing, [Washington, DC](#), 9/19/12)

"Obama Refused To Characterize It As A Terrorist Attack Even After Others In The Administration Said It Was." "Obama refused to characterize it as a terrorist attack even after others in the administration said it was. Matt Olsen, head of the National Counterterrorism Center, testified on Sept. 19 that it was a 'terrorist attack.' He also said the administration still lacked 'specific intelligence that there was a significant advanced planning or coordination for this attack.' A day later, White House press secretary Jay Carney said it is 'self-evident that what happened in Benghazi was a terrorist attack.' Yet, when asked on ABC's 'The View' whether it was a terrorist attack, Obama refused to say." ("FactChecking The Hofstra Debate," [FactCheck.org](#), 10/17/12)

- **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 25, 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)
- **"Obama Continued To Resist Saying The 'T' Word, Instead Repeatedly Bringing Up The Video, Even In A Speech To The U.N. General Assembly On Sept. 25."** "More to Romney's point, Obama continued to resist saying the 't' word, instead repeatedly bringing up the video, even in a speech to the U.N. General Assembly on Sept. 25. On Sept. 26--15 days after the attack-- the White

House spokesman felt compelled to assert 'it is certainly the case that it is our view as an administration, the President's view, that it was a terrorist attack.'" (Glenn Kessler, "Fact Checking The Second Presidential Debate," [The Washington Post's Fact Checker](#), 10/17/12)

NBC's Chuck Todd: "I Think That The Increased Coverage Of It Will Still Cause Questions, Right, The President Didn't Answer Why Was The Film Being Used To Still , As Part Of The Blame Of What Happened In Benghazi." NBC's CHUCK TODD: "There is some perverse good news for Romney on this Libya topic. I think that the increased coverage of it will still cause questions, right, the president didn't answer why was the film being used to still, as part of the blame of what happened in Benghazi, number one, and number two, guess what, the third debate is foreign policy." (PBS, 10/16/12)

AFTER THE DEBATE, BIDEN AGAIN DENIED RESPONSIBILITY FOR DIPLOMATIC SECURITY AROUND THE WORLD

Biden Passed The Buck On Libya Again, Saying He Won't "Speculate" On Whether He Should Have Known About Security Requests. CBS'S NORAH O'DONNELL: "I want to ask you about Libya because certainly at the vice presidential debate that topic also came up and you said that you were not told about the request for extra security at the consulate. I have to ask you, do you wish you had been told?" BIDEN: "Well, I'm not going to speculate on that look but what I said was absolutely accurate. Neither the president or I were told of the additional security request, as Hillary has pointed out straightforwardly that request never got to the president or me." O'DONNELL: "Should you have been told?" BIDEN: "Well I'm not going to speculate on that. There's an investigation under way. We'll see what the, what it's all about." (CBS's ["This Morning"](#), 10/17/12)

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During The Vice Presidential Debate, Biden Said He Was Unaware Of Security Needs In Libya

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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On October 12, 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)

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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