

The Obama Timeline – Part II

The Doomed Presidency

December 2013

On December 1 CNN attempts an on-air demonstration of the “repaired” Healthcare.gov web site and gets an error message. [51874, 51879, 51910, 51913, 51930]

The Obama Timeline tries to access Healthcare.gov and receives the errors message, “Oops! Page Not Found Sorry, the page you were looking for could not be found.”

Meet the Press has a “reality check” segment on ObamaCare with Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel (one of the chief architects and supporters of ObamaCare) and Ezra Klein (a far left *Washington Post* journalist). (No conservative is on the panel.) During a discussion with Congressman Mike Rogers (R-MI) about ObamaCare, host David Gregory does his best to interrupt and repeat Obama administration talking points. [51878, 51974, 52006]

WashingtonPost.com writes, “Today is the day: Vast Majority Sunday! For weeks now, the Obama administration has promised that HealthCare.gov would ‘work smoothly for the vast majority of users’ by the end of November. With it now being December, the White House is taking a look at where things stand. ‘HealthCare.Gov on Dec. 1 is night and day from where it was on Oc. 1,’ Jeffrey Zients, the former Obama administration official now managing health Web site repair efforts, told reporters Sunday morning. ‘While we still have work to do, we’ve made significant progress with HealthCare.gov working for the vast majority of consumers.’ ... ‘We have improvements in stability ... given the redundancy and capacity we’ve added to the system,’ Zients says. Yes, there are still glitches, but they don’t bring down the Web site in the way they used to last month. ‘When we experience system glitches and slowdowns we can resolve them.’ ... Medicare spokeswoman Julie Bataille told reporters that as of Dec. 1, ‘we’re more in the zone of 80 percent of users being able to [sign up].’” (The “80 percent claim” is a clever way of hiding the reality that the success rate may be far less than 80 percent, as someone who cannot enroll in ObamaCare has no way of knowing if he is really part of a 40 percent failure rate.) [51875, 51885]

NYTimes.com reports, “The Obama administration said on Sunday that it had met its goal for improving HealthCare.gov so that the website now ‘will work smoothly for the vast majority of users.’ In effect, the administration gave itself a passing grade.” [51876, 51908]

On ABC’s *This Week*, former Obama advisor David Plouffe says, “it may take until 2017,” for ObamaCare to be fully functional and beneficial. “It will work really well then.” (Plouffe’s words are unlikely to please many Democrats running for reelection in 2014 and 2016.) Plouffe adds, “I think [Obama’s] numbers will recover, I think people’s

confidence will recover... I think he spoke directly to this and I think people accepted what he had to say. I think people trust [Obama].” [51877, 51911, 51913, 51931]

Also on *This Week*, Congressman Keith Ellison (D-MN), a Muslim socialist, defends Obama’s “If you like your plan you can keep it lie,” saying, “So I think even though he may have said, ‘If you like your ‘decent’ insurance, your insurance that works,’ uh, then you can keep it. I think that people really get that. Then when, there, and when, he, he, he owned it [sic]. He said, ‘Look, man, I, uh, if you misunderstood what I was trying to say, I am sorry about that.’ I think that shows integrity. He didn’t do anything to self-promote. He did, what he was doing, he was trying to do to help Americans all over this country for decades [sic], and I think good intentions count.” [51894]

At Breitbart.com Tony Lee reports, “Though the Obama administration has claimed HealthCare.gov can now handle 50,000 users at the same time and around 800,000 users a day, Obama administration officials have said they want users to be on the site during non-peak hours and will suggest to users ‘a better time to return to the site’ as they log on during ‘peak hours.’ [Site repair leader Jeffrey] Zients on Sunday reportedly warned there could still even be some outages as the Obama administration seeks to add seven million Americans to the various Obamacare programs. Many of those Americans looking for insurance will need to use the website to figure out if they qualify for subsidies. Not only is 40% of the site still not fully built, NBC News also reported that the ‘back end’ is also still not completely functional, which means ‘health insurers are still seeing enrollments that are duplicated and missing information.’ According to *National Journal*, ‘there is still about a 5 percent error rate in the information the site submits to insurance companies on behalf of those picking a new insurance plan. If the site is fixed but this problem is not, the problem could get worse. People would sign on, fill out the forms, and insurance companies would be flooded with bad data.’ The site will reportedly run faster when users are browsing for plans than when they are actually trying to enroll in them, which is further exacerbated because the ‘so-called direct enrollment’ feature is still barely working, meaning that a ‘vast majority’ Americans are unable to go ‘directly to a health insurer’s site and sign up with a small detour to HealthCare.gov to see if they are eligible for a subsidy.’” [51897]

On *State of the Union*, former Vermont Governor Howard Dean says, “We all have to live by a set of things that are passed in Washington and agreed to by the court. We’ll see what the court does [in the ObamaCare religious freedom case, *Sebelius v. Hobby Lobby*], but I don’t think a particular employer has a right to decide what kind of health care their employees are going to get. That’s now in the hands of the federal government, and that’s where it should be.” (Millions of Americans might argue that health care decisions should be made by individuals and their doctors, not the federal government.) Former Senator Rick Santorum says, “I mean, the idea that the First Amendment stops after you walk out of a church, that it doesn’t have anything to do with how you live the rest of your life, I don’t know very many people of faith who believes that their religion ends with just worship. It ends in how you practice and live that faith. And now... what ...Obama’s saying [is], ‘No, once you step outside that church door, then I get to impose my values

on you. Your religious values don't matter anymore, it's my values that I can impose on you.' I don't think that's what the First Amendment stands for and I don't think that's what the court will say." (The Supreme Court has also agreed to hear *Conestoga Woods Specialties Corp v. Sebelius*, another case involving ObamaCare's restriction of religious liberties and its violation of the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act.) [51925, 52062]

What Dean does not state—and what leftist host Candy Crowley does not mention—is that ObamaCare's contraception mandate violates the Religious Freedom Restoration Act which, according to the Heritage Foundation, “says that the government may impose a substantial burden on the exercise of religious belief only if it's the least restrictive way to advance a compelling governmental interest. The act further says that no later law should be read to trump this protection unless it explicitly says it's doing that. The Affordable Care Act has no such language.” [51949]

On *Face the Nation*, Senator Bob Corker (R-TN) says, “I don't know how you fix the many fundamental problems of this [ObamaCare] program. ...I'm a strong supporter of dynamic, marketplace exchanges. I do think we need to equalize the tax code so that if you buy [insurance] individually, you get the same benefits that you do through a company where it's tax-free. So I think there are, there are things that need to be done and I think there are some elements that could be built upon. But, generally speaking, the fundamentals of this, to me, were done in a way, a chaotic way much like we're seeing the [web site] rollout. It was done in a way that really—there wasn't a vision at the end, it was just an amalgamation of legislation that didn't have a central focus. And so I don't know how you fix it. I'll be honest. I don't know how you fix a program that was put together in this manner with only one side of the aisle and taking the shortcuts that we're taking to put it in place. ...[A]t end of the day, while there will be a few winners, most Americans are going to find a less dynamic health system, they're going to find that the cost of the health care that they're able to purchase is going to be a lot higher, and they're also going to realize that their choices are... far less. And so for our country, you're going to have continued downward pressure on employment, you're going to have upward pressure on deficits. And so I still think the foundations of this plan have some of the same kinds of problems that the rollout has had, but they're fundamental, very hard to overcome and, unfortunately, as people enroll, I think there's [sic; there are] going to be a lot of negative surprises as to what they're able to enroll in.” [51926]

On *Fox News Sunday*, former CIA and NSA Director General Michael Hayden says that with Obama's Iranian deal “We have accepted Iranian uranium enrichment. ...Right now, the Iranians are far too close to a nuclear weapon. "We have hit the pause button. Now we've got to negotiate hitting the delete button with them. ...Iran's going to be a nuclear threshold state.” [51893]

Also on *Fox News Sunday*, George Will says, “I recommend everyone read the prose that was released this morning with [the government's Healthcare.gov] status report. It said, ‘There was an unacceptable user experience—that's the 2013 understatement of the

year—but they’ve made substantial progress.’ And this is lovely, it says, “While there’s now more work to be done the team is operating with private sector velocity and effectiveness.’ Now, that’s progress, when the government says we aspire to the private sector. But it does go on to say that ‘there will be more progress in the weeks *and months* ahead’—which means, months, at least into the late winter, perhaps early spring. But, let me suggest that, way over the horizon, six months from now, a hundred million people get their insurance from Medicare and Medicaid; 171 million get it from their employers. Watch the employers, because if they start dumping people into Medicare and into Medicaid, and the doctors then say, ‘The burdens are too high, and the reimbursement is too low, we’re not seeing Medicaid patients,’ then all Hell is going to break loose.” [51900, 51908, 51916, 51929]

Former Congresswoman Jane Harmon (D-CA), who voted for ObamaCare, says, “The rollout has been a mess, it’s hopefully better today, but what will matter is in six months or whatever the right time frame is: Will there be enough people across the spectrum from sick to healthy in the exchanges to create a competitive market so that the price of health care is affordable to those who have very little or no money? I’m betting that it will work.” Former Senator Birch Bayh (D-IN), who also voted to approve ObamaCare, adds, “Clearly, the rollout has been a disaster, and it’s still a work in progress. ...First impressions tend to be lasting, so it’s going to take some time in the court of public opinion to turn this thing around. There are going to be more dislocations coming. Co-pays may go up, your doctor bill may go up, people may have their coverage dropped and have to go on the exchanges. That’s going to be disconcerting, so short term: troubling. It may be really problematic for the 2014 midterm elections.” (Both Harmon and Bayh are mistaken. Obama’s biggest problem is that many Americans thought his “Affordable Care Act” meant “Free Care Act,” and everyone else actually thought it actually meant “affordable.”) [51900, 51908, 51916]

Newsmax.com reports, “With the passing of the November 30 deadline to have the glitch-filled website functioning, James Capretta of the Ethics and Public Policy Center told Fox News it may be a month before anyone can tell if there has been success in fixing the site. He said the appearance of a better-working site doesn’t mean the system is functioning as it should. ‘The real test of HealthCare.gov is whether you make the right payment to the right people to the right insurance plans,’ he said. ‘It’s very easy to fix the front-end enrollment if you turn off controls on the back end. And it’s very clear from multiple media reports that the system is still not accurate when it makes payments to the insurance plans.’ The technicians are working around the problem instead of fixing it, he said. The government currently is making bulk payments to insurance companies who are self-reporting their sign-ups because the back end of the system isn’t properly keeping an accounting.” (Because the “back end” problems with Healthcare.gov remain, many Americans who enrolled in ObamaCare via the web site may find themselves without insurance on January 1 if the administration cannot get the proper information and payments to the insurance companies.) [51916]

NYPost.com reports on a young couple in Long Island, New York that has learned their

18-month-old daughter cannot be covered under an ObamaCare “family plan” and will need her own individual policy. “When [Mr.] Kelly called a representative, he was told his daughter had to be 2 before she could be covered under a family plan. He would have to buy a separate plan for her, at monthly premiums that ranged between \$117.21 and \$369.31. The cost would be on top of a family plan with premiums ranging from \$810.84 to \$2,554.71 a month. Kelly said he had been paying about \$1,000 a month. Unwilling to put his daughter on a separate policy, Kelly found a family plan in the private marketplace for about \$1,250 a month.” [51888, 52191]

DailyCaller.com reports, “The company that earned the no-bid contract to build the failed Obamacare website also runs the Army’s disastrous Human Terrain System in Iraq and Afghanistan, which has been accused of fraud, sexual harassment and racism. The much-maligned Human Terrain System (HTS), launched in 2007, sends academics from social science fields like anthropology and linguistics into war zones to help soldiers understand the local population. The Army spent \$58 million on the program in 2013, down from \$114 million in 2011. CGI Federal, the U.S. arm of the Canadian CGI Group and the designer of the failed Obamacare website, attempted a failed turnaround in HTS during the Obama administration. The young company, which employs Michelle Obama’s former Princeton classmate and Christmas guest Toni Townes-Whitley as a top executive, received eight figures from the Army in 2013 for the project, records reveal.” [51912, 52591, 52592]

CGI is not the only foreign company involved in the development of the ObamaCare system. According to *The New York Times*, the Obama administration “awarded a contract worth as much as \$1.2 billion to a British company to help them sift applications for health insurance and tax credits under the new health care law. The company, Serco, has extensive experience as a government contractor with the Defense Department and intelligence agencies, and it also manages air traffic control towers in 11 states and reviews visa applications for the State Department. But it has little experience with the Department of Health and Human Services or the insurance marketplaces, known as exchanges, where individuals and small businesses are supposed to be able to shop for insurance. ...Serco will also help the administration decide who is entitled to exemptions from the tax penalties that can be imposed on people who go without health insurance starting next year.” (In July 2013 *The Washington Post* reported that the British government had launched an investigation of Serco, Inc.’s parent company, Serco Group, because it “reportedly overbilled the government by ‘tens of millions of pounds’ under a contract to monitor offenders on parole and individuals released on bail, according to an audit conducted by the country’s Justice Ministry.”) [52591, 52592, 52594]

Obama issues a Twitter message: “In a single moment 58 years ago today, Rosa Parks helped changed this country.” (Accompanying the message is a photo not of Parks, but of Obama on a 1950s bus at Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan. The same photograph was used by Obama to commemorate the 57th anniversary of Parks’ arrest for refusing to move to the back of a bus.) [31404, 31405, 31421, 40594, 51982]

At a Chanukah ceremony in Rome, Italy, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu warns, “I would like to dispel any illusions. Iran aspires to attain an atomic bomb. It would thus threaten not only Israel but also Italy, Europe and the entire world. There should be no illusions about this charm offensive. Today there is a regime in Iran that supports terrorism, facilitates the massacre of civilians in Syria and unceasingly arms its proxies— Hamas, Hezbollah and Islamic Jihad—with deadly missiles. ... As we have warned, and I say this with regret, the sanctions regime has started to weaken and very quickly. If tangible steps are not taken soon, it is liable to collapse and the efforts of years will vanish without anything in exchange. ... I tell you and promise in the spirit of the Maccabees, we will not allow Iran to receive a military nuclear capability. ... In contrast to others, when I see that interests vital to the security of Israel’s citizens are in danger, I will not be silent. It is very easy to be silent. It is very easy to receive a pat on the shoulder from the international community, to bow one’s head, but I am committed to the security of my people. I am committed to the future of my state and in contrast to periods in the past, we have a loud and clear voice among the nations and we will sound it in time in order to warn of the danger.” [51898, 51907]

IsraelNationalNews.com reports, “Senior officials in the White House have said that Israel Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu ‘is desperate and weak,’ in reaction to Netanyahu’s remonstrations against the deal struck with Iran over its nuclear weapons program. Israeli television Channel 10 quoted the officials as saying ‘His pronouncements show a lack of self-confidence,’ in an unusually harsh personal attack on Netanyahu. ‘We are not perturbed by his vocal opposition.’” (The Obama administration negotiates a deal that essentially gives Iran the green light to become a nuclear power, putting Israel at greater risk than ever, and it has the audacity to ridicule Netanyahu for calling a spade a spade. Obama may not be perturbed at the moment, but he will be when Israel launches a strike against Iran’s nuclear facilities.) The unnamed White House official adds, “Too bad [Netanyahu] does not trust us. We know what we’re doing on Iran. We’re not naive.” [51901, 51902, 51903, 51948]

The Ulsterman Report writes, “Sources within the corridors of Capitol Hill indicate both [Senate Minority Leader] Harry Reid [D-NV] and [House Minority Leader] Nancy Pelosi [D-CA] have suffered ‘very significant’ damage regarding their ability to force other Democrats to ‘fall in line,’ and that more than one congressional office is now declaring themselves, ‘on our own’ as they scramble to try and save their House or Senate seats as the 2014 Midterm Election quickly approaches. While the media repeats the mantra of Republicans at war with one another, it is in fact Democrats who are now fighting increasingly against their own leadership, and all but ignoring the pleas of the Obama White House. Readers have likely noted the uptick in the Mainstream Media’s tone of urgency that the Obama administration must somehow get in front of the Obamacare debacle that is not only pummeling [Obama’s] own approval ratings, but dragging down the entire Democratic Party along with it. ... This desperation is a direct result of Democratic staffers sharing just how tense things have become for all Democrats in D.C. these days, and how fractured the party itself now is as party leaders work to repair at least some of the damage. Both Harry Reid and Nancy Pelosi, at the direction of the Obama White House, attempted to get out in front of the debacle, and behind closed

doors, twisted arms of their rank and file to keep quiet, fall in line, and make no public complaints. This directive is now being ignored by a growing number from within the party... Harry Reid and Nancy Pelosi cannot be trusted to save them, and certainly not the Obama White House, which has a long history of caring only about itself, and looking down with disdain at the mechanics of D.C. politics.” [51904]

The term Lame Duck is now firmly wrapped around the Obama White House, and while White House operatives are clearly aware of this fact, it appears those closest to Barack Obama are working to insulate him from the term as much as possible. That insulation... will continue, to come in the form of several fundraising trips that allow [Obama] to remain feeling as if he remains an integral part of the political climate, even as his own party moves past him. As for Republicans, there has been some initial efforts to mend fences between the more conservative factions and the leadership. This effort was initiated first by the [House Speaker John] Boehner [R-OH] office, to later include [Senate Minority Leader] Mitch McConnell [R-KY], who has admitted to his own staff a growing fear he is losing support among Republican voters in his home state. Both Senator Ted Cruz [R-TX] and Senator Mike Lee [R-UT] apparently were open to conciliation, though both offices have reminded others their efforts against Obamacare have been proven right, and that more Republicans should have been willing to openly join the effort. Apparently a certain senator from North Carolina [Democrat Kay Hagan] instructed their [sic; her] staff that the only public statements regarding Obamacare were to be in opposition to its implementation, (though not the law itself) an example that will likely be copied by more Democrats facing tough red state elections in 2014, which in turn, reduces the Obama White House’s influence on the party even further.” [51904]

The RNC [Republican National Committee] is quietly getting the word out regarding fundraising goals not having been met. It appears conservatives are sending their dollars directly to candidates as opposed to more generalized organizations like the RNC. If this trend continues, it will be a truly transformative process for the Republican Party, helping to return it to its grassroots foundations, and opening up the possibility of a national candidate who appeals to a cross section of voters, much like Ronald Reagan’s ‘Reagan Democrats’ movement of the 1980’s that resulted in historic landslide victories for the Republican candidate. So in short, it is proving an increasingly tough time for Democrats, and increasingly interesting times for Republicans.” [51904]

At WND.com E. Michael Maloof writes, “A prominent Army general, bolstered by other military and defense leaders, contends ...Obama’s preferred counterinsurgency policy is proving to be ‘devastating’ for America and rewarding to its enemies. Maj. Gen. Paul E. Valley, now retired, was deputy commanding general in the Army’s Pacific Command, is founder of Stand Up America and has been a military analyst for Fox News. Valley says Obama has so degraded and demoralized the military in multiple ways—including a major purge of senior officers, with almost 200 relieved of duty over Obama’s five years as commander-in-chief and nine generals this year alone—that those remaining cannot speak out for fear of being forced out of the military. Essentially, Obama’s counterinsurgency, or COIN, doctrine is a form of warfare that makes soldiers trained to

fight tank battles shift to a combat style that emphasizes politics, cultural awareness and protecting the local population from insurgent attacks, Vallely said. The result looks like failure, he said. ...Vallely attributes the failed COIN strategy to the lack of military officers speaking out against the Obama administration's political and social demands. If they do, as he and other retired officers have pointed out, those outspoken officers are forced out or given bad evaluation reports. That would mean 'they will never make flag officer because of their failure to comply to a certain view,' agrees retired Navy Capt. Joseph John. ...A Naval Academy graduate, John had three tours of duty in Vietnam, served as an al-Qaida expert for the FBI and was a commanding officer with SEALs embedded on special operations. Since then, as chairman of Combat Veterans For Congress PAC (Political Action Committee), he has helped elect 20 combat veterans to Congress. 'The truly sad story is that many of the brightest graduates of the three major service academies, witnessing what the social experiment on diversity ...is doing to the U.S. military, are leaving the service after five years,' he told WND. 'We are being left with an officer corps that can be made to be more compliant, that is, exactly what Obama needs to effect his long range goals for the U.S. military.'" [51905, 53267]

Newsmax.com reports, "The abysmal rollout of the Obamacare individual mandate last month exposed a website so badly flawed that White House officials considered junking it altogether, according to a detailed account of the inner workings of the healthcare plan's debacle. While ...Obama touted publicly that 'interest way exceeded expectations, and that's the good news' during the first weekend of the rollout, White House officials were considering another question, The New York Times reports in a front page article Sunday—"Should we just take the website down altogether for a time so it can be fixed?" The question was dismissed by Todd Park, the administration's chief technology officer, because, he said, HealthCare.com had to be up and running for one simple reason—"To see where the problems are," the Times reports. 'One senior White House official said they briefly considered scrapping the system altogether. They decided it was fixable.' ...'The White House would also have to hold together a fragile alliance of Democratic lawmakers and insurance executives,' the newspaper reports. 'If we don't do that,' one senior White House adviser told the Times, 'it's a very serious threat to the success of the legislation and a very serious threat to him,' referring to Obama. 'We get that.'" [51906]

TheHill.com reports, "Vice President Joe Biden left Andrews Air Force Base late Sunday for Tokyo, the first stop on his week-long Asia trip. Biden's son, Hunter Biden, and his granddaughter, Finnegan Biden, are traveling with the vice president, according to a White House pool report. ...The vice president's trip, which also includes stops in China and South Korea, is part of ...Obama's 'pivot' to the region. In Tokyo, Biden will be focused on the negotiations over the 12-member Pacific Rim trade deal. In Beijing and Seoul, the discussion will shift to security and regional issues." [51895, 51924]

Former Congressman Allen West (R-FL) writes, "[A]s a former combat commander, I have been trained to look for trends. And I believe we've found a very disturbing one. It seems that back door gun control is in full effect in the United States. Why? Thanks to Obama's Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), we can no longer smelt lead from ore

in the United States. The first contact the EPA made with The Doe Run Lead Smelter in Herculaneum, Missouri (population 2,800) was in 2008 but it was in 2010 that the EPA finally forced Doe Run to plan a shut down. This plant has been in operation since 1892 but will finally close its doors this month. It was the last lead smelting plant in the US. The closedown is due to new extremely tight air quality restrictions placed on this specific plant. ...Obama and his EPA raised the regulations by 10 fold and it would have cost the plant \$100 million to comply. ...What this all means is that after December 2013, any ammunition that will be available to US citizens will have to be imported, which will surely increase the price and possibly come under government control. It seems this is fully in concert with the US Military and Homeland Defense recent purchase of large quantities of ammunition. ...China is the largest miner of lead and the largest importer of scrap lead in the world. The highly progressive state of California recently passed a law that lead ammo is banned for sporting use. There is an alternative, copper ammo, but it is hugely expensive to make, and pure copper bullets are frequently labeled 'cop killers' so they can't be sold. So America, back door gun control is moving forward and while we are all distracted with Obamacare and Iran nuclear negotiations, our Second Amendment rights are undergoing an assault by clandestine infiltration. Remember we reported on this website [allenbwest.com] the gun registration actions being undertaken in Washington DC. Barack Obama and his progressive socialist acolytes are quite savvy at political chess. He is seeking to outflank, envelope, and destroy the Second Amendment. Now it's our move in 2014." (Most lead is used for automobile batteries, not ammunition, and is routinely recycled.) [51945, 52264]

On CNN, ESPN columnist L. Z. Granderson says, "And, time and time again, Americans have said we can deal with the lies that ...Obama tells us because we believe in his heart, he has the best interest for the American people. ...Every president is going to lie to you. Every politician is going to lie to you. The question is, which lies can you live with?" [51975, 52173]

On December 2 former White House press secretary Robert Gibbs appears on MSNBC's Morning Joe, where he says, "Well, look, I think, you know, the notion that [Healthcare.gov] works for a vast majority of users, obviously is, as many have pointed out an arbitrary measure. We don't know the exact number. It is clear from reporting that people are having a better user experience. Again, I think the pressure now will be on the administration to be more forthcoming about what's happening on the back end and whether insurance companies are getting the information. ...This has to work for both the administration and [the] insurance companies, and the administration has to work with those insurance companies to ensure that information is being transmitted correctly..." [51921, 51929]

Meanwhile, FoxNews.com reports that "insurance companies are still grappling with error-riddled files fed to them from the flawed website. The lingering glitch could cause major problems weeks down the road, resulting in people thinking they've signed up when insurance companies have no record of them doing so. These so-called 'back-end' problems were largely glossed over when federal health officials confidently claimed

over the weekend they had met their own goals for improving the website by Dec. 1. ...The New York Times reports that companies are getting flooded with phone calls from people who think they've signed up—though they're not on record as having done so. The ongoing problems mean that people who believe they have a health plan could be in for a surprise on Jan. 1.” [51922]

White House press secretary Jay Carney tells reporters he cannot confirm that people who have enrolled in ObamaCare via Healthcare.gov will actually have health insurance in effect on January 1. He tells reporters, “We’re telling consumers if they’re not sure if they’re enrolled they should call the insurer directly.” [51909]

ABC’s Jonathan Karl asks Carney, “Let me try to crystallize down, because we try to pin you down on what ‘vast majority’ means, and you guys didn’t want to quantify it. Very clearly, in terms of the goal that you set for this moment in time, is it mission accomplished? Have you accomplished that goal?” Carney replies, “Using that phrase is not one I would employ [sic].” [51972]

The White House notes the birthday of chief of staff Denis McDonough by tweeting a photo of Obama. [52549]

DailyCaller.com reports, “The federal government has imposed a virtual tax on savers, costing them \$360 billion since 2007, according to a new report by the research division of a major management consulting firm. The Federal Reserve’s ‘Quantitative Easing’ policy has dropped interest rates to almost zero, effectively taxing the flow of interest payments to older people who have diligently saved cash for emergencies or retirements, according to the ‘discussion paper,’ which is titled ‘QE and ultra-low interest rates: Distributional effects and risks.’ The virtual tax had the effect of quietly transferring \$900 billion to the federal government, and also boosting revenue for cooperating big banks by \$150 billion, says the report, which was produced by the McKinsey Global Institute, which is run by one of the world’s major management-consulting firms, McKinsey & Company.” (“Quantitative easing” is better called “currency devaluation.” The Federal Reserve “creates money out of nothing” and uses it to buy government debt, which allows the Treasury Department to avoid the need to pay higher interest rates to attract bond buyers. That artificial lowering of interest rates harms the average American—and especially senior citizens—who cannot earn a decent interest rate on their deposits.) [51914]

Obama’s propaganda arm, Organizing for Action, emails supporters to recommend that they organize gun control events on December 14, the anniversary of the Sandy Hook school shootings. [52220, 52221]

Businessweek.com reports, “About 100,000 people signed up for health insurance through the online federal exchange last month, a roughly four-fold increase from October even as a team of U.S. government and contractor programmers was fixing the

troubled Affordable Care Act website, said a person familiar with program's progress. The preliminary November numbers reflect individuals who successfully selected a plan. The administration expects that most consumers will sign up early next year as the enrollment period nears its March 31 close, said the person who asked for anonymity because the final numbers were still being calculated." [51917, 51932]

Daniel Halper writes at WeeklyStandard.com, "The Kuwaiti news outlet Al-Jarida reports that ...Obama is seeking to arrange a trip to Tehran, Iran next year. The headline of the article reads, 'Obama would like to visit Tehran, official invitation after details resolved.' 'Al-Jarida has learned from a U.S. diplomat that ...Obama is seeking to visit Tehran in the middle of next year,' the report reads, based on a translation using Google Translate. 'The source said that the desire to visit is shared, and that Tehran and Washington are waiting for the conclusion of the arrangements prior to Iranian President Hassan Rohani [Rouhani] issuing an official invitation to his American counterpart to visit Tehran. He pointed out that the most important detail that is outstanding regarding the meeting is the question of a meeting with Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei and the possibility of not holding the meeting. The source said that Obama was waiting for the invitation to devote his new administration's policy in the region based on the principle of non-military involvement and balance.' ...A State Department spokeswoman did not respond to a request for confirmation of the Al-Jarida report. But in an email, one former high ranking U.S. national security official says, 'I don't believe it.'" (AtlasShrugs.com's Pamela Geller comments, "If true, what a kick in the head and the gut to every American and freedom-loving human being. That such a thing is even proposed ...like FDR going to Berlin to meet with der Führer after Czechoslovakia. Obama just denied this report, but he is a bald-faced liar. Lying is his modus operandi—it's how he goes about getting things done. He leaks through backdoor channels a particularly egregious plan or plot or policy, then denies it—all the while getting decent folks used to a monstrous idea. It's a hallmark of his [administration]—norming the hellish and the horrible.") [51920, 51943]

HotAir.com later comments on the Tehran visit rumor: "I don't [believe it] either—*unless* O has been quietly dangling this as a carrot to get Iran to agree to a final deal rolling back its nuke program. I've always assumed that the price of denuclearization is, in part, official U.S. recognition of the regime. Having Obama go to Tehran and personally welcome the mullahs back into the community of nations would be a pot-sweetener for the ages. Plus, the more spectacularly his domestic agenda fails, the more he'll want to salvage his second term with some kind of major foreign-policy 'achievement.' A comprehensive deal on Iranian nukes followed by a state visit to Iran would qualify as a 'major.' ObamaCare's loss is Ayatollah Khamenei's gain! In fact, he may be dreaming even bigger than that: Despite copious evidence to the contrary, including a raging Sunni/Shiite proxy war in Syria, Obama and [Secretary of State John] Kerry have always seemed to believe that a final deal between Israel and the Palestinians is the key to regional peace. They may be thinking that between the U.S./Iran thaw and the de facto Israeli/Sunni alliance against Iran, there's some minuscule chance to bring the entire region to the table on an Israeli/Palestinian accord if the U.S. and Iran can reach a deal on nukes first. Would Obama be willing to go to Tehran and kiss Khamenei's ring for that? Probably, sure. Remember, before O got elected..., embraced NSA surveillance, and

started droning people willy nilly, the Hopenchange foreign-policy brand was all about dialogue with foreign powers. Going to Tehran would be true to that, and he'd also likely regard it as something that (finally) earned him his Nobel Peace Prize. If nothing else, the mere prospect of him visiting would convey enough legitimacy on Iran as to further dissuade Israel from launching an attack of its own. Which, let's face it, is what the current temporary nuclear deal with Iran is mainly about." [51971]

Former Obama Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's approval/disapproval rating is "underwater" by two percent in a YouGov/Economist poll, where she scores 46/48. (Some of the drop is certainly the result of the Benghazi fiasco, in which four Americans were killed and Clinton was involved in the "blame it on a YouTube video" cover-up. Another factor may simply be that many Americans are recognizing that, despite her fame, Hillary Clinton did not actually accomplish anything significant as a Senator or as Secretary of State. *The Obama Timeline* believes that millions of Americans would vote for her only because they want her husband back in the White House, and not her. If that is the case, she had better hope Bill Clinton does not drop dead of a heart attack before 2016.) [51923, 52906]

The Obama Timeline again tries to access Healthcare.gov and gets far enough to learn that a plan which is far inferior to what had covered his family will cost *almost four times as much*—despite higher deductibles and out-of-pocket expense limits. [51927]

Initial reports show that Christmas shoppers spent \$57.4 billion from Thanksgiving Day through Sunday, December 1—down from \$59.1 billion in 2012. The average shopper spent \$407.02, down from \$423.55 in 2012. [51928, 51953]

ObamaConspiracy.org, an Obama-supporting website that ridicules opponents of the socialist thug-in-chief—especially those who doubt Obama's birth story—posts an enemies list. For reasons unknown, as of this date *The Obama Timeline* is not on the list. (The author's name appears on the list the next day—misspelled, which may lead some to believe it refers to a former *Los Angeles Times* reporter with a similar name. Frederick William Dame, whose thought-provoking essays appear at TheObamaTimeline.com, makes the list a few days later.) [51934, 51935]

Senator Jon Cornyn (R-TX) says, "I think the current administration has taken lying to a new level." [51978]

According to WashingtonTimes.com, Congressman Darrell Issa (R-CA), chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, "says the FBI is stonewalling his inquiry into whether the agency and the Internal Revenue Service targeted conservative group True the Vote for special scrutiny, and ... Issa is now threatening subpoenas to pry loose the information from FBI Director James B. Comey Jr." Issa and Congressman Jim Jordan (R-OH) "also said the FBI is refusing to turn over any documents related to its own investigation into the IRS, which began in the days after an auditor's report revealed

the tax agency had improperly targeted tea party groups for special scrutiny. Six months after it began, the FBI's investigation has resulted in no release of information. The congressmen said the FBI even rescinded an offer for an in-person briefing with the assistant director in charge of the investigation. The reversal, after the FBI consulted with the Justice Department, suggests political meddling, the two investigators said." [51977]

Politico reports that Obama "will launch a coordinated campaign Tuesday by the White House, congressional Democrats and their outside allies to return attention to why the Affordable Care Act passed in first place. After two months of intense coverage of the botched HealthCare.gov rollout, [Obama] will host a White House event kicking off a three-week drive to refocus the public on the law's benefits... The White House will take the lead in emphasizing a different benefit each day until the Dec. 23 enrollment deadline for Jan. 1 coverage. The daily message will be amplified through press events and social media by Democratic members of Congress, the Democratic National Committee, congressional campaign committees and advocacy organizations, officials said." (In other words, the Obama propaganda machine will be ramped up to its maximum level, in an effort to counter all the bad news about Americans who are losing their insurance coverage or will have to pay substantially more for replacement plans.) [51939]

NYTimes.com reports, "The White House is offering more money to insurance companies as an incentive for them to let people keep insurance policies that were to have been canceled next year. The administration floated several proposals on Monday to 'help offset the loss in premium revenue and profit' that it said might occur if insurers went along with ...Obama's request to reinstate canceled policies. ...Any such assistance would come on top of federal subsidies that the government plans to pay insurers to make coverage more affordable for low- and middle-income people under the new law. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that those subsidy payments will exceed \$1 trillion over the next 10 years." [51980]

FreeBeacon.com reports, "Iranian President Hassan Rouhani vowed to 'forge ahead' with Iran's nuclear enrichment program over the weekend and announced the upcoming construction of a second nuclear reactor in the province of Bushehr. Iran's Bushehr nuclear power plant came online in 2011 and is operated with the assistance of the Russians. Rouhani said that a second reactor would be built in the near future. 'Based on our estimates, the second nuclear power plant will be built in the same province and I hope that we can use the facilities of this province,' Rouhani said according to Iran's state run Fars News Agency." [51940]

According to JihadWatch.org, Obama-backed Muslim rebels in Raqqa, Syria "took over an Armenian church and transformed it into their bureau..." [51946, 51947]

On *Special Report*, Fox News senior political analyst Brit Hume comments that Obama's "health insurance reform plan is now the stuff of jokes, but its political consequences will be felt long after the laughter has faded. The farcical rollout of the web site, which is still not fixed, is likely to prove the least of the problems. Mr. Obama's deceptive promise

that no one would lose their doctors, hospitals or health insurance has done far greater damage. People simply do not forget such conspicuous acts of bad faith. And many congressional Democrats set to face the voters next year echoed Mr. Obama's false promise and are thus complicit in it. Millions of Americans have now lost coverage. Millions more will. Countless others are finding out their doctors or hospitals are not included in the ObamaCare insurance offerings. Now, in time, ObamaCare will undoubtedly produce some winners, especially those who were previously uninsured or who lost coverage but are able now to find new policies at a subsidized price. The problem for Democrats is that anger and disappointment are almost always more powerful political motivators than satisfaction and contentment. It is negative emotions that start political movements and drive people to the polls or sometimes the streets. Remember, ObamaCare was passed at a time when 80 percent of Americans indicated in polls they were satisfied with their health care. Disrupting that was the political equivalent of knocking over a hornet's nest, and there seems little doubt at this point who is going to get stung." [51951]

WashingtonExaminer.com reports that Obama "has yet to make good on the administration's promises that he would sign up for health insurance on the new government exchanges, the White House acknowledged on Monday. White House press secretary Jay Carney said that Obama has not signed up for Obamacare and that he did have a reason for the delay. A reporter pressed Carney on whether the White House would make it an open-press event if and when Obama does enroll. 'I'll get back to you,' Carney replied." [51954, 51955]

WashingtonPost.com reports that the Obama administration goal of 50,000 concurrent users on Healthcare.gov on December 1 fell short by about 15,000, as the "queuing software" operated in the "mid-30,000" range. [51966]

On *On the Record*, Congressman Mike Rogers (R-MI) tells Greta Van Susteren the White House refused to brief members of Congress on the known risks of Healthcare.gov—even in closed session. [51967]

On CNN, Piers Morgan speculates as to whether Americans would vote for Chris Christie for president in 2016 because he is morbidly obese, and says, "[A]fter the perfect Barack Obama—who's a perfect physical specimen to many people's eyes—does it matter?" [51996, 52015]

On December 3, with 19 human props standing behind him at the White House, a defensive Obama delivers a brief address to reassure Democrats that ObamaCare is working just fine and to reaffirm that he will not allow ObamaCare to be repealed. (Until December 23, Obama and key Democrats are reportedly planning on staging daily events to remind Americans of the positive aspects of ObamaCare.) The speech is somewhat warmly received—because the White House briefing room audience consists mostly of administration officials, including Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius and close advisor Valerie Jarrett. (At NYPost.com John Podhoretz later writes, "[I]n truth, yesterday wasn't about ObamaCare. It was about Obama. It was about

bucking up the boss. It was about showing him some love. The fact that Obama was in on the tribute to himself only adds to the poignancy. You have to be a little desperate to agree to organize and promote a support rally to boost your own spirits. He got the applause he wanted. He got the love he needed. He got MSNBC talk personalities to speak admiringly of him. So by those standards, if by no other, the speech was a roaring success. It may even have kicked off a new lifestyle trend: Are you a boss? Things getting you down? Have a pep rally in the staff cafeteria and make sure your staff gives you a big round of applause! ...Now that he's had his little pep rally, ...Obama would be well-advised to go under the radar again for a while. According to Gallup, the more facts people know about ObamaCare, the less likely they are to support it. It would appear that it's better for [him] if people live in blissful ignorance rather than horrified awareness.") [51959, 51981, 51995, 51999, 52019, 52025, 52056]

At WashingtonExaminer.com Byron York writes, "...Obama never said who those [19] people were, and, unlike other events, the White House did not release their names or biographies. A spokesman later said the White House would not provide the information. A pool report called the group '19 individuals whom the White House said benefited from health care reform.' Beyond that, their connection to Obamacare remains unknown." [52007]

A D.C. court hears oral arguments in *Halbig v. Sebelius*, a lawsuit which points out that federal subsidies for the purchase of health insurance are illegal in states that did not establish ObamaCare exchanges because the law specifically authorizes subsidies only for those who are enrolled "through an exchange established by the state under section 1311 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act." DailyCaller.com notes, "In addition, businesses where the employees are unable to access these subsidies also can't be penalized. Two hundred million Americans live in those 34 states—a hefty chunk of the U.S. population. ...Another case with traction is *King v. Sebelius*, which is unfolding in Virginia. Both the judge in D.C. and the judge in Richmond could issue a ruling before Jan. 1—potentially halting the subsidies and penalties from kicking in. This would be a public disaster for the administration." (The problem lies with the poor drafting of the legislation. Obama is violating the law by proceeding with the implementation of ObamaCare as though the employer penalties and the subsidies—in excess of \$1 trillion over 10 years—apply even in states that did not establish exchanges. Unfortunately for Obama, courts are not supposed to rule on the "intentions" of those who drafted the law, but on the letter of the law. If a court rules against Obama—which it logically should—he would have to ask Congress to write new legislation to correct the problem—something it is not about to do. Some argue that the Affordable Care Act's language was intentional, and that it was designed to encourage all 50 states to establish ObamaCare exchanges—and the administration was stunned when 34 states said, "Thanks, but no thanks.") [51950, 51952, 51956]

On Fox News, former federal prosecutor Fred Tecce comments on the lawsuits challenging ObamaCare's subsidies to non-participating states, telling Jenna Lee, "Do they have a case? I'm going to tell you something. Before, as Dr. [Charles] Krauthammer

said, this ‘lawlessness’ began, this case would be a slam dunk. It’s very simple. When you talk about interpreting a statute, Jenna, the words of the statute control. And the words of the statute define this exchange as set up by a state and they authorize subsidies for exchanges as defined by the statute. And—this is the irony of this—the law presumes that Congress knew what they were doing when they passed a statute. That’s the end of the conversation. ...When they wrote the section of the law that indicated who was going to get the subsidies, they specifically did not include the federal exchanges. At the end of the day, even if it was a mistake... it’s too bad, because mistakes are drawn against the drafters. ...If that’s what they meant, then that’s what they should have said. This is what happens when you ram a bill through with no back-and-forth, no bipartisan support. Ultimately, because of the mistakes that were made, the irony is that the real, the legitimate, the lawful fix for this would be to send the law back to Congress and tell them to fix it.” [51956]

The University of Notre Dame joins the ranks of institutions suing the Obama administration over ObamaCare’s contraceptive and abortifacient mandate. [51984]

Investors.com reports, “Extortion: Just when we thought its post-crisis probe of banks couldn't get more corrupt, the Obama administration has cut radical Democrat groups in on the record \$13 billion JPMorgan Chase subprime loan deal. On Page 5 of ‘Annex 2’ of the recently released consent order, you’ll find this little gem: The Justice Department mandates that JPMorgan fork over any unclaimed or unpaid consumer damages to a nonprofit group that finances Acorn clones and other shakedown groups. They stand to reap millions. The ‘consumer relief’ portion of the deal by itself totals \$4 billion. If the government ‘determines that a shortfall in that obligation remains as of Dec. 31, 2017,’ the agreement states, ‘JPMorgan shall make a compensatory payment in cash in an amount equal to the shortfall to NeighborWorks America to provide housing counseling, neighborhood stabilization, foreclosure prevention or similar programs.’ Potentially billions could be distributed to Democrat activists through NeighborWorks, a government-funded ‘affordable housing’ group that supports a national network of left-wing community organizers operating in the same vein as Acorn. In 2011 alone, NeighborWorks shelled out \$35 billion in ‘affordable housing grants’ to 115 such groups, according [to] its website. Recipients included the radical Affordable Housing Alliance, which pressures banks to make high-risk loans in low-income neighborhoods. The recession has dried up funding for such groups. But [Attorney General Eric] Holder’s massive bank shakedown could rebuild their war chests in a hurry. He’s written back-door funding for Democrat groups into other major bank deals he’s brokered, including the \$335 million Bank of America and \$175 million Wells Fargo subprime mortgage settlements. In the fine print of those decrees, both defendants must turn over any leftover funds in escrow to affordable-housing groups aligned with Democrats. In effect, lenders are bankrolling the same parasites that bled them for the risky loans that caused the mortgage crisis. Infused with new cash, they can ramp back up their shakedown campaign, repeating the cycle of dangerous political lending that wrecked the economy. Under the dubious deal, JPMorgan is also obligated to donate foreclosed homes to these ‘nonprofits’ while offering home loans to ‘low to moderate income borrowers’ in areas hit ‘hardest’ by subprime foreclosures.” [52499, 52500]

Americac2c.com posts a January 24, 2013 CanadaFreePress.com article by Dan Calabrese, which itself was a re-posting of a 2008 article, in which the author reports that Hillary Clinton [then Hillary Rodham] was fired by the Watergate investigatory committee on which she served in 1974. Calabrese writes, “The now-retired general counsel and chief of staff of the House Judiciary Committee, who supervised Hillary when she worked on the Watergate investigation, says Hillary’s history of lies and unethical behavior goes back farther—and goes much deeper—than anyone realizes. Jerry Zeifman, a lifelong Democrat, supervised the work of 27-year-old Hillary Rodham on the committee. Hillary got a job working on the investigation at the behest of her former law professor, Burke Marshall, who was also Sen. Ted Kennedy’s chief counsel in the Chappaquiddick affair. When the investigation was over, Zeifman fired Hillary from the committee staff and refused to give her a letter of recommendation—one of only three people who earned that dubious distinction in Zeifman’s 17-year career. Why? ‘Because she was a liar,’ Zeifman said in an interview...[in 2008]. ‘She was an unethical, dishonest lawyer. She conspired to violate the Constitution, the rules of the House, the rules of the committee and the rules of confidentiality.’ How could a 27-year-old House staff member do all that? She couldn’t do it by herself, but Zeifman said she was one of several individuals—including Marshall, special counsel John Doar and senior associate special counsel (and future Clinton White House Counsel) Bernard Nussbaum—who engaged in a seemingly implausible scheme to deny Richard Nixon the right to counsel during the investigation. Why would they want to do that? Because, according to Zeifman, they feared putting Watergate break-in mastermind E. Howard Hunt on the stand to be cross-examined by counsel to the president. Hunt, Zeifman said, had the goods on nefarious activities in the Kennedy Administration that would have made Watergate look like a day at the beach—including Kennedy’s purported complicity in the attempted assassination of Fidel Castro.” [52051, 52052]

Calabrese notes that one of Clinton’s legal briefs “was so fraudulent and ridiculous, Zeifman believes Hillary would have been disbarred if she had submitted it to a judge. ...Of course, Nixon’s resignation rendered the entire issue moot, ending Hillary’s career on the Judiciary Committee staff in a most undistinguished manner. Zeifman says he was urged by top committee members to keep a diary of everything that was happening. He did so, and still has the diary if anyone wants to check the veracity of his story. Certainly, he could not have known in 1974 that diary entries about a young lawyer named Hillary Rodham would be of interest to anyone 34 years later. But they show that the pattern of lies, deceit, fabrications and unethical behavior was established long ago—long before the Bosnia lie, and indeed, even before cattle futures, Travelgate and Whitewater—for the woman who is still asking us to make her president of the United States. ...By the way, there’s something else that started a long time ago. ‘She [Hillary Rodham] would go around saying, ‘I’m dating a person who will some day be president,’ [chief Republican committee counsel Franklin] Polk said. ‘It was like a Babe Ruth call. And because of that comment she made, I watched Bill Clinton’s political efforts as governor of Arkansas, and I never counted him out because she had made that forecast.’ Bill knew what he wanted a long time ago. Clearly, so did Hillary, and her tactics for trying to achieve it were established even in those early days.” (The relevance of Calabrese’s article is that

Hillary Clinton has historically shown no reluctance to lie, as she did with the cover-up of the Benghazi fiasco by repeating the false claim that the terrorist attack was the result of a YouTube video.) [52051, 52052]

The *Daily Mail* reports, “The U.S. Department of State will spend \$2.5 million next year on art to decorate its embassies, it was revealed Tuesday. The agency’s 2013 spending included \$1 million for a single granite sculpture set to adorn the new American Embassy in London. It’s part of the State Department’s ‘Art In Embassies’ program, which has 16 government employees curating [sic] art exhibits at diplomatic stations all over the world. The State Department writes that the program ‘provides exhibitions to represent American art abroad.’ The \$1 million art award will go to Sean Scully, an Irish-born artist who emigrated to the U.S. at age 30, and whose work resembles stacked piles of paving stones.” [52170]

The Boston Globe reports, “A federal immigration judge today allowed ...Obama’s uncle, Onyango ‘Omar’ Obama to remain in the United States... US Immigration Judge Leonard I. Shapiro issued his ruling from the bench. He said he believed Onyango Obama was a gentleman, a good neighbor, paid his taxes, and met the criteria for legal permanent residency, commonly known as a green card. ...Immigration judges’ rulings obtained by the Globe through the Freedom of Information Act show that Onyango Obama was ordered deported in 1986 and 1989 and then lost his appeal in 1992. The issue of deportation arose again after Onyango Obama was arrested for drunken driving in 2011 in Framingham, where he lived. ...Shapiro is the same immigration judge who approved an asylum request for Onyango Obama’s sister, Zeituni, in 2010. She attended today’s hearing to show her support for her brother and to testify on his behalf, but Shapiro said he did not need to hear from her.” (Obama has claimed that he never even met his uncle, but Onyango Obama testified that he lived with him “for at least three weeks” in the 1980s in Cambridge, Massachusetts, while he attended Harvard Law School. The White House later admits that Obama did, in fact, know his uncle and lived with him—but staffers had told reporters Obama did not know him because his name did not appear in the book *Dreams From My Father* and no one had bothered to ask Obama about their relationship. Additionally, no one in the White House had even bothered to tell Obama that his uncle had been arrested for drunk driving... or the administration is lying.) [51957, 51598, 51985, 52034, 52049, 52061, 52068, 52070, 52074, 52090, 52147]

A White House blog that announces, “On Wednesday, December 4, 2013 the White House will host a Youth Summit, offering young people from around the country an opportunity to discuss the Affordable Care Act and other issues with senior White House officials. White House Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and Google+ followers ages 18-35 are eligible to apply to attend this White House event on December 4. Interested in joining? Sign up for your chance to join other White House social media followers at the #WHYouth social.” (DailyCaller.com comments, “Yes, now we have the White House Youth. Either these geniuses are actively inviting comparisons with the Hitler Youth, or nobody in that building knows any better. Which likelihood is more depressing?” Charles

C. W. Cooke tweets, “Just spoke to someone in the White House. Apparently #WHYouth was a typo. It’s actually supposed to be #WHJugend.” Pamela Geller writes at AtlasShrugs.com, “Freaky and creepy. ‘Obama Youth’—it is so eerily reminiscent of Hitler Youth. Same name and same approach to the young and impressionable and stupid. ‘Obama Youth Summit!’ You have to think that the Alinsky-driven administration wants to bait the opposition in order to ridicule those of us who question their fuhrer. ‘Look, those crazy teabaggers are calling Obama Hitler!’ Of course, considering Obama’s recent dramatic and catastrophic foreign policy reversal allowing Iran to build nuclear weapons, it’s not an altogether wrong comparison. As for any young person who shows up to this obvious PR circus psyop—they should be the object of scorn and derision from their peers for being such tools of the government.”) [51960, 5196, 519621, 51970, 51989, 52004]

After ruling that cuts to city employee pensions could be considered in Detroit’s Chapter 9 bankruptcy proceedings, Federal Judge Stephen Rhodes immediately receives death threats. (Obama has no comment.) [51963, 51964, 51988]

Obama’s approval/disapproval rating falls to 39.8/55.9 in the Real Clear Politics average of major polls—marking the first time Obama’s *average* approval rating fell below 40 percent. [51965, 51992, 52005]

NationalReview.com’s Jim Geraghty writes at Morning Jolt, “Attention, White House staffers: This is not Syria, some far-off land that people will eventually forget about. This isn’t Benghazi; the country won’t eventually move on and forget about your lies. This is not ‘Fast and Furious;’ most Americans can’t just shrug that it doesn’t affect them. This is not the IRS abuse scandal, which you can blame on some low-level employees in a Cincinnati office, or GSA employees spending taxpayer dollars on luxury hotels in Las Vegas. This isn’t Solyndra. This isn’t wiretapping AP telephone lines or preparing a conspiracy charge against Fox News’s James Rosen. This isn’t even the NSA domestic-surveillance scandal, a revelation that really aggravates people but that fades from the headlines over time. No, this is the health care of millions of people that you’re botching, after years and years of assuring the public that you can handle this and that they’ll love the results of your efforts, hammered through Congress on party-line votes. It’s infuriating to be on the receiving end of the lie, but the irony is that it’s only the shortest of short-term solutions for the person telling the lie. Their impossible promises and lies and excuses always end with some variation of ‘and in the very near future, you’re going to have an easier time, paying less money, to get better health care, we promise!’ The ‘very near future’ then arrives, and lo and behold, their vision hasn’t come to fruition. Because it can’t come to fruition, at least not the way they’re doing it.”

HotAir.com’s Ed Morrissey reports, “While the White House returns to ‘sales mode’ on ObamaCare, insurers are more worried about their delivery mode. With less than a month before the individual mandate begins, the back-end systems for Healthcare.gov still don’t work—or don’t exist at all. Given the track record at HHS [Health and Human Services] of declaring victory while systems collapse, their partners in the private sector are not

sanguine about the immediate future.” In charge of building the “back end” transactions is CGI Federal: “Yes, the same people who couldn’t turn out a functioning web portal with a year’s head start, and who still can’t make the front end function to meet the expected demand, are in charge of providing the crucial back end to complete enrollments. So far, insurers aren’t seeing any sign that this will get done, not for reconciliation or for subsidy payments. Instead, HHS is telling customers to do the reconciliation themselves by flooding their insurers with the phone calls that Healthcare.gov was supposed to avoid. The payment systems are an even bigger deal. Insurers will have to start paying providers from the premiums they receive starting on January 1, and those subsidies are a large portion of those premiums. If they don’t get paid on time, they’ll have to run at a loss until CGI figures out how to create a computer system that transfers funds accurately ... a task that every financial institution figured out decades ago. Heck, your local bank knows how to do that with Automated Bill Pay. If it takes more than a month to get subsidy payments in place, insurers could be looking at some serious red ink, especially with the flood of demand expected to be created with the ObamaCare structure. Providers will end up getting stiffed, which is going to make them less than enthusiastic about remaining in these networks, too.” [51968, 51969, 51973, 51983, 51998, 52028]

Regardless of whether Healthcare.gov appears to be working on the “front end,” the programming for collecting premiums and passing them on to the insurance companies had not been completed. The Obama administration’s absurd “solution” is to allow the insurance companies to *estimate* the amount of lost premium revenue, and the Treasury Department would then write a check for that amount. Obama is essentially begging the insurance companies to cover people for free, with the promise that they will be bailed out by the federal government. It is a political “hail Mary” pass. Obama has spent five years arguing that the insurance companies are crooked, should not be trusted, and require strict federal regulation—but can now be trusted to estimate the subsidy and premium amounts they have not yet received for tens of thousands of customers. Arguably, however, the insurance companies are not likely to engage in fraud. The fraud will be from people who lie about their income in order to receive larger federal subsidies than they are entitled to under the law—and they may as well lie, because there is no enforcement mechanism in ObamaCare to punish them for cheating. Additionally, the insurance companies would only be able to estimate payments for customers whose enrollments have actually been processed. As many as one-third of those who believe they have signed up for coverage may not have it on January 1—because proper computer transactions have not been passed from Healthcare.gov to the insurance companies. [51993, 51994, 52013, 52028]

At a House Judiciary Committee hearing on the use of power by the executive branch of the federal government, law professor Jonathan Turley—a “moderate leftist”—is surprisingly blunt about abuses by the Obama administration and the dangers that portends. Turley says, “The danger is quite severe. The problem with what [Obama] is doing is that he’s not simply posing a danger to the constitutional system. He’s becoming the very danger the Constitution was designed to avoid. We have what many once called an imperial presidency model. ... We have what many once called an imperial presidency

model of largely unchecked authority, and with that trend we also have the continued rise of this fourth branch. We have agencies that are quite large that issue regulations.” Turley also charges that Obama has “claimed the right of the king to essentially stand above the law.” Congressman Trent Franks (R-AZ) says some of Obama’s actions “could be considered royal prerogatives, which is, if my history’s right, what we had that little unpleasantness with Great Britain about.” Congressman Steve King notes “the word that we don’t like to say in this committee, and I’m not about to utter here in this particular hearing.” (That is, impeachment.) Georgetown law professor Nicholas Rosenkranz says, “I don’t think you should be hesitant to speak the word in this room. A check on executive lawlessness is impeachment.” Congressman Blake Farenthold (R-TX) says, “We’ve also talked about the I-word, impeachment [in the House], which I don’t think would get past the Senate in the current climate. . . . Is there anything else we can do?” [52018, 52022, 52027, 52032, 52035, 52046, 52083, 52123, 52125, 52126, 52127, 52150, 52535, 52545]

HotAir.com writes, “Turley makes two valuable points... One: Courts tend to give the executive a wide berth in separation-of-powers challenges on the theory that Congress has the power of the purse and can defund any executive agency it likes. But that’s not true anymore, he says. Obama, by defying appropriations, has claimed some of that power for himself. What check does Congress have left? That brings us to point two: Even if Congress can’t stop Obama, the courts can. The problem there, though, says Turley, is that O and the DOJ [Department of Justice] have argued successfully in many cases that no one has standing to sue him because no one can show an injury from his power grabs that’s concrete enough to justify a federal lawsuit. So the courts can’t check him either. The only check is to beat him at the polls, and since he’s now term-limited, there’s no real check there apart from his party’s fear that they’ll be punished for his excesses instead. Show of hands: Who thinks [Senate Majority Leader] Harry Reid [D-NV] and [House Minority Leader] Nancy Pelosi [D-CA] will keep Obama in line? Before you answer, note that leading amnesty shill [Congressman] Luis Gutierrez [D-IL] argued at this same hearing that, if anything, Obama should have a freer hand so that he can go about unilaterally legalizing the illegals Gutierrez has been effectively representing in Congress for years. That’s what’s left of Democratic opposition to the imperial executive.” [52018, 52022, 52027, 52032, 52035, 52046, 52083, 52123, 52150]

Turley warns, “The danger is quite severe. The problem with what [Obama] is doing is that he’s not simply posing a danger to the constitutional system. He’s becoming the very danger the Constitution was designed to avoid. That is the concentration of power in every single branch. This Newtonian orbit that the three branches exist in is a delicate one but it is designed to prevent this type of concentration. There is [sic; are] two trends going on which should be of equal concern to all members of Congress. One is that we have had the radical expansion of presidential powers under both President Bush and ...Obama. We have what many once called an imperial presidency model of largely unchecked authority. And with that trend we also have the continued rise of this fourth branch. We have agencies that are quite large that issue regulations. The Supreme Court said recently that agencies could actually define their own or interpret their own jurisdiction.” [52018, 52022, 52027, 52032, 52035, 52046, 52083, 52150]

At the same hearing, Cato Institute Director of Health Policy Studies Michael Cannon states, “There is one last... thing to which the people can resort if the government does not respect the restraints that the Constitution places on the government. Abraham Lincoln talked about our right to alter our government or our revolutionary right to overthrow it. And that is certainly something that no one wants to contemplate, but... if the people come to believe that the government is no longer constrained by the laws then they will conclude that neither are they. That... is a very dangerous sort of thing for [Obama] to do, to wantonly ignore the laws, to try to impose obligations upon people that the legislature did not approve.” [52027]

According to a Rasmussen poll, “50% of Likely U.S. Voters believe Congress and [Obama] should repeal [ObamaCare] and start again from the beginning. That’s up from 43% support in late October. Another 31% think Congress and [Obama] should go through the law piece by piece to improve it. Just 16% want to leave the law the way it is, down slightly from 18% four weeks ago.” [51976]

FuelFix.com reports, “Oil production in Texas has hit its highest monthly rate on record, more than doubling in less than three years, according to new federal data. The state pumped 2.7 million barrels of crude per day during September, the highest average since monthly record-keeping began in January 1981. That marked a 30 percent jump over September 2012, according to data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration. Texas’ oil production peaked in 1972, when it produced an average of 3.4 million barrels per day, according to annual data from the Texas Railroad Commission. After decades of decline, Texas oil production abruptly turned in 2008 with the beginning of the shale oil and gas boom. Innovation in oil field technology, particularly hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling, have opened new regions of the United States to oil and natural gas activity in recent years. Production from deep, dense rock formations, once uneconomical to drill, has unleashed a new wealth of oil and gas on the energy-hungry nation.” (The increased production is despite Obama’s energy policies, not because of them, but Obama can nevertheless be expected to take credit.) [52020]

Peggy Noonan writes in *The Wall Street Journal* that Obama’s “problem right now is that people think he’s smart. They think he’s in command, aware of pitfalls and complexities. That’s his reputation: He’s risen far on his brains. They think he is sophisticated. That is his problem in the health insurance debacle. ...It’s a shock for most people that it’s a shambles. A fellow very friendly to the administration, a longtime supporter, cornered me at a holiday party recently to ask, with true perplexity: ‘How could [Obama] put his entire reputation on the line with a program and not be on the phone every day pushing people and making sure it will work?’ ...It’s a leader’s job to be skeptical of grand schemes. Sorry, that’s a conservative leader’s job. It is a liberal leader’s job to be skeptical that grand schemes will work as intended. You have to guide and goad and be careful. And [Obama] wasn’t. I think part of the reason he wasn’t careful is because he sort of lives in words. That’s been his whole professional life—books, speeches. Say something and it magically exists as something said, and if it’s been said and publicized it must be real. He

never had to push a lever, see the machine not respond, puzzle it out and fix it. It's all been pretty abstract for him, not concrete. He never had to stock a store, run a sale and see lots of people come but the expenses turn out to be larger than you'd expected and the profits smaller, and you have to figure out what went wrong and do better next time. People say Mr. Obama never had to run anything, but it may be more important that he never worked for the guy who had to run something, and things got fouled up along the way and he had to turn it around. He never had to meet a payroll, never knew that stress. He probably never had to buy insurance! And you know, his policies were probably gold-plated—at the law firm, through his wife's considerable hospital job, in the Illinois Legislature, in the U.S. Senate. Those guys know how to take care of themselves! Maybe he felt guilty. Maybe that's to his credit, knowing he was lucky. Too bad he didn't know what he didn't know, like how every part has to work for a complicated machine to work." [52000]

Noonan continues, "From what I have seen the administration is full of young people who've seen the movie but not read the book. They act bright, they know the reference, they're credentialed. But they've only seen the movie about, say, the Cuban missile crisis, and then they get into a foreign-policy question and they're seeing movies in their heads. They haven't read the histories, the texts, which carry more information, more texture, data and subtlety, and different points of view. They've only seen the movie—the Cubans had the missiles and Jack said 'Not another war' and Bobby said 'Pearl Harbor in reverse' and dreadful old Curtis LeMay chomped his cigar and said 'We can fry a million of 'em by this afternoon, Mr. President.' Grrr, grrr, good guys beat bad guys. It's as if history isn't real to them. They run around tweeting, all of them, even those in substantial positions. 'Darfur government inadequate. Genocide unacceptable.' They share their feelings—that happens to be one of the things they seem to think is real, what they feel. 'Unjust treatment of women—scourge that hurts my heart.' This is the dialogue to the movies in their heads. There's a sense that they're all freelancing, not really part of anything coherent. For four years I have been told, by those who've worked in the administration and those who've visited it as volunteers or contractors, that the Obama White House isn't *organized*. It's just full of chatter. Meetings don't begin on time, there's no agenda, the list of those invited seems to expand and contract at somebody's whim. There is a tendency to speak of how a problem will look and how its appearance should be handled, as opposed to what the problem is and should be done about it. People speak airily, without point. They scroll down, see a call that has to be returned, pop out and then in again." [52000]

"...And when you apply this to the ObamaCare debacle, suddenly it seems to make sense. The White House is so unformed and chaotic that they probably didn't ignore the problem, they probably held a million meetings on it. People probably said things like, 'We're experiencing some technological challenges but we're sure we'll be up by October,' and other people said, 'Yes, it's important we launch strong,' and others said, 'The Republicans will have a field day if we're not.' And then everyone went to their next meeting. And no one did anything. And [Obama] went off and made speeches. Because [to them,] the doing isn't that important, the talking is. ...Mr. Obama's problem now is that people think he is smart. They think, as they look at his health-care vows, that

either he didn't know how bad his program was, what dislocations it would cause, what a disturbance it would be to the vast middle class of America... Or he knew, and deliberately misled everyone. If they thought he wasn't very bright, they might give him some leeway on that question. But they think he's really smart. So they think he knew. And deliberately misled. They think he knowingly quelled people's fears when he knew they had every reason to be afraid. Which makes him just another dishonest pol, just another guy hiding in the deliberately obscure paragraph on page 1,037 of the omnibus comprehensive reform bill. He has taken himself down, lowered his own stature. Commentators like to decry low-information voters—the stupid are picking our leaders. I think the real problem is low-information leaders. They have so little experience of life and have so much faith in magic—in media, in words—that they don't understand people will get angry at you when you mislead them, and never see you the same way again.” [52000]

In London, Alan Rusbridger, editor of the *Guardian*, tells the British government's Home Affairs Select Committee that the newspaper has published only about one percent of the 58,000 files it had received from NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden. (Snowden has stated, “The great fear that I have regarding the outcome for America of these disclosures is that nothing will change. [People] won't be willing to take the risks necessary to stand up and fight to change things... And in the months ahead, the years ahead, it's only going to get worse. [The NSA will] say that... because of the crisis, the dangers that we face in the world, some new and unpredicted threat, we need more authority, we need more power, and there will be nothing the people can do at that point to oppose it. And it will be turnkey tyranny.”) [51979, 52721]

CNSNews.com reports, “The total number of people in the United States now receiving federal disability benefits hit a record 10,982,920 in November, up from the previous record of 10,978,040 set in May, according to newly released data from the Social Security Administration.” (Although their number is unknown, many of those individuals are not totally and permanently disabled, but are in their 50s and unable to find unemployment and deal with the situation by claiming bad backs, depression, or other hard to disprove ailments.) [52023]

DailyCaller.com reports, “Despite consistently beating the drum for an increased minimum wage, ... Obama's highly organized grassroots organization is offering jobs that don't pay at all. ‘OFA is now accepting applications for full-time and part-time HQ Interns for the Spring 2014 and Summer 2014 HQ Internship Programs in Chicago, IL,’ reads the job posting listed at Organizing for Action's site, BarackObama.com. ‘This is a 14-week, unpaid internship program,’ continues the listing.” [52002, 52003]

WashingtonTimes.com reports that House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) “has hired a longtime advocate of legalizing illegal immigrants to be an adviser, signaling that the Republican is still intent on trying to pass an immigration bill during this congressional session. Immigrant rights advocates cheered the move as a sign of Mr. Boehner's dedication to action. Those who want a crackdown on illegal immigration said the top

Republican in the House has moved closer to embracing amnesty by hiring Rebecca Tallent, a former staffer” of Senator John McCain (R-AZ) and Congressman Jim Kolbe (R-AZ). Mark Kirkorian, executive director of the Center for Immigration Studies, comments, “Tallent’s hiring suggests [Boehner] really does still want to push an amnesty through the House, which to me suggests that the immigration hawks still have their work cut out for them. She is a professional amnesty advocate.” [52008, 52009, 52016]

On CNN’s *Crossfire*, Democrat National Committee chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz insists, “Any of our candidates will be able to run on ObamaCare. ...Any of our candidates will run on the fact that a young adult can stay on their parents’ insurance until they’re 26 years old. ...All of our candidates are able to run on the provisions of ObamaCare. They’ll be able to use ObamaCare as an advantage... because, you know what? When a woman comes up to me who’s dealing with breast cancer and she’s told me that, under the old system, before the Affordable Care Act, she had to choose between the radiation or the chemo, because she couldn’t afford the co-pay or the deductible on both, you’re darn right that our—our party brought that [woman] peace of mind.” (Wasserman Schultz is mistaken. Many Democrats running for reelection in 2014, especially Senate Democrats, are desperately seeking ways to escape an end to their political careers because of their ObamaCare votes.) [52024]

In an interview with Andrea Shea King on Blog Talk Radio, document expert Douglas Vogt states that he has advised Maricopa County, Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio of the identity of the person who forged Obama’s birth certificate. Vogt does not announce the name on the air, but makes it clear that the forger is a woman—who hid a portion of her name in the document in order to prove that she had created the document. [51986, 51987, 52216, 52247, 52760]

On December 4 Ron Fournier reports at NationalJournal.com, “Young Americans are turning against Barack Obama and Obamacare, according to a new survey of millennials, people between the ages of 18 and 29 who are vital to the fortunes of [Obama] and his signature health care law. The most startling finding of Harvard University’s Institute of Politics: A majority of Americans under age 25—the youngest millennials—would favor throwing Obama out of office. ...Obama’s approval rating among young Americans is just 41 percent, down 11 points from a year ago, and now tracking with all adults. While 55 percent said they voted for Obama in 2012, only 46 percent said they would do so again. When asked if they would want to recall various elected officials, 45 percent of millennials said they would oust their member of Congress; 52 percent replied ‘all members of Congress’ should go; and 47 percent said they would recall Obama. The recall-Obama figure was even higher among the youngest millennials, ages 18 to 24, at 52 percent. While there is no provision for a public recall of U.S. presidents, the poll question revealed just how far Obama has fallen in the eyes of young Americans. ...According to the poll, 57 percent of millennials disapprove of Obamacare, with 40 percent saying it will worsen their quality of care and a majority believing it will drive up costs. Only 18 percent say Obamacare will improve their care. Among 18-to-29-year-olds currently without health insurance, less than one-third say they’re likely to enroll in the

Obamacare exchanges.” [51990, 51991, 52001, 52021, 52029, 52036]

Obama’s National Security Advisor, Susan Rice, addresses the Human Rights First Annual Summit, saying, “We defend the freedom for all people to worship as they choose, and we champion open government and civil society, freedom of assembly and a free press...No one understands this profound responsibility more keenly than [Obama] From his Nobel Prize acceptance speech to his remarks at the United Nations in September, he has been clear about the principles that guide us and to which we hold ourselves accountable, even as we navigate an increasingly complex world of competing and overlapping challenges. Make no mistake: advancing democracy and respect for human rights is central to our foreign policy. It’s what our history and our values demand, but it’s also profoundly in our interests.” (AtlasShrugs.com’s Pamela Geller comments, “Obama’s suppression of the press is well documented. Reporters who don’t kiss his ring and stroke his insatiable ego are punished. White House press corps, notorious Obamaphiles, are revolting at the lack of access. His administration was found spying on reporters who were not part of the mass-media cheerleading squad.”) “When ethnic and religious minorities—such as Tibetans and Uighurs—are denied their fundamental freedoms, the trust that holds diverse societies together is undermined. Such abuses diminish China’s potential from the inside.” (Geller: “Chinese Muslims (the Uighurs) are waging jihad in China. So according to the Obama administration, waging jihad is fundamental religious freedom, but he sanctions non-Muslims living under the sharia and suffering as sub-class citizens, denied basic human rights.”) “U.S. officials press foreign governments at all levels to advance religious freedom, including through advocacy on specific cases, such as the case of Saeed Abedini—an Iranian-American pastor imprisoned in Iran—and Rimsha Masih—a Christian child accused of blasphemy in Pakistan.” (Geller: “Obama signed a deal with Iran to allow them to continue to enrich uranium, while Christians rotting in Iranian prisons because of their religion were left to die.”) [52089]

CNN.com reports that Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), “one of Obamacare’s architects and staunchest supporters, is also the only top congressional leader to exempt some of his staff from having to buy insurance through the law’s new exchanges. Reid is the exception among the other top congressional leaders. GOP House Speaker John Boehner, House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi and Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell have all directed their staffs to join the exchange, their aides said. ...In September, Reid told reporters, ‘Let’s stop these really juvenile political games—the one dealing with health care for senators and House members and our staff. We are going to be part of exchanges, that’s what the law says and we’ll be part of that.’” A senior GOP Senate aide comments, “I’m sure that regular Americans who just lost their insurance will feel comforted to know that Senator Reid’s staff gets to keep their [taxpayer-subsidized] government plan.” Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) Tweets, “Sen. Dem Ldr exempted top staff who worked to pass Obamacare. Was it the higher costs or reduced choices?” (Obama and his family also have not enrolled in ObamaCare.) [52010, 52011, 52014]

According to HollywoodReporter.com, during a November 26 visit to the DreamWorks

studio in California, Obama said to Disney CEO Robert Iger, “At least I know what I want to do when I retire... host ESPN SportsCenter’s Top 10 list.” (ESPN is owned by the Disney conglomerate.) [52012]

Vice President Joe Biden answers immigration questions via Skype in an “Ask the White House from your house” event. (Politico later reports that “those who actually got to speak directly with Biden were first recruited by Skype and vetted by the White House. Skype spokesman Chaim Haas said the Microsoft-owned company reached out last week to people already active in the immigration debate in order to find people to interact with Biden and White House domestic policy chief Cecilia Munoz. Skype then submitted a list of would-be questioners to the White House, which eliminated some of them from contention, Haas said.”) [52367]

The Obama administration claims that about 29,000 Americans enrolled in ObamaCare during the first two days in December. (How it defines “enrolled” is uncertain. The administration is likely counting people who selected a plan but have not necessarily committed to paying for it. Whether the additional 29,000 potential enrollees is good news for the administration depends on who they are. If they are mostly sick, poor people who will qualify for Medicaid or taxpayer subsidies, they will contribute to ObamaCare’s problems.) [52017, 52030]

During a House hearing on ObamaCare, Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney (D-NY) unwittingly reads from satirical columns by Andy Borowitz (“The Borowitz Report”) as though they were factual. WashingtonExaminer.com notes “one in which ...Borowitz joked that Republicans are complaining that the problem-plagued Obamacare website is working too fast. She later called the blog a ‘distinguished report.’ Maloney said, ‘The distinguished report went on to criticize some of my Republican colleagues for plotting to make the Affordable Care Act work, criticizing efforts by ...Obama and his team to be flexible, making adjustments in their plan.’ Borowitz describes his column as ‘news, reshuffled.’ His latest post is about how the Hubble Space Telescope is sending ‘selfies’ back to NASA.” (On the assumption that Maloney’s staffers had seen the text of her statements before the meeting, it can only be assumed that they are as humorless and uninformed as she is.) [52026]

In a different House committee hearing, it is confirmed that IBM offered to build the ObamaCare web site for free but was turned down by the Obama administration. [52037, 52038]

Obama holds a “White House Youth Summit” where, according to WashingtonExaminer.com, he “...called on young people to do whatever they can to promote his signature health care law—including plying their customers with cheap booze. ‘If you are a bartender, have a happy hour,’ Obama said as the crowd laughed. ‘And also probably get health insurance because a lot of people don’t have it.’ Obama also encouraged young people who are student body presidents or workers at nonprofit organizations to help people get enrolled. ‘If you’ve got a radio show, spread the word on

air,' Obama added. Obama called on young people's sense of patriotism to join the cause. '[The] bottom line is that I'm going to need you, the country needs you,' Obama said, reminding them that their friends and peers might not know the benefits of Obamacare.'" [52031]

Obama also delivers a speech in Anacostia, a poor neighborhood in Washington, D.C., where he calls for an increase in the minimum wage and says, "The combined trends of increasing [income] inequality and decreasing mobility pose a fundamental threat to the American dream, our way of life, and what we stand for around the globe." In a statement certainly intended to arouse bitterness, rather than a desire to achieve, Obama says, "today's CEO now makes 273 times more" than the average worker. ("Income inequality" may be Obama's new theme, designed to take the nation's focus off the failure of ObamaCare. If that is the case, the labor union and the mainstream media have already been issued their marching orders. It can be assumed that they will not point out that "income inequality" has actually grown while Obama has been in the White House.) [52055, 52060, 52259, 52268, 52284]

With the ObamaCare disaster pushing Obama's approval ratings lower and frightening the daylight out of Senate Democrats up for reelection in 2014, NYTimes.com pretends there is only a silver lining and no dark cloud at all, writing, "... Obama and congressional Democrats, seizing on the good news of an improving health care website and rising enrollments, on Wednesday highlighted parts of the law that are popular with the public and reminded Americans, and the law's opponents, of what would be lost if the Affordable Care Act were repealed." [52119]

FreedomOutpost.com asks why leftists consider it racist to request a photo ID to vote but not racist to request that same photo ID, birth certificate, utility bill showing your address, your Social Security number and a paycheck stub or tax return in order to enroll in Medicaid. [52033]

DailyCaller.com reports, "Obamacare "raided" \$300 billion for Medicare Advantage and seniors will begin feeling the cuts next year, according to an analysis Tuesday by the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee. Obamacare took \$700 billion from Medicare and \$300 billion from Medicare Advantage alone for its own funding, according to the subcommittee. The cuts to Medicare Advantage beneficiaries will 'begin to be fully realized in the next year,' according to the subcommittee." Congressman Michael Burgess (R-TX), who is also a physician, states, "There was a promise made to seniors as well. The promise was that we're going to use your Medicare dollars as a piggy bank to fund the Affordable Care Act, and in doing that we'll improve Medicare and allow seniors to keep their doctors if they liked. So, do you have an opinion as to whether or not this is another broken promise?" American Action Forum president Doug Holtz-Eakin states, "Those most hurt by the cuts are low-income seniors in rural areas without other options for supplemental Medicare coverage. Additional scheduled cuts in the future will broaden the damage to Medicare Advantage." (According to

DailyCaller.com, “Twenty-eight percent of Medicare beneficiaries were enrolled in Medicare Advantage plans in 2013.” [52047, 52463, 52870]

WashingtonExaminer.com reports, “Christendom College students, along with the rest of the school’s part-time employees, will have their hours cut as a result of the health insurance mandate in Obamacare.” Chief operations officer Ken Ferguson states, “It would bankrupt the college. We would go out of business. We have approximately a \$10 million operating budget and we currently spend about \$1.1 million in insurance costs to cover our roughly 100 full-time employees... and we would have roughly 100 [additional employees], split evenly between student employees and non-student part-time employees, who would be mandated by the Obamacare legislation to receive insurance because they work more than 30 hours a week. And, if you do the simple extrapolation, it would cost us another \$1.1 million to insure them, which is more than 10 percent of our operating budget, and it would bankrupt the college. ...It was very common for colleges to provide insurance for their students, it was very cheap, but insurance companies will no longer provide that insurance post-Obamacare. The student insurance policies were perfect policies for students but they were basically crisis policies... Under the new legislation, these insurance policies had to have minimum [coverage] and as a consequence they became cost-prohibitive for the students to buy.” [52045]

FreeBeacon.com reports, “The Obama administration quietly finalized the Health Insurance Tax (HIT) over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend, a provision in Obamacare that will cost nearly \$60 billion over the next five years and raise health care premiums by 3 percent. The final rule, published on Nov. 27, imposes a fee beginning in 2014 for health insurers with premium revenues over \$25 million per year. The annual tax is levied for ‘United States health risks,’ and is hidden from consumers since it is directly assessed on health insurance companies. ...According to the Business Council of New York State, the average family will see a \$270 increase in their premiums in 2014. Over the next decade, the tax will cost families \$5,080.” [52063]

CNN visits the Washington, D.C. residence of Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) and learns that he sleeps with a life-size cardboard cut-out of Obama next to his bed. (Schumer shares the house with Senator Dick Durbin (D-IL) and their landlord, Congressman George Miller (D-CA).) [52064, 52072]

According to Hawaii Now News, Obama and his family will spend the Christmas holidays in Hawaii. [52065, 52078]

According to a Gallup poll, voters who knew the least about ObamaCare were most likely to have voted for his reelection in 2012. Additionally, Republicans and Independents were far more familiar with the Affordable Care Act. [52066]

At PJMedia.com Bridget Johnson reports, “Members of the House Intelligence Committee learned in a closed-door briefing yesterday that more contractors are

corroborating the report that the Obama administration had plenty of time to respond to the attack on the Benghazi diplomatic facility. Congressman Devin Nunes (R-CA) called the new information ‘outstanding testimony.’ ‘And essentially what they were able to prove today, they basically backed up the other contractors who were on the ground in the two previous hearings. So this is an ongoing investigation,’ Nunes said Tuesday evening. ‘And I think they gave us a lot of good leads today and I feel very comfortable moving forward with where we are at today.’ The congressman confirmed the White House claim that the attack was sparked by protest over a YouTube video ‘was a complete lie, and we always knew that. But what I think, some important testimony came out today. So these gentlemen found out about this right around dusk. And they knew the ambassador was missing, and they were in Tripoli. So, and then you have this whole time, you’re talking about roughly 9 to 10:00 at night, until 5:00 in the morning,’ he said. ‘And at that point, you know, essentially the attack was still ongoing. Because they arrived at the time the mortars hit and killed two additional Americans that were not killed at the embassy compound earlier. So this is—there is just nothing there the administration is standing on anymore, as to what were they doing? How come nobody came to help? I think that was clear, nobody knew even at 5:30 that the attack was going to be over.’ [52067]

Congressman Trey Gowdy (R-SC) holds a press conference at which he challenges reporters to ask questions about Benghazi that have so far not asked. Gowdy asks, “Can you tell me why [Ambassador] Chris Stevens was in Benghazi the night that he was killed? Do you know? Does it bother you whether or not you know why Chris Stevens was in Benghazi? Do you know why we were the last flag flying in Benghazi, after the British had left and the Red Cross had been bombed? Do you know why requests for additional security were denied? Do you know why an ambassador asking for more security days and weeks before he was murdered and those requests went unheeded? Do you know the answer to why those requests went unheeded? Do you know why no assets were deployed during the siege? And I’ve heard the explanation, which defies logic, frankly, that we couldn’t have gotten there in time, but you know [that] they [in the Obama administration] didn’t know when it was going to end. So how could you possibly cite that as an excuse? Do you know whether [Obama] called any of our allies, and said, ‘Can you help, we have men under attack?’ Can you answer that? Do any of you know why [then-U.S. ambassador to the U.N.] Susan Rice was picked? The Secretary of State [Hillary Clinton] did not go. She said she doesn’t like Sunday talk shows; that’s the only media venue she does not like—if that’s true. Why was Susan Rice on the five Sunday talk shows? Do you now the origin of this mythology that it was spawned as a spontaneous reaction to a video? Do you know where that started? Do you now how we got from no evidence of that to that being the official position of the administration? In conclusion, Congress is supposed to provide oversight; the voters are supposed to provide oversight; and you [journalists] are supposed to provide oversight. That’s why you have special liberties, and that’s why you have special protections. I am not surprised that [Obama] called this a phony scandal. I’m not surprised that Secretary Clinton asked, ‘What difference does it make?’ I’m not even surprised that [White House press secretary] Jay Carney said that Benghazi happened a long time ago. I’m just surprised at how many people bought it.” [52082]

Author and columnist Mark Steyn writes, “For the last half-century, Obama has simply had to be. Just being Obama was enough to waft him onwards and upwards: He was the Harvard Law Review president who never published a word, the community organizer who never organized a thing, the state legislator who voted present. And then one day came the day when it wasn’t enough simply to be. For the first time in his life, he had to do. And it turns out he can’t. He’s not Steve Jobs [Apple] or Bill Gates [Microsoft] or Jeff Bezos [Amazon.com]. And Healthcare.gov is about what you’d expect if you nationalized a sixth of the economy and gave it to the Assistant Deputy Commissar of the Department of Paperwork and the Under-Regulator-General of the Bureau of Compliance. Politics, the late Christopher Hitchens used to say, is show business for ugly people. But it’s also ugly business for show people. Thatcherism is a political philosophy; Obamaism is a vibe, a groove, a pose, an aesthetic. When his speechwriters are cooking, he’ll get them to work up a little riff about how it’s not about Big Government vs. Small Government, it’s about ‘smarter’ government. A few months ago, he even gave it a [Twitter] hashtag! #SmarterGov. How cool is that? ‘Smart’ refers less to the product than to the guys pitching it.” [52039]

“...A few weeks before Obamacare’s launch, one of the smart set, Dan Pfeiffer, promised it would be ‘a consumer experience unmatched by anything in government, but also in the private sector.’ And he was right, kind of. ...[W]e have government by people who read [leftist *New York Times* columnist] Thomas L. Friedman and use words like ‘interconnectedness’ and give commencement addresses where they rave about how our world is changing so fast—and assume that just being glibly au courant is a substitute for being able to do, make, build. There are lessons here beyond the abysmal failure of one misconceived government program, lessons about what our esteemed (if not terminally self-esteeming) elites value as ‘smart,’ and about the perils of rule by a poseur technocracy. As for Obama, he’s not Jay-Z, nor even Justin Bieber: He can’t sing, or dance, or create a government bureaucracy that functions any more efficiently than a Soviet supermarket. He broke the lifelong rule that had served him so well—‘Don’t just do something. Stand there’—and for the first time in his life did something, terribly. It will bear his name forever.” [52039]

According to Breitbart.com, a Government Accountability Institute analysis of Obama’s White House calendar shows that Obama had “just one face-to-face meeting between Obama and his Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius in the more than three-and-a-half years leading up to the disastrous Obamacare launch. The startling statistic... raises new questions about Obama’s executive leadership and management throughout the implementation of his singular legislative achievement. More alarming still, [Obama’s] schedule lists 277 private meetings with 16 other Cabinet secretaries in the same time span from Obamacare’s March 23, 2010 signing to November 30, 2013. Why Obama would devote so little face time to the person tasked with implementing what he calls his ‘most important initiative’ is presently unclear. ...The lack of in-person meetings between Sebelius and Obama may offer new insight into what the *New York Times* calls a ‘deeply dysfunctional relationship’ between HHS and Obama’s White House chief of staff. On Tuesday, the *New York Times* reported that

White House officials are coming under ‘mounting pressure from Democrats and close allies to hold senior-level people accountable for the botched rollout of ...Obama’s signature domestic achievement and to determine who should be fired.’” [52040]

Blogger Doug Ross posts results from an IBD/TIPP poll that shows Democrats are in an “alternate universe,” “blindly loyal” to Obama, and “extreme in their views when compared with independents and Republicans. While only a small percentage of Americans are “satisfied with the direction of the country,” a whopping 66 percent of Democrats think things are going just fine. Despite the terrible economy, 77 percent of Democrats believe it is improving and say 65 percent Obama’s handling of economic issues is “excellent or good.” Most telling is that 59 percent of Democrats “want a bigger government with more services,” 68 percent think “government should provide health care to all Americans,” and 71 percent are satisfied with the rollout of ObamaCare, calling it “average or better.” The poll also shows that 65 percent of Americans oppose a government bailout of insurance companies that lose money because of ObamaCare. [52041, 52520]

The Wall Street Journal reports, “The U.S. and its allies have held direct talks with key Islamist militias in Syria, Western officials say, aiming to undercut al Qaeda while acknowledging that religious fighters long shunned by Washington have gained on the battlefield.” [52091, 52092]

At PJMedia.com former Department of Justice attorney J. Christian Adams reports, “Despite the sequester, the Department of Homeland Security [DHS] has just completed a hiring blitz of attorneys to oversee and manage immigration litigation. Almost all of these new civil service attorney hires hail from an activist pro-amnesty and pro-asylum background. Sources within the Department of Homeland Security report that the process for hiring these new career civil service lawyers was unconventional and was conducted by an Obama political appointee within DHS. The new attorneys have activist backgrounds with a variety of pro-amnesty groups such as the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), the Advancement Project, and open borders groups funded by the Tides Foundation. ...The ideological histories of these new DHS lawyers undermine confidence that the federal government will vigorously enforce federal laws, notwithstanding any congressional ‘mandates’ to do so.” Among the new attorneys is Jennifer Lee, “an advocate for illegal aliens obtaining in-state tuition at public universities... Lee also worked at the Legal Aid Justice Center, a organization which advised illegals ‘what to do in the event of a raid.’” (Without exception, it appears from their pasts that the attorneys will be more interested in helping illegal immigrants remain in the United States than deporting them. The jobs are career positions; they will remain in place even after Obama leaves the White House.) [52141]

On *Hannity*, David Kennedy, president of the technology firm TrustedSec, says the Obama administration vastly overpaid for the programming of Healthcare.gov: “I would say to build a site like this with the infrastructure, the architecture around it, you are looking at maybe \$5 million to \$10 million at a very maximum rate. It isn’t rocket

science.” Luke Chung, president and founder of the technology firm FMS, says, “I would agree with Mr. Kennedy, [it’s] in the \$5 million-\$10 million range, max. ...[N]one of these contractors are ever held accountable for delivering such crap.” (Some estimates place the cost to the federal government at between \$350 million and \$618 million.) [52048, 52057]

On December 5 Obama delivers another speech endorsing ObamaCare, telling students at TheArc arts school in Washington, D.C., “In the three years since we passed this law, the share of Americans with insurance is up, the growth of health care costs are down to their slowest rate in 50 years. More people have insurance, and more have new benefits and protections—100 million Americans who have gained the right for free preventive care like mammograms and contraception; the more than 7 million Americans who have saved an average of \$1,200 on their prescription medicine; every American who won’t go broke when they get sick because their insurance can’t limit their care anymore.” (Arguably it is not ObamaCare that has slowed the rate of increase in health care costs. In any event, those costs will balloon in 2014 because of ObamaCare. “More people have insurance” is a claim that can hardly be made when more than five million families have had their policies canceled because of ObamaCare. It is unclear where Obama got the \$1,200 prescription savings claim.) [52053]

Perhaps not wanting to admit that legislation like the Affordable Care Act—let alone Constitutional Amendments—can be repealed, the White House ignores the 80th anniversary of the ratification of the 21st Amendment to the Constitution, which repealed the 18th Amendment (“Prohibition”). [52638]

Scranton, Pennsylvania’s TheTimes-Tribune.com reports that Congressman Lou Barletta (R-PA) “wants answers on whether volunteer firefighting companies could be unintentionally swept into the national health care reform law... The International Association of Fire Chiefs has asked the Internal Revenue Service, which has partial oversight of the law, to clarify if current IRS treatment of volunteer firefighters as employees means their hose companies or towns must offer health insurance coverage or pay a penalty if they don’t. The organization representing the fire chiefs has been working on the issue with the IRS and White House for months.” Barletta states, “It could be a huge deal. In Pennsylvania, 97 percent of fire departments are fully or mostly volunteer firefighters. It’s the fourth highest amount in the country.” At HotAir.com Steve Eggleston adds, “While the Department of Labor classifies most volunteer firefighters as volunteers and thus not employees, the IRS currently classifies them as employees. That means that, if a particular department puts in more than 1500 man-hours while using at least 50 volunteers and employees in a week, it must provide health insurance for those who put in at least 30 hours in a week starting in 2015, or sooner if a court decides to toss the administrative 1-year delay in the employer health insurance mandate. ...Many volunteer fire departments operate on shoestring budgets, and they cannot afford the extensive record-keeping required to determine whether they have to provide health insurance and to whom they have to provide health insurance, the cost of said insurance, or the \$2,000/eligible person fine if they do not provide health insurance.”

[52327, 52328]

Ronald Smith, an American teacher at an international school in Benghazi, Libya is reportedly murdered while jogging. White House press secretary Jay Carney tells reporters, “We do expect the Libyan government to investigate this. At this point, we don’t have very much information to share about who is responsible or how it happened or why. But we certainly do expect the Libyans to investigate.” (A report in VoiceofRussia.com suggests that Smith was a CIA agent, rather than a teacher, and was seen with Senator John McCain (R-AZ) in Tripoli on December 3. Regardless of whether Smith was a teacher or a CIA agent, jogging in Benghazi is not an activity a reasonable person might recommend.) [52093, 52094, 52114, 52139, 52159]

WashingtonTimes.com reports, “The number of U.S. battlefield fatalities exceeded the rate at which troop strength surged in 2009 and 2010, prompting national security analysts to assert that coinciding stricter rules of engagement led to more deaths. A connection between the sharp increase in American deaths and restrictive rules of engagement is difficult to confirm. More deaths surely stemmed from ramped-up counterterrorism raids and the Taliban’s response with more homemade bombs, the No. 1 killer of NATO forces in Afghanistan. But it is clear that the rules of engagement, which restrain troops from firing in order to spare civilian casualties, cut back on airstrikes and artillery strikes—the types of support that protect troops during raids and ambushes. ‘In Afghanistan, the [rules of engagement] that were put in place in 2009 and 2010 have created hesitation and confusion for our war fighters,’ said Wayne Simmons, a retired U.S. intelligence officer who worked in NATO headquarters in Kabul as the rules took effect, first under Army Gen. Stanley M. McChrystal, then Army Gen. David H. Petraeus. ‘It is no accident nor a coincidence that from January 2009 to August of 2010, coinciding with the Obama/McChrystal radical change of the [rules of engagement], casualties more than doubled,’ Mr. Simmons said. ‘The carnage will certainly continue as the already fragile and ineffective [rules] have been further weakened by the Obama administration as if they were playground rules.’” [52491, 52492]

Nelson Mandela, the communist (author of *How To Be A Good Communist*), anti-apartheid former president of South Africa who served 27 years in prison after being convicted of 23 acts of sabotage, conspiracy, and leading a terrorist bombing campaign against government facilities, movie theaters, and shopping centers, dies at age 95. (There are reports that Mandela had been kept on life support since June 26.) Mandela, a fan of Yasser Arafat, Moammar Gaddafi, Chairman Mao, Che Guevara, and Fidel Castro, refused several offers to be released from prison because they required that he denounce violence. He and his first wife Winnie were involved in the African National Congress (ANC), which was closely aligned with the Soviet Union and the Palestine Liberation Organization and which engaged in the practice of “necklacing”—which involved placing a gasoline-filled tire around a victim’s neck or waist and setting it on fire. Mandela, in fact, founded the militant wing of the ANC—the “Unkhtonto we Sizwe” (“Spear of the Nation”). As president of South Africa, Mandela appointed Yossel Mashel Slovo his secretary of housing. Slovo was also an ANC leader and, according to

AmericanFreePress.net, “had been the planner of many of the ANC terrorist attacks, including the January 8, 1982 attack on the Koeberg nuclear power plant near Cape Town, the Church Street bombing on May 20, 1983, which killed 19 people, and the June 14, 1986 car bombing of Magoo’s Bar in Durban, in which three people were killed and 73 injured.” [14208, 14209, 14240, 14288, 14296, 33082, 33755, 52042, 52043, 52058, 52059, 52085, 52087, 52097, 52109, 52110, 52134, 52135, 52136, 52137, 52138, 52148, 52149, 52174, 52190, 52193, 52194, 52195, 52244, 52265, 52375, 52410, 52685, 52967]

Obama delivers brief remarks praising Mandela as an inspiration to him. (Considering that Mandela was 95 years old and his death was expected, it is unclear why Obama’s words were not more inspiring or profound. Among Obama’s poorly worded sentences: “We will not likely see the likes of Nelson Mandela again.” He also says that Mandela “Bent the arc of the moral universe toward justice,” repeating yet again the “arc of the moral universe” line which he lifted from Martin Luther King, Jr., who himself lifted it from 19th century Unitarian minister Theodore Parker.) Predictably, Obama’s words are almost as much about Obama as they are about Mandela: he mentions Mandela eight times and himself 14 times, and brags, “My very first political action, the first thing I ever did that involved an issue or a policy or politics, was a protest against apartheid.” Obama does not repeat these Mandela statements: “Che Guevara is an inspiration for every human being who loves freedom.” “The cause of Communism is the greatest cause in the history of mankind!” “There’s one place where [Fidel Castro’s] Cuba stands out head and shoulders above the rest—that is in its love for human rights and liberty!” (It is worth noting that Obama and his wife, who did not attend the funeral of former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, will attend Mandela’s funeral. Thatcher was not a revolutionary communist, of course. Czech Prime Minister Jiri Rusnok, informed that he may have to attend in place of a President Milos Zeman because of a recent knee injury, is overheard telling Defense Minister Vlastimil Picek, “I’m dreading that I will have to go.”) [14208, 14209, 14240, 14288, 14296, 33082, 33755, 52042, 52043, 52058, 52059, 52085, 52087, 52097, 52109, 52110, 52134, 52135, 52136, 52137, 52138, 52148, 52149, 52151, 52174, 52190, 52193, 52194, 52195, 52244, 52265, 52375, 52410, 52685, 52967]

The White House pays tribute to Mandela by tweeting a photo of... Obama (and Obama’s rehashed quote about bending “the arc of the moral universe”). [52077, 52108, 52140]

NARAL, the National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League, sends a Twitter message: “It is with great sadness that we mourn the loss of a true freedom fighter. RIP Nelson Mandela.” It is immediately followed by another message: “Among his many accomplishments, Nelson Mandela replaced one of the most restrictive anti-choice laws in South Africa.” (In 1996 Mandela signed abortion-on-demand law legislation.) [52223, 52224, 52225]

Many politicians and most in the mainstream media neglect to point out that Mandela was a communist, and spread the lie that he “ended Apartheid in South Africa. At LewRockwell.com Eric Margolis explains the reality: “A combination of fierce pressure

and much violence from the African National Congress and Communist Party, foreign economic and military sanctions, and the fear of invasion by Cuban and East Bloc troops from Angola finally did in the white regime. ...During the 1980's, Mandela was both number two at the African National Congress and a senior leader of its ally, the Communist Party. Mandela also headed up the Umkhonto we Sizwe or Spear of the Nation, the violent fighting arm of the ANC. He was a hereditary prince of the Xhosa people. In those days, the US and Britain branded Mandela and the ANC as 'terrorists.' White civilians were killed, restaurants and bars bombed. I joined a special South African unit up on the Limpopo River trying to protect isolated, elderly white farmers from being murdered by gangs of ANC gunmen. In fact, most of the ANC's white victims were civilians. Hundreds of blacks accused of collaboration with the government were 'necklaced' (burned to death by having gasoline-filled tires put around their necks). It was your typically brutal, dirty revolutionary war, the kind I'd covered in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Amazingly, Mandela remained on the notorious US terrorist black list until 2008. ...Remember others who brought peace to South Africa: the last white leader, F.W. deKlerk, a man of wisdom who read the writing on the wall. Zulu Chief Mangusutu Buthelezi who, with Mandela, prevented a Zulu-Xhosa conflict, and Foreign Minister Pik Botha. Their combined efforts resulted in a smooth transition to majority rule and allowed the whites to retreat with honor. Most revolutions rarely produce happy outcomes. The ANC became all-powerful, a one-party government riddled with corruption and malfeasance. Crime has run rampant in post apartheid South Africa. ...Compared to today's world leaders, Mandela does look like a saint. He was wise enough to serve only one term before failing health and grubby politics tarnished his renown. His memory will shine on." [52568]

In an interview with KSNV-TV's Jeff Gillan, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) says, "Remember what [Obama] said. 'If you like your insurance, you can keep it.' There is nobody in America has the same insurance that they had when he said this. So he's been—we've had three different years. The policies were only for one year. ...[So] What [Obama] said was true. If you want to keep the insurance you have, you can keep it. The problem is, we did not put the bill into effect that way." (Townhall.com political editor Guy Benson writes, "I'm speechless. The promise Obama made was true, *except for the fact that the law he signed didn't allow it to be kept*. Incredible. Reid's bigger point—and I use the term loosely—is that because insurance plans are renewed on an annual basis, nobody in America technically gets to keep their plan from year to year, or something.") [52044, 52146]

At a fundraiser for prostate cancer research and treatment, former Secretary of State Colin Powell—proving that his Republican label is either meaningless or a decades-long joke—touts a national health care system. Powell says, "I am not an expert in health care, or ObamaCare, or the Affordable Care Act, or however you choose to describe it, but I do know this: I have benefited from that kind of universal health care in my 55 years of public life. And I don't see why we can't do what Europe is doing, what Canada is doing, what Korea is doing, what all these other places are doing." [52232, 52233, 52234]

DailyCaller.com reports that Obama's "overall job approval rating has declined since last December, but Hispanics' approval for [Obama] plummeted more than any other group or major subgroup, according to a new Gallup survey. [Obama's] job approval averaged 41 percent last month, down 12 percentage points from his 53 percent approval last December. During that same time period, support for Obama among Hispanics dropped 23 percentage points—from 75 percent to 52 percent in November, Gallup reported..." [52050, 52122]

Obama attends an MSNBC-hosted ObamaCare event at American University in Washington, D.C., with questions from *Hardball* host Chris "tingle up my leg" Matthews. Obama finds a new entity to blame for the ObamaCare fiasco, telling Matthews, "The challenge, I think, that we have going forward is not so much my personal management style or particular issues around White House organization. It actually has to do with what I referred to earlier which is we had these big agencies, some of which are outdated. Some of which are not designed properly." (Guy Benson writes at Townhall.com, "Point one: Hey, don't blame me. Point two: So, it turns out that the federal bureaucracy is actually pretty unwieldy and outmoded. The self-serving blame shift bit is classic Obama. Nothing's ever his fault—hell, he often claims that he rarely even hears about bad news until it's plastered all over the media. But in his rush to stiff-arm the consequences for his own self-created, credibility-sapping mess, he (likely inadvertently) undermines the Left's entire worldview. They believe that big government can do big things well for the little people, and therefore more government is the path to better outcomes. That's the core of their governing philosophy. This acknowledgement by Obama transforms 'Yes We Can!' into 'well, maybe we can't—but it's not my fault.'") To accommodate the interview, two dress rehearsals for *The Nutcracker* were canceled—leaving dozens of child ballerinas disappointed. FoxNews.com reports, "Melissa Carney, the ballet company's artistic director told The Washington Post they had signed a contract to rent the theatre in January. They were told they were being shoved out so Matthews could interview Obama on Tuesday. 'They did not ask,' she told the Post. 'They told us.'" [52069, 52079, 52088, 52107, 52117, 52121, 52161, 52164]

Matthews asks Obama why Americans are skeptical of government, and Obama whines, "When we do things right, they don't get a lot of attention. That's not, that's not something that's reported about." ("The media does not do a good enough job of reporting my greatness.") "If, on the other hand, you've got an office in Cincinnati, in the IRS office that—I think, for bureaucratic reasons, is trying to streamline what is a difficult law to interpret about whether a nonprofit is actually a political organization, deserves a tax exempt agency. And they've got a list, and suddenly everybody's outraged." (Obama is again blaming IRS employees in Cincinnati for the agency's targeting of conservative groups, even though it has been clearly demonstrated that orders to discriminate against those groups came from Washington, D.C. The discrimination was not the result of "streamlining" anything; it was the result of a conscious effort to harm Tea Party groups by denying them the tax exempt status necessary to raise funds.) Obama adds, "And by the way, Chris, I'll point out that there are some so-called progressives and, you know, perceived to be liberal commentators who during that week were just as outraged at the possibility that these folks, you know, had, had been, you

know, at the direction of the Democratic Party, in some way discriminated against these folks.” (In other words, “I didn’t do anything wrong, and how dare leftist journalists suggest that I did!”) [52111, 52133]

Among Matthews’ “tough” questions: “What can we do to stop the GOP, the Republicans, from rigging the states, rigging the votes, state by state, to disenfranchise voters and destroy our democracy? Thirty-six states right now led by Republican legislatures have been trying to make it difficult for minority people to vote, especially in big cities and older people. Everybody knows the game. What’s your reaction?” Obama responds, “Right. You saw the lines that we had not only in ’08, but then in ’12... and I said on election night, that’s not acceptable in a democracy that has been around as long as ours and that the world looks to. ... You can’t say you take pride in American democracy, in American constitutionalism, American exceptionalism and then you’re doing everything you can to make it harder for people to vote, as opposed to easier for people to vote. So, I think there’s some commonsense things that we can do...” [52118, 52131]

Blogger Ace of Spade later comments, “Watching Chris Matthews interview Obama, I was struck by just how uninterested in policy questions Matthews (and his panel) were, and how almost every question seemed to be, at heart, about Obama’s emotional response to difficulties—not about policy itself, but about Obama’s Hero’s Journey in navigating the plot of ...Barack Obama: The Movie. As with a MacGuffin in the movie, only the Hero’s emotional response to the MacGuffin matters. Again and again, Matthews and his panel focused not on weighty questions of state, but on what toll these important-sounding MacGuffins took upon the Star of the Picture, Barack Obama. Matthews was not terribly interested in hearing about the problems with Obamacare, or how Obama planned to address them. But he was very interested in learning how Obama was coping with the challenges. Matthews didn’t care all that much about disputes over the budget. But he was keenly interested in Obama’s thoughts on his opponents in such struggles. Chris Matthews called Obama’s last answer the most important in the interview, and his entire panel agreed it was simply amazing.” [52230]

“That last question was about Obama’s—the Hero’s—travails. Wrapping up the interview, Matthews ended the night with a question about whether going into politics is really worth it, especially considering that the great majority of students in the audience expressed interest in some day joining the congressional ranks. ‘It continues to be a way to serve that I think can be noble. It’s hard [sic; difficult]. It can be frustrating. You have got to have a thick skin,’ Obama said. ‘But I tell you, the satisfaction you get when you’ve passed a law or you’ve taken an executive action and somebody comes up to you and says you know what, my kid’s alive because you passed that health care bill. Because he was uninsured, he got insurance, got a check up and we caught a tumor in time... So for those young people who don’t mind a little gray hair, it’s something that I not only recommend, but I’d welcome.’ Matthews’ panel gushed over Obama’s answer here. And why shouldn’t they? Usually the Hero offers a self-reflective but somewhat grim speech as he sits in the belly of the beast, at his lowest point in his journey. It’s this speech that

lets the audience know the Hero may be down, but he's not yet out." [52230]

DailyCaller.com reports, "German scientists found that two naturally occurring cycles will combine to lower global temperatures during the 21st century, eventually dropping to levels corresponding with the 'little ice age' of 1870. 'Due to the de Vries cycle, the global temperature will drop until 2100 to a value corresponding to the 'little ice age' of 1870,' write German scientists Horst-Joachim Luedecke and Carl-Otto Weiss of the European Institute for Climate and Energy. Researchers used historical temperature data and data from cave stalagmites to show a 200-year solar cycle, called the de Vries cycle. They also factored into their work a well-established 65-year Atlantic and Pacific Ocean oscillation cycle. Global warming that has occurred since 1870 can be attributed almost entirely to both these factors, the scientists argue. According to the scientists, the oft-cited 'stagnation' in rising global temperatures over the last 15 years is due to the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean oscillation cycle, which lasts about 65 years. Ocean oscillation is past its 'maximum,' leading to small decreases in global temperature." (The report is unlikely to persuade Obama to drop his regulatory attacks on carbon dioxide emitters. In fact, the administration has ordered that all federal agencies rely on "green" energy by at least 20 percent by the year 2020.) Additionally, a chain of active volcanoes has been discovered under the West Antarctic ice sheet, and a Swedish study "found that the planet was warmer in ancient Roman times and the Middle Ages than today, challenging the mainstream idea that man-made greenhouse gas emissions are the main drivers of global warming." (Additionally, 2013 has been one of the 10 coldest years in U.S. history.) [52071, 52076, 52115, 52171, 52172, 52521, 52678, 52806]

At NationalReview.com John Fund reports that "fifty thousand people signed up online for New Jersey's gambling sites in the first week [after Internet gambling was legalized]. That compares with 741 who signed up for Obamacare during all of October." [52073]

FreeBeacon.com reports, "As the Obama administration works to finalize the details on an interim deal aimed at freezing Iran's nuclear program, former top U.S. officials and lawmakers say that the White House has squandered all its leverage, leaving Iran in the driver's seat. After announcing that Iran and Western nations known as the P5+1 had reached an interim accord two weeks ago in Geneva, the White House admitted last week that the deal still needed to be finalized at a later date. This admission was followed by the revelation that the Obama administration is now 'prepared' to let Iran keep its contested uranium enrichment program under a final deal that has yet to even be negotiated with Tehran. The diplomatic back-and-forth and willingness to make concession to Iran before it begins a six-month freeze of its nuclear program has lawmakers and top former U.S. officials concerned that Tehran has conned the West." Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations John Bolton says, "I don't think they [the White House] had much leverage to start with, and they've got less now. The perception of weakness they see will cause them to go forward. In fact, my view is that Iran isn't going to stall or slow down [its nuclear program]. Now, if I were Iran, I would press ahead and give more superficial concessions to get more sanctions relief." [52075]

Congressman Tom Price (R-GA)—who is also a physician—announces a bill called the Empowering Patients First Act of 2013 which would replace ObamaCare and, he claims, save \$2.34 trillion over 10 years. The savings estimate comes from former Congressional Budget Office director Douglas Holtz-Eakin. The bill would provide a tax credit for health insurance premiums; tax deductions for health insurance premiums; federal grants for state high-risk pools; individual and small employer membership associations for group insurance purposes; interstate insurance markets; lawsuit abuse reforms; and patient freedom of choice. [52080, 52081, 52219]

Rush Limbaugh, noting the Harvard study that shows Obama losing support among young people, says, “They’re discovering here that, all of a sudden, rather than being the recipients of federal largesse, they are going to be the source [via ObamaCare], and they said, ‘Whoa!’ A, they don’t have jobs. So I guarantee you, as the Regime looks at these polling numbers, the minimum wage... is not about actually increasing anybody’s income, because it doesn’t do that. That’s not what it’s for. Even the Regime knows this. This is just a political wedge. Nobody gets rich on the minimum wage. Nobody’s gonna be able to afford more. No matter raise it a buck or two or 10, it isn’t gonna matter. The Millennials are not nearly as dumb, nor are they as slavishly devoted as Obama thought. So I get what Obama and his people are doing. They see these polling numbers. ‘We’re losing the Millennials. Okay, [it’s] time to buy them back.’ That’s what they’re talking about right now. ‘What can we give them? What can we buy them back with?’ Let’s make a note. What is this, December 5th? Mark it down, somebody... ‘December 5th, 2013: El Rushbo predicting that one of the ways Obama will try to buy the Millennials back to get his poll numbers up, is to forgive student loans.’ It’s just sitting out there on a silver platter, just waiting for Obama to do it. It’s the Chicago way! If they don’t succeed in getting rid of you with a gun or a knife, they’ll forgive your student loan and they’ll buy you back. That’s what’s on tap, my friends.” [52084]

WashingtonTimes.com reports that Obama’s “repeated use of presidential powers is causing a tough problem—his own supporters now expect him to use it to achieve everything they want. From immigration to the minimum wage, congressional Democrats and liberal activists this week urged Mr. Obama to declare an end run around Capitol Hill, assert executive authority and make as much progress as he can on the expansive agenda he laid out for his second term. A day after Mr. Obama denounced income inequality, progressive lawmakers said he should take the lead by issuing an executive order requiring all federal contractors to pay workers more than the minimum wage. A dozen lawmakers and immigration activists held a news conference outside the Capitol on Thursday asking him to halt all deportations as a down payment on an eventual immigration bill. ‘To not use his executive authority is not just unstrategic [sic]; it is cruel,’ said Tania Unzueta, a strategist with the National Day Laborer Organizing Network.” (By routinely abusing his powers, Obama has raised the expectations of his far left supporters, who not only want him to flaunt the laws even more, they would probably be happy to see him declare himself dictator for life and impose a combination of socialism and fascism on the United States. Arguably, Obama’s actions may harm Hillary Clinton in the 2016 presidential race because the “progressives” will push her as far to the left as they can—perhaps with primary challenges from socialist Senators Bernie

Sanders (I-VT) and Elizabeth Warren (D-MA). The more Clinton is pushed to the political left, the more difficult it will be for her to win the general election—especially if the voters decide they have had enough “income redistribution” schemes.) [52096]

At WND.com Aaron Klein reports, “Saudi Arabia is proposing a sweeping deal to Russia that solidifies Moscow’s position in the Middle East and Persian Gulf largely at the expense of the United States, according to informed Egyptian security officials. The deal incorporates increased Russian involvement in Egypt, Syria and the Persian Gulf, and even involves a Saudi guarantee to aid against terror plots targeting the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. The Egyptian officials said the deal seeks to replace the U.S. with Russia as the major weapons dealer to Egypt. However, the weapons sales to Cairo are only the tip of the potential re-balancing iceberg that follows a major fallout with the Saudis after ...Obama’s outreach efforts to Iran.” (Even the suggestion of a possible deal means that the Saudis no longer trust Obama. Having seen what he did to undermine U.S. ally Hosni Mubarak in Egypt to facilitate a takeover by the Muslim Brotherhood, the Saudis have no reason to believe Obama will not his back on other allies.) [52143, 52203]

Meanwhile, at WashingtonPost.com, Charles Krauthammer comments on “the collapse of confidence of U.S. allies as America romances Iran. The Gulf Arabs are stunned at their double abandonment. In the nuclear negotiations with Iran, the U.S. has overthrown seven years of Security Council resolutions prohibiting uranium enrichment and effectively recognized Iran as a threshold nuclear state. This follows our near-abandonment of the Syrian revolution and de facto recognition of both the Assad regime and Iran’s ‘Shiite Crescent’ of client states stretching to the Mediterranean. Equally dumbfounded are the Israelis, now trapped by an agreement designed less to stop the Iranian nuclear program than to prevent the Israeli Air Force from stopping the Iranian nuclear program. Neither Arab nor Israeli can quite fathom Obama’s naivete in imagining some strategic condominium with a regime that defines its very purpose as overthrowing American power and expelling it from the region. Better diplomacy than war, say Obama’s apologists, an adolescent response implying that all diplomacy is the same, as if a diplomacy of capitulation is no different from a diplomacy of pressure. ...No one’s asking for a JFK-like commitment to ‘bear any burden’ to ‘assure the ...success of liberty.’ Or a Reaganesque tearing down of walls. Or even a Clintonian assertion of America as the indispensable nation. America’s allies are seeking simply a reconsideration of the policy of retreat that marks this administration’s response to red-line challenges all over the world—and leaves them naked.” [52144]

At WashingtonExaminer.com Byron York writes, “One striking thing about the new White House Obamacare promotion campaign is that so far it hasn’t had much to say about the central focus of Obamacare, which is helping Americans buy affordable health insurance. Look at the cases ...Obama has highlighted. There are young people who say they have benefited from being allowed to stay on their parents’ health policies until age 26. There are people suffering from serious illnesses who say they are thankful there will no longer be lifetime caps on insurance benefits. There are stories of people with pre-

existing conditions who will be able to purchase coverage. ...What is indisputable is that the aspects of Obamacare the White House cites most often in its promotional campaign—the pre-existing conditions policy, or the estimated 3.4 million young Americans who can stay on their parents’ coverage until age 26—involve numbers that are far smaller than the tens of millions of people who will likely face steeper costs, nearly unpayable deductibles and sharply limited doctor choices under Obamacare. ...And that is why the White House sales campaign focuses on the same things Democrats said in 2009, and 2010, and 2011, and 2012. Back then, the burdens of Obamacare had not yet become a reality for most Americans. Now they have, and the administration does not have a good answer for the millions who will struggle under the new system. No wonder [Obama] is talking about something else.” (No one expects Obama to go back to claiming that the Affordable Care Act will save the average family \$2,500 per year in premiums—because the word “Affordable” in the title of the legislation was only a sales pitch, not a guarantee.) [52101, 52102]

According to TheHill.com, “White House chief of staff Denis McDonough held an unpublicized meeting with Sen[ator] Michael Bennet [D-CO], chairman of the Senate Democrats’ campaign arm, amid anger and anxiety that ObamaCare’s botched rollout could cost the party its majority next year. In the meeting, requested by the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee (DSCC), McDonough and Bennet discussed what the White House could do to help vulnerable Senate Democrats and ‘talked about developing a stronger relationship with the White House,’ according to one senior Democratic aide familiar with the conversation. Democratic senators fear the White House is not sympathetic enough to their plight. After the government shutdown, they were confident they would retain the Senate, but optimism vanished as problems with the healthcare law mounted. ‘I know these guys are nervous as hell,’ said a second senior Democratic aide. ‘I mean, all of their jobs are on the line because this is the thing making the biggest waves lately. It’s a nightmare.’ ...Anger among Democrats over the rollout of ObamaCare is deep. [A] third aide, who works for a senator up for reelection in 2014, said the White House had ‘s--t the bed.’ Now, the staffer said, [Obama’s] sinking approval ratings are an additional problem. ‘Everyone recognizes that our electoral process is tied to [Obama’s] standings,’ the aide said. ‘I think it’s in everyone’s best interest to get the [Healthcare.gov web] site working again.’” (Merely fixing Healthcare.gov will not solve the problems facing Senate Democrats up for reelection in 2014. Obama will not lift a finger to help them if it means even a partial dismantling of ObamaCare. He would rather lose the Senate to the Republicans and keep the bureaucratic wheels rolling toward a single payer health care system than give up his socialist dream of controlling the citizenry.) [52105, 52106]

FoxBusiness.com reports, “California residents who have signed up for health insurance on the state’s exchange to make sure they are covered on Jan. 1 could still find themselves uninsured in the new year by no fault of their own. As many as 35,000 of the health insurance applications faxed in to Covered California, the state’s insurance exchange, have yet to be fully entered into the system, according to Sam Smith, president of the California Association of Health Underwriters, and the clock is ticking. In order to be covered by Jan. 1, Smith says California applications need to be fully processed by

Dec. 23 and premium checks need to be postmarked by Dec. 31. ... ‘These people who think they were covered may be in for a holiday surprise,’ says Smith. He says Covered California had been instructing brokers and agents to fax in applications from the first day the exchange opened on Oct. 1 because the website was not yet fully functional. If insurance companies haven’t received the applications, they can’t process them and fully enroll the individuals. And with so little time left, Smith is skeptical that verification and payment for premiums can be fully completed by the deadline.” [52142, 52275]

At NationalJournal.com James Oliphant reports, “The young Americans the Obama administration so desperately needs to help make the Affordable Care Act function are the ones most likely to believe the law is endangered, suggesting that sustained House Republican efforts to repeal and undermine the law are bearing some fruit. More than half of 18-to-29-year-olds who were surveyed in the most recent United Technologies/National Journal Congressional Connection Poll say it is likely the law will be repealed in 2014, even though the chances of that actually occurring are remote. According to the poll, 18 percent of respondents in this age group said it was ‘very likely’ Obamacare would be repealed by Congress next year, while 33 percent said it was ‘somewhat likely’ the law would be done away with. ... That has real-world implications. The administration has relentlessly wooed these so-called young invincibles—young, healthy Americans—to sign up to purchase health insurance through online exchanges. Those consumers, who tend to use health care services less frequently, are needed to subsidize the cost of treating older, sicker ones. Without their participation in large numbers (the target for next year is 40 percent of all new enrollees), premium rates for consumers in the exchanges could rise.” (Obama would, of course, veto any legislation repealing ObamaCare. But the fact that so many young people expect it will be repealed suggests they will not be eager to enroll in the scheme.) 52168, 52169]

On Democracy Now!, leftist journalist Jeremy Scahill says, “You have, on the one hand, ... Obama saying that his administration is going to be the most transparent in history and that they want to be friends with the press. And on the other hand, they are monitoring the metadata of journalists, they are seizing phone records, they are trying to compel journalists to testify against their sources, they are trying to figure out who journalists are talking to within government so that they can go and indict those people. Our profession, our trade is the only one specifically cited in the Constitution for a reason. When all three branches of the government are colluding against the interests of the people, it’s the responsibility of journalists to hold them accountable. But this White House, like Bush’s before, they seem to want only state media. They want everything to look like MSNBC, and that’s not real journalism.” [52113, 52160]

Jay Leno quips, “Plans are being discussed for a new reality show based on the White House. It’s called *Lame Duck Dynasty*.” [52132]

On December 6 Michelle Malkin reports at Townhall.com, “The Affordable Care Act created a 90-day grace period before insurers can drop patients who fall behind on premiums. So, delinquents who obtain tax-subsidized health insurance through an

Obamacare health insurance exchange have three months to settle up their bills prior to their policy being canceled. As written, the law puts insurers on the hook for the grace period. But the bureaucrats at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services decided to issue a rule in March making insurers responsible only for paying claims during the first 30 days of the debtors' grace period. Who's on the hook for the other two months? Well, customers are entrusted to foot the bills for additional services. But if they blow off the payments, it's up to physicians and hospitals to collect. In real-world practice, this means providers will be eating untold costs. Several large hospital associations raised red flags over the issue this summer. In August, the Missouri Hospital Association [MHA] noted that the regulatory shift 'unduly burdens physicians, hospitals and other health care providers' by making them directly collect payments from patients, which 'puts them at an unfair and significant risk for providing uncompensated care to patients.'" (The rule gives physicians and hospitals an incentive *not* to treat patients who have taxpayer-subsidized ObamaCare coverage. If a patient racks up \$100,000 in health care costs and fails to pay his insurance premiums, the hospitals and doctors could be stuck with the entire \$100,000 debt. That, in turn, will result in even higher health care costs, with providers forced to raise prices to offset the cost of deadbeats.) [52098, 52534]

"Emillie J DiChristina of Practicefirst Medical Management Solutions spelled out the financial risks for clients on the company's blog: 'This leaves providers in a potentially bad place as they have a high potential for accruing bad debt on services provided between 31 and 90 days of the allowed grace period.' Can you spell f-r-a-u-d? People could 'go on and off' insurance plans, Tampa Bay health care lawyer Bruce Lamb told me, and game the system by bailing on payments and exploiting Obamacare protections against denial of coverage.' Or as MHA officials put it: 'We also are very concerned that some disreputable individuals will learn they can manipulate the system and win a full year's insurance coverage on only nine months of premiums. Knowing they are entitled to three months of grace period coverage, dishonest persons could stop paying premiums on the ninth month, enjoy free coverage during the 90-day grace period, have their coverage terminated, and then re-enter the exchange market where the Affordable Care Act's guaranteed issue mandate would prohibit another plan from denying them coverage.'" [52098]

Coral Andrews, the executive director of the ObamaCare exchange in Hawaii, resigns. (FoxNews.com notes that in the first month, only 257 Hawaiians signed up for ObamaCare. "Hawaii's website contract was awarded to the same firm, CGI, that blew the national Healthcare.gov roll out. CGI won the Hawaii contract even after the state senate president warned the state exchange director not to hire the firm. CGI apparently also had botched Hawaii's tax website, costing Hawaiians \$50 million to fix.") [52939]

FoxNews.com reports, "The Obama administration is moving toward finalizing a rule that would give alternative energy farms a pass for killing bald and golden eagles for decades, just weeks after it took legal action for the first time against a company for doing so. The rule by the Interior Department extends the length of the permits that allow farms to unintentionally kill the eagles without penalty from five to 30 years, according

to department records.” (For the average “non-green” American, killing an eagle comes with a \$250,000 fine and a two-year prison sentence.) From Obama’s perspective, protecting wildlife is sufficient justification for blocking the Keystone XL pipeline, but protecting the nation’s national symbol takes a back seat to the green job lobby. [52099, 52100]

The Bureau of Labor statistics reports that nonfarm payroll employment rose by 203,000 in November. About 41 percent of the jobs are with federal, state, and local governments. The unemployment rate falls to 7.0 percent—mostly because more Americans have given up looking for work and are no longer counted in the unemployment calculations. The unemployment rate is 20.8 percent for those aged 16 to 19. More than 90 million Americans age 16 or older are *not* in the labor force. The number was about 80.5 million when Obama took office in 2009. (As explained previously in this *Timeline*, the “official” unemployment rate is made to appear lower than it really is by *not counting people who stopped looking for work*. If 92 of 100 people are working, the unemployment rate is 8 percent, or 8 divided by 100. But if 3 people cannot find work, exhaust their unemployment benefits, and stop looking for work entirely, they are no longer counted as part of the workforce. They *disappear* from the calculations, leaving 92 out of 97 working—and an unemployment rate of only 5.15 percent, or 5 divided by 97. The “real” unemployment rate would be at least 10 percent if the government still counted those who have “left the workforce.” Arguably, the percentage would be even higher if welfare recipients were counted as unemployed—which they are.) [52103, 52104, 52120, 52129, 52130, 52163, 52165]

According to DailyCaller.com, the AARP and the leftist Herndon Alliance “participated in weekly conference calls during the run-up to the passage of Obamacare” and were involved in the development of the administration’s “you can keep your plan and your doctor” messaging. (AARP benefits from ObamaCare by selling Medicare supplemental policies to senior citizens who, because of ObamaCare, will lose their Medicare Advantage plans. DailyCaller.com notes, “AARP saved \$1.8 billion by successfully pushing to keep Medigap reform out of the final draft of Obamacare.”) [52112]

New York City officials begin a gun confiscation program, sending letters that read, “It appears you are in possession of a rifle and/or Shotgun (listed below) that has an ammunition feeding device capable of holding more than five (5) rounds of ammunition. Rifles and shotguns capable of holding more than five (5) rounds of ammunition are unlawful to possess in New York City, as per NYC Administrative Code 10-306 (b). You have the following options. 1. Immediately surrender your Rifle and/or Shotgun to your local police precinct, and notify this office of the invoice number. The firearm may be sold or permanently removed from the City of New York thereafter. 2. Permanently remove your Rifle and/or Shotgun from New York City and provide the following... Disposition Report/Registration Certificate... Notarized statement of permanent removal... Utility bill or other proof of residency regarding the address where the firearm will be stored outside the City of New York. 3. You may call to discuss the matter if you believe your firearm is in compliance...” [52116]

Congressman Steve Stockman (R-TX) gives every member of the House of Representatives a copy of the book, *Impeachable Offenses: The case for removing Barack Obama from office* by Aaron Klein and Brenda J. Elliott. [52124]

A Competitive Enterprise Institute (CEI) study estimates that existing and upcoming government regulations will cost the economy as much as \$1.8 trillion per year. [52128]

DailyCaller.com reports, “The Obama administration is painting a much rosier picture of American jobs than the data supports, two researchers claim. They have been touting their recent study showing that nearly every state has seen its private sector shrink under the Obama administration. ‘Our findings show that for many states, the impact of the recession and slow recovery on the private sector has been more severe than the official economic data indicates,’ Keith Hall, a senior fellow at the free-market Mercatus Center, told The Daily Caller News Foundation. Hall and fellow researcher Robert Greene found that 41 states saw their private sectors shrink from 2007 to 2012. Alabama, Arizona, Florida, Idaho and Nevada have seen the largest contractions in their respective private sectors—in 2012, Nevada’s has shrunk 13 percent below 2007 levels. However, only three states have seen their private sectors grow more than two percent since 2007. North Dakota saw its private sector explode nearly 25 percent in five years largely due to a boom in oil production brought about by hydraulic fracturing. Alaska also saw its private sector grow by nearly 7 percent. Texas, which is often touted as one of the best states for business, saw its private sector grow nearly 6 percent from 2007 to 2012.” [52145]

Rebecca Pearce, the \$175,000-per-year executive director of Maryland’s ObamaCare exchange, resigns (or is forced to resign). FoxNews.com reports that “a source told The Washington Post [her departure] was related to leadership changes made by Gov. Martin O’Malley, a strong political ally of Obama and a potential 2016 Democratic presidential candidate. Maryland is one of 14 states running its own exchange and has struggled with the same kind of technical problems that have plagued the federal site that the 36 other states use to sign up Americans for insurance under Obama’s signature health care reform law. ...[T]he site, MarylandHealthConnection.gov, crashed soon after the October rollout and has sputtered along over roughly the past nine weeks, enrolling just 3,000 residents. However, state officials indicated earlier Friday that the site has shown some improvement, signing up roughly 700 more people in the week ending Nov. 30.” (Despite the problems with the Maryland exchange web site, Pearce vacationed in the Cayman Islands the week of Thanksgiving—and made sure she could not be reached by telephone or email. On September 26, 2013 Obama addressed a crowd in Largo, Maryland, saying, “Like any law, like any big product launch, there are going to be some glitches as this thing unfolds. Folks in different parts of the country will have different experiences. It’s going to be smoother in places like Maryland where governors are working to implement it rather than fight it.” At HotAir.com Mary Katherine Ham quips, “This will all be fun when Gov. Martin O’Malley and Hillary Clinton are arguing over who had least to do with Obamacare.”) [52176, 52205, 52386, 52387, 52665]

At the National Christmas Tree lighting ceremony, Obama says, “For 91 years, the National Christmas Tree has stood as a beacon of light and a promise during the holiday

season. During times of peace and prosperity, challenge and change, Americans have gathered around our national tree to kick off the holiday season and give thanks for everything that makes this time of year so magical—spending time with friends and family, and spreading tidings of peace and goodwill here at home and around the world. And this year, we give a special measure of gratitude for Nelson Mandela, a man who championed that generosity of spirit. In his life, he blessed us with tremendous grace and unbelievable courage. And we are all privileged to live in a world touched by his goodness. Each Christmas, we celebrate the birth of a child who came into the world with only a stable’s roof to shelter him. But through a life of humility and the ultimate sacrifice, a life guided by faith and kindness towards others, Christ assumed a mighty voice, teaching us lessons of compassion and charity that have lasted more than two millennia. He ministered to the poor. He embraced the outcast. He healed the sick. And in him we see a living example of scripture that we ought to love others not only through our words, but also through our deeds. It’s a message both timeless and universal—no matter what God you pray to, or if you pray to none at all—we all have a responsibility to ourselves and to each other to make a difference that is real and lasting. We are our brother’s keeper. We are our sister’s keeper. And so in this season of generosity, let’s reach out to those who need help the most. In this season of reflection, let’s make sure that our incredibly brave service members and their families know how much we appreciate their sacrifice. And there are several military families and servicemen and women here tonight. We are so grateful to you for all that you do. In this season of hope, let us come together as one people, one family to ensure that we’re doing everything we can to keep America the land of endless opportunity and boundless optimism for which we’re so thankful. So on behalf of Malia, Sasha, [mother-in-law] Marian, ...Michelle, plus [dogs] Bo and Sunny, I want to wish everybody a Merry Christmas and a joyful holiday season. God bless you. God bless our troops. God bless the United States of America.” (Some might argue that recognizing the communist, former terrorist Mandela in a Christmas message is inappropriate. Additionally, Obama once again misinterprets the “brother’s keeper” passage from the Old Testament.) [52152, 52153, 52154, 52155, 52156, 52940]

The White House notes the lighting of the National Christmas Tree by tweeting a picture, not of the tree, but of the Obama family. (At the White House Christmas party, the Obamas serve cookies shaped like their two dogs. At HouseofSunny.TV, Sunny Lohmann jokes, “If Obama was from this country he’d know we don’t eat dogs here. ...Obama said that he ate them with some fava beans and a nice Chianti.” In previous years, the Christmas tree in the White House Blue Room was decorated with ornaments featuring Chairman Mao, Obama’s head on Mount Rushmore, and a transvestite. Cookies shaped like acorns were also served—apparently to honor the community activist group ACORN.) [1093, 1094, 1591, 2178, 2179, 6095, 6107, 6135, 7031, 7053, 7407, 7408, 7410, 7419, 7450, 52548]

WashingtonExaminer.com reports, “An estimated seven out of every 10 physicians in deep-blue California are rebelling against the state’s Obamacare health insurance exchange and won’t participate, the head of the state’s largest medical association said. ‘It doesn’t surprise me that there’s a high rate of nonparticipation,’ said Dr. Richard Thorp,

president of the California Medical Association. ...The CMA represents 38,000 of the roughly 104,000 doctors in California. 'We need some recognition that we're doing a service to the community. But we can't do it for free. And we can't do it at a loss. No other business would do that,' he said. California offers one of the lowest government reimbursement rates in the country—30 percent lower than federal Medicare payments. And reimbursement rates for some procedures are even lower. In other states, Medicare pays doctors \$76 for return-office visits. But in California, Medi-Cal's reimbursement is \$24, according to Dr. Theodore M. Mazer, a San Diego ear, nose and throat doctor. In other states, doctors receive between \$500 to \$700 to perform a tonsillectomy. In California, they get \$160, Mazer added. Only in September did insurance companies disclose that their rates would be pegged to California's Medicaid plan, called Medi-Cal. That's driven many doctors to just say no.' [52157, 52161, 52237]

TheHill.com reports that Congressman James Sensenbrenner, Jr. (R-WI), the author of the Patriot Act, wants Director of National Intelligence James Clapper "prosecuted for lying to Congress" in March, when he gave false testimony to the Senate Intelligence Committee. Clapper claimed that the NSA does "not wittingly" collect information on Americans—a statement disproven by documents released by whistleblower Edward Snowden. Sensenbrenner states, "Lying to Congress is a federal offense, and Clapper ought to be fired and prosecuted for it. ...The only way laws are effective is if they're enforced. If it's a criminal offense—and I believe Mr. Clapper has committed a criminal offense—then the Justice Department ought to do its job." (The odds of Attorney General Eric holder prosecuting Clapper are zero.) [52166]

Workers (and labor union shills from the SEIU) in some cities picket outside fast-food restaurants, demanding a \$15 per hour minimum wage. One Wendy's employee tells a reporter in Hartford, Connecticut, "And that \$15 an hour, that would mean I would have to work a little less days [sic] instead of every day, all day." (If she were paid \$800 per hour she might only have to work one hour per week—but that does not mean increasing the minimum wage is a good idea or that it would have no negative side effects. In fact, if the minimum wage were increased to \$15 per hour she might lose her job to a touch-screen menu device. McDonald's already has thousands of them in use in its European restaurants.) [52185, 52196]

ConstantContact.com reports, "[D]istrict authorities in Sulawesi, Indonesia began demolishing the South Sulawesi Christian Church on Wednesday after the local government issued an injunction ordering the members to completely halt all worship services late last week. The demolition of the protestant church is being called an 'act of barbarism' and an example of 'zero tolerance' towards religious minorities by Indonesian human rights observers. By Friday morning, authorities were still in the process of dismantling the church. According to regional news sources, church members responded to the demolition with 'a mixture of dismay and disappointment,' calling the authorities' decision 'nonsense.' The church is reportedly the only place of worship for hundreds of Christians in the Pangkep District of South Sulawesi. Problems for the church reportedly began in 2011 after the church was forced to apply for a permit to repair its leaking roof. Local authorities responded by demanding the church obtain 60 signatures from Muslim

residents giving the church permission to repair the roof. ...In 2012, ICC recorded 50 such forced church closures across Indonesia. To date, the [strict zoning] law has never reportedly been used as justification to halt construction, seal off, or forcibly demolition a Sunni Islam place of worship.” (Obama has no comment.) [52214, 52215]

On *Special Report*, columnist Charles Krauthammer comments on Obama’s latest excuse for ObamaCare problems: that government is simply not good at some things and some agencies need consolidating. Krauthammer says, “And this is after he’s argued for basically half a decade now in office that government is the font of American enterprise and success—if you built it, it’s not you, it’s the government. It’s just amazing that right now in the beginning, well, middle of his second term, he says there’s a real problem here with the big agencies, some of which are outdated and not designed properly. So he discovers this three years after he decided to pass a bill that would consign a sixth of the U.S. economy, the entire ecosystem of American medicine, into the hands of precisely an outdated and improperly designed bureaucracy, i.e., HHS [Health and Human Services]. It’s interesting how he discovers everything late. A month ago, in the press conference he held where he apologized, sort of semi-apologized, he said he hadn’t quite realized how hard it is to purchase health insurance. And this is, of course, after he nationalizes the purchase of health insurance. This reminds me of a time when after—remember he said he had discovered there are no shovel-ready jobs? But he discovers that after he passes a \$1 trillion spending bill on the argument that there are all these shovel-ready jobs out there that will stimulate a depressed economy. It’s as if this guy discovers everything late, as if he wandered into the White House on a White House tour and discovered himself in the Oval Office as president.” [52167]

On December 7, the 72nd anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese, the White House issues its first message of the day—touting Obama’s weekly address, “Why Congress needs to extend unemployment insurance.” (The problem faced by Obama and his fellow Democrats is that they want to extend unemployment benefits but are unwilling to cut spending elsewhere to pay for that extension—and the Republicans are not about to agree to tax increases for that purpose.) [52177, 52514, 52547]

Obama’s Facebook page later posts an old photo of Obama visiting the U.S.S. Arizona Memorial at Pearl Harbor. Breitbart.com notes, “The picture barely fits the name of the Arizona Memorial so it can frame Obama in the foreground. The post’s statement reads: ‘Today, with solemn pride and reverence, let us remember those who fought and died at Pearl Harbor, acknowledge everyone who carried their legacy forward, and reaffirm our commitment to upholding the ideals for which they served.’” [52187, 52188, 52189, 52222]

VancouverSun.com reports that “Christian civilians fled by the thousands to the airport guarded by French forces in this chaotic capital [Bangui, in the Central African Republic] Friday [December 6] as the mostly Muslim armed fighters who have ruled the country since March hunted door-to-door for their enemies and the death toll from inter-communal violence rose to 280 people. Bodies lay decomposing along the roads in a city too dangerous for many to collect the corpses. Thursday’s clashes marked the worst

unrest in Bangui in nine months and raised fears that waves of retaliatory attacks could soon follow. ‘They are slaughtering us like chickens,’ said Appolinaire Donoboy, a Christian whose family remained in hiding.’ (Obama has no comment.) [52429, 52430, 52487]

FoxNews.com reports that California’s ObamaCare health exchange “has admitted it has been divulging contact information for tens of thousands of consumers to insurance agents without their permission or knowledge in an effort to hit deadlines for coverage. Covered California said it was handing out consumer information as part of a pilot program to help people enroll ahead of a Dec. 23 deadline to have health insurance in place by the new year, according to the Los Angeles Times. The consumers in question had gone online to research insurance options, but didn’t ask to be contacted. Social Security numbers, income and other information were not provided to the agents, but names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses were made available, exchange officials said. The names provided by Covered California include people who started an insurance application on the website but didn’t complete the process. ...Some insurance brokers and consumers were unhappy with the initiative, despite assurances that it met privacy laws. ‘I’m shocked and dumbfounded,’ said Sam Smith, an Encino insurance broker and president of the California Association of Health Underwriters, an industry group. ‘These people would have a legitimate complaint,’ said Smith, who added he had been given two consumer names. A local agent emailed Robert Blatt on Thursday asking him about the application he’d started. ‘You can’t do this,’ Blatt, a technology consultant in Ventura County, told the newspaper. ‘For a government agency to release this information to an outside person is a major issue.’” [52175, 52186]

Fox also reports, “The University of Minnesota [UN] had to make its healthcare plans worse in order to avoid Obamacare-related penalties. The Affordable Care Act levels an excise tax on high-value health coverage plans, and UM would have to pay \$48 million with its existing plans. Instead, the university is lowering the quality of its coverage. ‘The Office of Human Resources announced in a July email that it was making changes to the UPlan, the employee healthcare program, including adding a deductible and increasing copays for primary and specialty care,’ according to the Minnesota Daily. ‘The email said the cost increases were necessary to help the University avoid a \$48 million excise tax in 2018.’” [52178]

In his weekly radio and Internet address, Obama calls on Congress to approve tens of billions of dollars more on extending unemployment benefits. Obama says, “The hole that we’re still digging out of means that there are still millions of Americans looking for work—often because they’ve been laid off through no fault of their own. These are people we know. They’re our friends and neighbors.” (Obama is correct that their situation is often “no fault of their own,” but he does not recognize that the fault often lies with government. Obama also does not realize that one does not “dig out of a hole.” One climbs a ladder to get out. Perhaps if Obama would stop digging the hole would not be so deep.) Obama also says, “If Congress refuses to act, it won’t just hurt families already struggling—it will actually harm our economy. Unemployment insurance is one of the most effective ways there is to boost our economy.” (If paying people not to work

actually “boosts the economy,” then it would be wise to lay off every worker in the United States and send them unemployment checks.) [52182, 52514]

Medicare spokeswoman Julie Bataille confirms that about 10 percent of ObamaCare’s enrollment files, the “834 transactions” that are transmitted to the insurance companies from Healthcare.gov, contain errors. Kevin Glass notes at Townhall.com, “Here’s the kicker: nobody can identify if an individual who applied for or received insurance had an error. So *every single application* from October and November—and likely December—will need to be confirmed by the applicant with the insurance company to make sure they’ve actually got insurance coverage.” [52813, 52184, 52254]

On December 8 Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (rferl.org) reports, “Afghan President Hamid Karzai says he has two demands before he’ll sign a Bilateral Security Agreement with the United States and that he’ll approve the document as soon as those demands are met—despite saying earlier he would wait until his country’s presidential election is completed in April 2014.” Karzai tells journalist Akbar Ayazi, “I have demanded an end to all American attacks against Afghan homes and the beginning of a realistic peace process. Whenever the Americans meet these two demands of mine, I am ready to sign the agreement. And when these two demands are implemented, this agreement is in Afghanistan’s interests. On the issue of elections, last night the U.S. national security adviser [Susan Rice] assured me that America is not going to interfere in the elections and that it wants the elections to be conducted on time. ... They have assured me about this. But I will see what happens.” [52179]

Ayazi asks, “Do you think that the Afghan security forces are able to deal with the Taliban on their own [after U.S. forces leave Afghanistan]?” Karzai responds, “This is our responsibility. We are all Afghans and we know each other well. Whether we would fight the Taliban or make peace with them—that is our problem. Last year, during my visit to Washington, in a very important briefing a day before I met [Obama], his [then-] national security adviser Tom Donilon, and senior White House officials, generals, and intelligence officials, the national security adviser met with me. He told me: ‘The Taliban are not our enemies and we don’t want to fight them.’ I told him, ‘This is a very good thing and this is what we want. We have been urging you for years to stop bombing people and fighting people inside of Afghanistan. So if you don’t consider the Taliban your enemies and don’t want to fight them, then why are you raiding Afghan homes every night? If you don’t consider the Taliban your enemies, which are something I want you to do and am happy you have recognized, then why are you going into Afghan homes in the name of looking for the Taliban every night?’ My question is whether this will go on after the security agreement. This is why I can never allow it to happen. The security agreement should end American operations.” (AtlasShrugs.com’s Pamela Geller asks, “The Taliban are not the enemy? If not them, who? The Taliban aided and abetted Osama Bin Laden in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks on America. They are killing our soldiers (our brothers and sisters, husbands and fathers) in ‘insider attacks.’ They are bombing schools we built to educate girls. They are waging jihad, imposing the most brutal and extreme ideology on the face of the earth—the sharia—and they are not the enemy? If not them, who?”) [52179, 52180, 52181]

Although Karzai has yet to agree on an agreement with the United States, Reuters reports that he has signed an agreement with Iran. Karzai spokesman Aimal Faizi states, “Afghanistan agreed on a long-term friendship and cooperation pact with Iran. The pact will be for long-term political, security, economic and cultural cooperation, regional peace and security.” [52198]

MSNBC’s lispng leftist, Melissa Harris-Perry, claims the term ObamaCare “was conceived of by a group of wealthy white men who needed a way to put themselves above and apart from a black man, to render him inferior and unequal and diminish his accomplishments. ...Obama has been labeled with this word by his opponents, and at first he rose above it, hoping that if he could just make a cause for what he’d achieved, his opponents would fail in making their label stick. But no matter how many successes that he had... he realized there were still many people for whom he’d never be anything more than that one disparaging word—a belief he knew was held not just by his political opponents, but also by a significant portion of the American electorate. And so he decided if you can’t beat them, you’ve got to join them. So he embraced the word and made it his own, sending his opposition a message they weren’t expecting: ‘If that’s what you want me to be, I’ll be that.’” [52229, 52243, 52277, 52283]

DailyCaller.com reports, “A California county has banned a veteran employee from criticizing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act because a coworker who overheard the criticism was offended. The employee is Norina Mooney, who has logged some 20 years of work experience with Santa Clara County, the epicenter of Silicon Valley. According to Mooney’s attorneys with the Pacific Justice Institute, she made some water-cooler talk with a fellow employee about the high number people who have had their insurance policies canceled under Obamacare. Later, a supervisor called Mooney into a private meeting and allegedly dressed her down for the attempt at chitchat because an unidentified person had overheard the small talk and been offended. In the future, the supervisor said, Mooney must exit the government building should she have anything adverse about Obamacare or otherwise political to say. Mooney’s attorneys noted that this edict is an odd one considering Mooney’s claim that the office environment is replete with pro-Obama paraphernalia. She noted that her coworkers openly wore Obama campaign attire to work at election time as well.” [52300, 52301]

At the Brookings Institution’s annual Saban Forum, Obama says, “If I had an option, if we could create an option in which Iran eliminated every single nut and bolt of their nuclear program, and foreswore the possibility of ever having a nuclear program, and, for that matter, got rid of all its military capabilities, I would take it, But that particular option is not available.” (In other words, Obama is accepting Iran as a nuclear power.) The next day, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu tells the forum, “We all agree that after a couple of years of tough sanctions, Iran finally began to negotiate seriously. Because of the pressure, what seemed impossible yesterday became possible today. We should not assume that more and tougher sanctions won’t lead to a better deal. What seems impossible today could become possible tomorrow. Unlike the recent interim deal, any final deal must bring about the termination of Iran’s military nuclear capability.

...[When] the power on the throne is committed to a radical ideology and pursues it and talks about it again and again and again, then I say: Beware. We've learned in our experience, the experience of the Jewish people, to take seriously those who speak about our annihilation, and we will do and I will do what is necessary to protect the Jewish state and the future of the Jewish people." (The fool Obama rushed in where the wise man Netanyahu fears to tread.) [52242]

Newsmax.com reports, "The discovery of massive oil deposits in Australia could shake up the world's energy industry and threaten OPEC's grip on oil markets. Australia's Linc Energy has released reports, based on exploration near the remote town of Coober Pedy in South Australia, estimating the amount of oil in the untapped Arckaringa Basin could range to as high as 233 billion barrels. That could turn Australia from an oil importer into a large-scale exporter. Estimates of 233 billion barrels are just 30 billion fewer than the estimated reserves in Saudi Arabia, 263 billion barrels. They are more than in Venezuela (211 billion barrels), Canada (175 billion), Iran (137 billion), and Iraq (115 barrels), and could be worth more than \$20 trillion." [52192]

On *Face the Nation*, Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel says, "Well, you can use any term you want, 'retreat' or 'not renewing our efforts here [in Afghanistan] post-2014.' You can say it any way you want. But what I'm saying is, unless we have the security of an agreement to protect our forces, then we'll have no choice. We'll—we will not be able to stay." [52239]

On *Fox News Sunday*, host Chris Wallace interviews ObamaCare architect Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel, and asks, "...Obama 'famously promised, if you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor. Doesn't that turn out to be just as false, just as misleading, as his promise about if you like your plan, you can keep your plan? Isn't it a fact, sir, that a number, most, in fact, of the ObamaCare health plans that are being offered on the exchanges exclude a number of doctors and hospitals to lower costs?" Ezekiel responds that Obama "never said you were going to have unlimited choice of any doctor in the country you want to go to." Wallace: "No. ... 'If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor.' Did he not say that, sir?" Emanuel: "He didn't say you could have unlimited choice." Wallace: "It's a simple yes or no question. Did he say if you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor?" Emanuel: "Yes. But look, if you want to pay more for an insurance company that covers your doctor, you can do that. This is a matter of choice. We know in all sorts of places you pay more for certain—for a wider range of choices or wider range of benefits. The issue isn't the selective networks. People keep saying, 'Oh, the problem is you're going to have a selective network—' Wallace: "Well, if you lose your doctor or lose your hospital—" Emanuel: "Let me just say something. People are going to have a choice as to whether they want to pay a certain amount for a selective network or pay more for a broader network." Wallace: "Which will mean your premiums will probably go up." Emanuel: "They get that choice. That's a choice they always made." Wallace: "Which means your premium may go up over what you were paying so that, in other words—" Emanuel: "No one guaranteed you that your premium wouldn't increase. Premiums have been going up." Wallace: "[Obama] guaranteed me I could keep my doctor." Emanuel: "And if you want to, you can pay for it." (Emanuel's statements are

unlikely to satisfy many Americans, especially those who not only heard Obama promise they could keep their doctors, but heard him say premiums would go down by \$2,500 per family.) [52197, 52200, 52205, 52217, 52218, 52226, 52231, 52240]

Kaiser Health News reports on the problems Minnesota is having with its MNsure ObamaCare exchange: “Insurance carriers selling plans on the state’s insurance marketplace say enrollment information they’re getting from MNsure, is inaccurate and incomplete—and that time is running out to fix these problems. RedState.com adds, “The ‘good’ news is, only about 4,500 applications are actually affected (the rest of the 25K enrollment numbers usually being quoted right now is actually from Medicaid expansion) by this; the bad news is, well, everything else. People get at the very least cranky when they lose their coverage—all coverage—because Democratic politicians’ bodies can’t cash the checks that Barack Obama’s ego wrote; I’m quite keen to see how Minnesota voters handle this. I’m betting [Senator] Al Franken [D-MN] is just as keen to see, too. For pretty much the same reasons, if not the same emotional reaction to them.” [52245, 52246]

The White House flies the American flag at half-staff for communist Nelson Mandela. [52199]

Yahoo News reports, “Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Seymour Hersh has dropped yet another bombshell allegation: ...Obama wasn’t honest with the American people when he blamed Syrian President Bashar al-Assad for a sarin-gas attack that killed hundreds of civilians. In early September, Secretary of State John Kerry said the United States had proof that the nerve-gas attack was made on Assad’s orders. ‘We know the Assad regime was responsible,’ ...Obama told the nation in an address days after this revelation, which he said pushed him over the ‘red line’ in considering military intervention. But in a long story published Sunday for the *London Review of Books*, Hersh—best known for his exposés on the cover-ups of the My Lai Massacre and of Abu Ghraib—said the administration ‘cherry-picked intelligence,’ citing conversations with intelligence and military officials. ... Here’s what Hersh alleges: The administration buried intelligence on the fundamentalist group/rebel group al-Nusra. It was seen, Hersh says, as an alarming threat by May, with the U.S. being aware of al-Nusra members able to make and use sarin, and yet the group—associated with the rebel opposition in Syria—was never considered a suspect in the sarin attacks. Hersh refers to a top-secret June cable sent to the deputy director of the Defense Intelligence Agency that said al-Nusra could acquire and use sarin.” [52238, 52256, 52348]

At Breitbart.com Brandon Darby reports, “Texas Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst announced a Texas-led three-week effort that he says reduced illegal immigration, smuggling, and human trafficking to a standstill in the Rio Grande River section of the U.S./Mexico border. The Lt. Governor spoke with me in an interview for Breitbart News; he stated: ‘In the Rio Grande Valley sector, nearly nothing moved in those three weeks. We shut it down. We had teams of Texas law enforcement in the brush, high altitude aircraft, gun boats, and more,’ he explained. ‘Our intel revealed that the Gulf cartel was growing frustrated with our three-week effort. The border issue is just about dollars and

cents,' Dewhurst said. 'This proves Texas can do the job the federal government has refused to do—to invest in the border and shut it down from illegal activities that are hurting Texans and other Americans.' He added: 'Texas will protect our own citizens and other Americans from the criminal gangs that are destabilizing our state and our nation.'" (Texas has been spending state revenue to do what the Obama administration refuses to do: properly police the border.) [52206]

Republican challenger Tom Cotton leads Senator Mark Pryor (D-AR) by seven points, 48–4, in a recent survey by Kellyane Conway's The Polling Company. Although the election is 11 months away, the poll's results will be cause for concern among other Senate Democrats up for reelection in 2014. David N. Bossie, president of Citizens United, says, "Mark Pryor is synonymous with ObamaCare and ObamaCare is synonymous with making life worse for the American people. That's why Pryor is losing to Cotton in the Arkansas Senate race." (According to Politico, Obama's approval rating is a dismal 36 percent in Arkansas.) [52248, 52272, 52344, 52443]

KSTP.com reports that some state ObamaCare exchanges are vulnerable to "a specific kind of Wi-Fi attack." Additionally, sites hosted by Google servers appear to be capturing Media Access Control, or MAC, addresses, which can be used to identify specific computers. Mark Lanterman, CEO and chief technology officer of Computer Forensic Services, tells KSTP, "It seems weird to me. I'm a little bit troubled by it. It's not something that would ordinarily be collected, so someone had to make a decision to collect it." [52250, 52251]

HuffingtonPost.com reports, "The Obama administration appears to have almost no international support for controversial new trade standards that would grant radical new political powers to corporations, increase the cost of prescription medications and restrict bank regulation, according to two internal memos obtained by The Huffington Post. The memos, which come from a government involved in the 12-nation Trans-Pacific Partnership [TPP] free trade negotiations, detail continued disputes in the talks over the deal. They reveal broad disagreement over a host of key positions, and general skepticism that an agreement can be reached by year-end. The Obama administration has urged countries to reach a deal by New Year's Day, though there is no technical deadline. ...Previously leaked TPP documents have sparked alarm among global health experts, Internet freedom activists, environmentalists and organized labor, but are adamantly supported by American corporations and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. The Obama administration has deemed negotiations to be classified information—banning members of Congress from discussing the American negotiating position with the press or the public. Congressional staffers have been restricted from viewing the documents." [52201]

At Politico.com, Susan B. Glasser questions whether Hillary Clinton was effective as Secretary of State, and provides insights from various policy observers. One concludes that Clinton was a "fine" Secretary of State "but not consequential." Another calls her "good [but] not great," and says her "great weakness was avoiding serious diplomacy," probably because of "her future political considerations." (That is, Clinton did not want to attempt anything significant and then fail because it would harm her 2016 presidential

ambitions.) American Enterprise's Institute's Danielle Pletka notes Clinton's "unwillingness to take risks, unwillingness to lead, willingness to stab a lot of people in the back. And dead people [i.e., Benghazi]. ...she was enormously ineffective ...[but] no one was quite sure whether she was ineffective because she wanted to avoid controversy or because she wasn't trusted by [Obama] to do anything." Glasser writes that "Clinton's advocates tend to come in several camps, which can be broadly summed up as The Timing Just Wasn't Right group; the Blame the White Housers; and the Asia Pivot Was a Really Big Deal crowd ('her major accomplishment,' the Brookings Institution's Michael O'Hanlon told me, and 'too often underappreciated')." On the plus side, Clinton negotiated a deal for the release of Chinese dissident Chen Guangcheng—but Clinton's 2016 presidential opponents will focus on the four Americans killed in Benghazi and her "blame the video" cover-up. [52207, 52273]

DebkaFile.com reports, "It was commonly assumed that Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and President Vladimir Putin discussed the forthcoming Geneva nuclear accord with Iran when they met in Moscow on Nov. 20. But according to DEBKAFfile's intelligence and counter-terror sources, they focused on two quite different topics. One was possible Russian-Israeli military and intelligence cooperation against al Qaeda elements in Syria in which both are keenly interested. Israel is shoring up its defenses against potential cross-border terrorist attacks mounted from al Qaeda bases in Syria, while Putin has gone to great lengths to secure the high-prestige Winter Olympics taking place at the Russian Black Sea resort of Sochi Feb. 7-23. The other topic of conversation was Moscow's interest in a stake for Russian oil and gas companies in laying the pipelines for the export of Israeli offshore Mediterranean gas to European markets. By mutual consent, the Iranian issue on which they are deeply divided was scarcely touched on." [52209, 52210]

Obama hosts "Kennedy Center Honorees" at the White House, prior to the event at the Kennedy Center. According to TheHill.com, the awards will be presented to "musicians Billy Joel and Carlos Santana, pianist Herbie Hancock, opera singer Martina Arroyo and actress Shirley MacLaine." [52202]

On December 9 Commander Charles Kerchner (Retired) posts a full-page ad in *The Washington Times* with an image of Obama's forged and back-dated Selective Service registration form. The ad directs people who want information to Sheriff Joe Arpaio's "cold case posse" investigation team. [52211, 52212, 52213]

A physician in Somerset, Kentucky places a newspaper ad to announce he is retiring, with the statement, "Due to the policies of ObamaCare, Stephen Kiteck, MD will be closing his medical practice on December 31, 2013. Patients may pick up their charts at the office." Kiteck says, "It's pretty basic really. The reason is that ObamaCare requires electronic medical records and electronic prescribing and I simply don't have the finances at this time to go into debt to provide that for my office, it would just be a complete new transfer of electronic equipment in my office for that. ...Of the 20,000 pages [of federal regulations] in there, probably up to 1,000 pages are about doctors' offices. ...I've got 6,000 records, some of them are two inches thick. It would just be basically impossible to

scan all of these and put them on electronic medical records and very expensive, by the way. It's a solo practice, I'm just a very small solo practice. I call myself a mom and pop practice.” (One of the consequences of ObamaCare will be the retirement of many physicians who will simply find the regulations too expensive and burdensome. Some will argue that those consequences are unintentional. *The Obama Timeline* believes they are very much intentional, and that the plan is to drive physicians out of small, private practices and force them to become employees of hospitals and other large medical enterprises. That will make it easier for the government to nationalize the entire health care industry in the future. If the government takes over the hospitals and the corporations, the physicians they employ automatically become federal employees.) [52302]

Obama and his wife travel to South Africa to attend funeral services for Nelson Mandela. (Whether Obama will run into Iranian President Hassan Rouhani at the memorial service is not known.) [52227, 52241]

While Obama visits South Africa, Bill Clinton visits Brazil, where he tells *O Globo* that NSA's spying on foreign governments, including Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff, is wrong: “We should not be getting economic information under the pretext of security. Not with an ally.” (This is another attempt by Clinton to distance his wife, Hillary, from the Obama administration. Clinton is trying to convince people that Hillary had nothing to do with the spying when, in fact, she could hardly not have known about it as Obama's Secretary of State.) [52467]

DailyCaller.com reports, “A bill set for fast-track passage in the South Carolina Senate in January aims to eliminate Obamacare in the state. The law could become a model for other states fed up with the federal health-care law. House Bill 3101, titled the ‘South Carolina Freedom of Health Care Protection Act,’ passed the state House of Representatives last April by a 65-34 vote. The bill now heads to the GOP-controlled Senate with special-order priority, setting up the likelihood that South Carolina will become the first state to exempt citizens and businesses from all participation in the Affordable Care Act. State Sen. Tom Davis, the bill's sponsor who recently wrapped up study committee hearings for H3101 in Columbia, Charleston and other cities, says that the proposed legislation renders the Affordable Care Act void or inoperable through a handful of provisions. ... The bill's main component prohibits agencies, officers and employees of the state of South Carolina from implementing any provisions of the Affordable Care Act, leaving implementation of the national health-care law entirely in the hands of a federal government that lacks the resources or personnel to carry out the programs it mandates. This provision, according to Davis, comes from the anti-commandeering doctrine established in case law that says feds can't compel states to enforce federal laws.” [52228, 52266, 52267, 52297]

The U.S. government sells off its remaining shares of General Motors stock, leaving the taxpayers with a total loss of about \$10.5 billion on its bailout of the automaker. The White House releases a statement in which Obama takes credit for saving the industry—and neglects to mention the \$10 billion loss. (Some estimate that the taxpayers lost \$14

billion on the government bailout scheme. In 2009 the Obama administration also loaned \$1.6 billion to Japanese automaker Nissan—to subsidize the production of electric cars and batteries at its Tennessee plant. Few Americans are likely aware of that deal.) General Motors announces that Mary Berra will be its new CEO, replacing Dan Akerson—who says, “I would not accept the premise that this [government bail out] was a bad deal [for the taxpayers].” [52235, 52236, 52269, 52353, 52456, 52516, 52604]

At Forbes.com Scott Gottlieb writes that Obama “famously promised that you could keep your health plan and doctor. For many people, both of those pledges are turning out to be false. And now, you might not be able to keep your medicine, either. There are two reasons why. The first has to do with the higher out of pocket costs patients will face. The second issue may be even more significant. Simply put, many drugs may not be covered at all, and the costs patients incur by buying them with cash won’t count against out of pocket caps. This has repercussions for drug makers with big portfolios of specialty and primary care drugs... But most of all, it has implications for patients. ...The out of pocket caps on consumer spending only apply to costs incurred on drugs that are included on a plan’s drug formulary. This is the list of medicines that the health plans have agreed to provide some coverage for. If the drug isn’t on this formulary list, then the patient could be responsible for its full cost (with little or no co-insurance to help offset that cost). Moreover, the money they spend won’t count against their deductibles or out of pocket limits (\$12,700 for a family, \$6,350 for an individual). These are the ways that Obamacare cheapens the health coverage in order to pay for all of its expensive mandates. Obamacare is a throwback to the old HMO model of the 1990s, which promised a broad package of coverage for primary care benefits like vaccines, and routine doctor visits. But to pay for these benefits, the Obamacare plans skimp on other things—principally the number of doctors you’ll have access to, and also, the number of costlier branded drugs that make it onto formularies. ...The biggest problem in all of this is that consumers will have a very hard time figuring out where they stand. In many cases, the health plans being offered in the Obamacare exchanges don’t make information about their drug formularies readily available. In some cases, it doesn’t seem to be published anywhere.” [52252, 52253]

CNSNews.com reports, “The top 40 percent of households by before-tax income actually paid 106.2 percent of the nation’s net income taxes in 2010, according to a new study by the Congressional Budget Office. At the same time, households in the bottom 40 percent took in an average of \$18,950 in what the CBO called ‘government transfers’ in 2010. Taxpayers in the top 40 percent of households were able to pay more than 100 percent of net federal income taxes in 2010 because Americans in the bottom 40 percent actually paid negative income taxes, according to the CBO study entitled, ‘The Distribution of Household Income and Federal Taxes, 2010.’ ‘When refundable tax credits, such as the earned income tax credit and the child tax credit, exceed the other federal tax liabilities of the households in an income group, those households are said to have a negative average tax rate,’ said the CBO study.” [52255]

At NationalJournal.com, leftist Alex Seitz-Wald blames the Sandy Hook school shooting for Obama’s disastrous second term, claiming, “The Connecticut massacre set in motion

a cascade of events that led the White House to burn through its only real window to accomplish its goals. The month before the shooting, Obama had won a convincing reelection and a modest popular mandate. One major liberal wish-list entry, immigration reform, seemed not only within reach but almost inevitable. ...Then Lanza's rampage altered the debate in Washington. Suddenly, priority No. 1 wasn't immigration reform but gun control. The base that had just elected Obama was clamoring for background checks and magazine-clip restrictions, threatening to desert [Obama] before his second inauguration. Many in Washington, including Connecticut's Democratic senators, were convinced that the much-feared National Rifle Association had become a 'paper tiger.' ...That meant immigration would have to wait. The clock was ticking on both gun control and immigration, but Democrats moved ahead with gun control first, recognizing that as the memory of the tragedy at Sandy Hook faded, so too would the impetus for new laws. The Senate spent months on a bill, which eventually got whittled down to a universal background-check provision, before it finally died at the hands of a Republican filibuster in mid-April. ...Obama hasn't gotten back on track since." (Even if Obama had succeeded in getting gun control legislation passed, of course, millions of Americans would still be angry with him because of ObamaCare, and Seitz-Wald ignores the obvious question: why didn't Obama push for gun control early in his first term, when the Democrats controlled both the House and the Senate?) [52262, 52263, 52274]

At AmericanThinker.com Arlen Williams writes, "By now, the news has spread online of the IRS audit notices sent to two Obamacare whistleblowers. On November 25th, cancer victim Bill Elliott and C. Steven Tucker were informed of the ordeal each was to face. Elliott has been waging a pitched battle with cancer. Tucker is the insurance agent and healthcare freedom activist who informed him that the canceling of his insurance, wrought by the Obama administration for the sake [of] pushing citizens into Obamacare, was illegal. Tucker reached out immediately after Elliott appeared on Fox News' *The Kelly File*, Nov. 7th, and Elliott's insurance was hastily reinstated. What subsequently transpired for Tucker has deepened his impression that the twin IRS notices were no coincidence, but an attack by our federal government, an orchestrated effort at intimidation of them both. Friday, December 7th, he was visited in his home by an IRS official and received yet another threatening notice by mail." In an email exchange, Tucker tells Williams, "The health insurers across the nation who are canceling health insurance policies based on a posting in the Federal Register in June of 2010 which redefined the 'grandfathered clause' in the original PPACA (Obamacare) legislation are violating federal law. Specifically section 2742 of Public Law 104-191 (HIPAA). ...HHS [Health and Human Services] is violating this existing federal law by requiring health insurers to cancel these existing policies based on a random posting by HHS in the Federal Register in June of 2010. A posting in the Federal Register does not trump existing federal law, most especially HIPPA [sic; HIPAA], that is relied upon, expanded upon, and referred to in the PPACA. By faxing section 2742 of public law 104-191 over to his insurer (with the help of South Carolina governor Nikki Haley) Bill was able to retain his policy even after it was illegally canceled by his insurer. My goal is to inform every American who has had their policy canceled about this law and instruct them on how to use it to get their policy restored." [52279, 52280]

Section 2742 of Public Law 104-191 (the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, or HIPAA), states,

“(a) In General.--Except as provided in this section, a health insurance issuer that provides individual health insurance coverage to an individual shall renew or continue in force such coverage at the option of the individual.

(b) General Exceptions.--A health insurance issuer may nonrenew or discontinue health insurance coverage of an individual in the individual market based only on one or more of the following:

(1) Nonpayment of premiums.--The individual has failed to pay premiums or contributions in accordance with the terms of the health insurance coverage or the issuer has not received timely premium payments.

(2) Fraud.--The individual has performed an act or practice that constitutes fraud or made an intentional misrepresentation of material fact under the terms of the coverage.

(3) Termination of plan.--The issuer is ceasing to offer coverage in the individual market in accordance with subsection (c) and applicable State law.

(4) Movement outside service area.--In the case of a health insurance issuer that offers health insurance coverage in the market through a network plan, the individual no longer resides, lives, or works in the service area (or in an area for which the issuer is authorized to do business) but only if such coverage is terminated under this paragraph uniformly without regard to any health status-related factor of covered individuals.

(5) Association membership ceases.--In the case of health insurance coverage that is made available in the individual market only through one or more bona fide associations, the membership of the individual in the association (on the basis of which the coverage is provided) ceases but only if such coverage is terminated under this paragraph uniformly without regard to any health status-related factor of covered individuals.”

It has been *illegal* for health insurers to cancel policies since HIPAA was enacted on August 21, 1996—unless the “issuer decides to discontinue offering a particular type of health insurance coverage offered in the individual market...” or “elects to discontinue offering all health insurance coverage in the individual market in a State...” Most individual policies are not in compliance with ObamaCare’s strict requirements, which has resulted in their cancellation by insurance companies. *But ObamaCare cannot require that those policies be canceled because HIPAA prohibits their cancellation*—and there is no language in the Affordable Care Act (at least not that *The Obama Timeline* could find) that “overrides” HIPAA. On the basis of HIPAA regulations, Elliott’s insurer reinstated his policy. *On that same basis, virtually every one of the five million or more individual health insurance policies that have been canceled must be reinstated.*

(Essentially, ObamaCare conflicts with HIPAA. ObamaCare requires that all policies cover certain benefits, and that those that do not are illegal. But HIPAA does not allow policies to be canceled unless the insurer discontinues services altogether or leaves a state’s market. When the Obama administration changed the “grandfather rules” in 2010 in order to force millions of Americans out of their individual policies and into the ObamaCare exchanges, it neglected to consider that HIPAA prohibits the cancellation of policies they were trying to eliminate.) [52281, 52282]

TheBurningPlatform.com writes, “Edward Snowden has created a problem for ...Obama, his surveillance state apparatus, and the banking cabal that pull the strings in this empire of consumerism, by revealing the dirty secrets of a paranoid tyrannical ruling party. We are late in the game and pleading ignorance regarding how technology is being used by evil men for evil purposes is inexcusable. Snowden refused to remain a pawn in the NSA game and decided his fellow citizens needed to be warned about the dangers of an omniscient, secretive, malevolent state whose powers were unchecked and whose motives were geared towards oppression and coercion. He was a brilliant young cog within the government machinery, making good money, with a bright future if he conformed and obeyed, but he chose to be free. A free man can't be bought, controlled or conquered. Edward Snowden decided someone needed to make a stand and that someone was him. ...The explosive disclosures of government criminality, mass spying, cover-ups, lying to Congress by government apparatchiks, and conclusive evidence of a surveillance state completely out of control confirmed another truth for those not captured by the red/blue party propaganda. Snowden was declared a traitor by Obama, Romney, Schumer, McCain, Pelosi, Boehner, Reid, McConnell, Feinstein, Rove, and of course, the blood thirsty, hate spewing, dark-lord of the neo-cons—Dick Cheney. The immediate and united venomous response from the slimy politician snakes should have removed all doubt there is really one ruling party and the rest of us are nothing but pawns in their game. We live in a corporate fascist warfare/welfare surveillance state run by ultra-wealthy unelected men with evil intentions.” [52721]

The article's author quotes Robert Heinlein: “Secrecy is the keystone to all tyranny. Not force, but secrecy and censorship. When any government or church for that matter, undertakes to say to its subjects, ‘This you may not read, this you must not know,’ the end result is tyranny and oppression, no matter how holy the motives. Mighty little force is needed to control a man who has been hoodwinked in this fashion; contrariwise, no amount of force can control a free man, whose mind is free. No, not the rack nor the atomic bomb, not anything. You can't conquer a free man; the most you can do is kill him.” And former Congressman Ron Paul: “We've slipped away from a true republic. Now we're slipping into a fascist system where it's a combination of government, big business and authoritarian rule, and the suppression of the individual rights of each and every American citizen. When it comes to any significant differences on foreign policy, economic intervention, the Federal Reserve, a strong executive branch, a welfarism mixed with corporatism, both parties are very much alike. The major arguments in hotly contested presidential races are mostly for public consumption to convince the people they actually have a choice.” [52721]

On December 10 Obama addresses tens of thousands in a Johannesburg soccer stadium full of South Africans mourning the death of former communist president, Nelson Mandela. Obama says, “We know that like South Africa, the United States had to overcome centuries of racial subjugation. Michelle and I are the beneficiaries of that struggle. But in America and South Africa, and countries around the globe, we cannot allow our progress to cloud the fact that our work is not done. ...Around the world today, we still see children suffering from hunger, and disease; we still see rundown schools, we still see young people with few prospects for the future. Around the world today, men

and women are still imprisoned for their political beliefs; and are still persecuted for what they look like, or how they worship, or who they love.” (The cost to the taxpayers for sending Obama to Johannesburg: at least \$5 million. DailyCaller.com quips, “However, Obama will get numerous free mementoes of his trip, including photographs of him telling the world’s dignitaries his personal feelings [of] Mandela’s legacy and how it affected his own world-historic life.”) [52257, 52260, 52261, 52270, 52271, 52439]

At the Mandela ceremony, Obama greets Cuban President Raul Castro with a healthy handshake and a smile. Jimmy Carter says of the handshake, “I think it was something significant. I hope that will be an omen for the future.” (It can be assumed that Obama did not ask Castro for the release of Alan Gross, an American who has been held in a Cuban prison since 2009.) NBC’s Brian Williams calls the handshake “one of the better moments” of the funeral. ABC’s Barbara Walters says, “The significance is that maybe this may change our relations with Cuba after 50 years, because it seems a little ridiculous to me that we recognize China and our relationship but we still do not have a relationship with Cuba. So maybe something—something—if Mandela could forgive maybe we could.” MSNBC’s Chris Matthews excoriates conservatives for daring to bring up Mandela’s communist and violent past, saying, “Don’t they know that it’s not nice to make fun of a person so recently deceased, much less the world’s most honored champion of human freedom?” (Matthews apparently has no recollection of how he and others in the media soundly criticized British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher after she died.) Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) calls the Obama-Castro handshake “nauseating.” She tells *Newsmax*, “I came here when I was a small child with my family fleeing the aggression of the communist tyranny in Cuba, and to see [Obama] shake hands with a sadistic murderer, which is what Raul Castro is and what he represents, it is nauseating. ... Sometimes a handshake is just a handshake, but when the leader of the free world shakes the bloody hand of a ruthless dictator like Raul Castro, it becomes a propaganda coup for the tyrant. Raul Castro uses that hand to sign orders to repress and jail democracy advocates, and I pointed out what an irony it is that today is International Human Rights Day...” Rush Limbaugh comments, “He [Obama] is on stage and it’s all about him, and what happened was that Raul Castro shook his hand, not the other way around.” At House of Sunny, Sunny Lohmann quips, “Obama was later embarrassed [by the handshake], saying, ‘I thought it was Kim Jong Un.’” (At the memorial service, Castro was seated next to Brazil’s socialist president, Dilma Rousseff. Bill Clinton arrives separately from Hillary Clinton, but sits with her and daughter Chelsea—and all three leave with close Hillary advisor Huma Abedin.) [52278, 52285, 52287, 52306, 52311, 52312, 52313, 52317, 52330, 52341, 52425, 52439]

Meanwhile, some European-descent Afrikaners fear for their lives, as South African blacks do their best to displace white farmers and property owners. Dr. Gregory Stanton, head of Genocide Watch, tells WND.com, “There is... strong circumstantial evidence of government support for the campaign of forced displacement and atrocities against white farmers and their families. There is direct evidence of government incitement to genocide.” WND.com’s Alex Newman reports, “Sources from South Africa told WND—and reporters on the scene confirmed—residents in many areas began taking up the traditional, so-called ‘struggle songs,’ which sing not just of liberating the black

population, but pledge the mass-murder of whites. There are many songs and variations on them, but among the most common themes are ‘kill the Boer, kill the farmer,’ ‘bring me my machine gun’ and similar genocidal topics. While officially considered ‘hate speech’—even incitement to genocide—the songs advocating the mass-murder of European-descent South Africans were popular with Mandela and remain a regular feature of politics. Even the current president, Jacob Zuma, regularly sings the songs at political rallies. Often dismissed as just old ‘struggle’ songs, even by many Afrikaners, experts have long warned that such rhetoric can easily contribute to atrocities. In South Africa, some Afrikaners are on edge, too. ‘It sounds more like a war cry than anything else,’ said South African analyst Jacques Maré, who describes himself as a minority-rights activist. ‘The atmosphere is charged.’ ‘The mood of the crowd in the township seems to be excited, unlike the somber emotions one would expect,’ Maré told WND as he monitored developments intently from Pretoria. ‘It is going to be a difficult and uneasy time for the ethnic-European minority of South Africa.’” [52258]

A Sudanese human rights group recognizes International Human Rights Day with the statement: “In 2007, Mr. Obama said that genocide is ‘a stain on our souls’ and promised, ‘As president of the United States I don’t intend to abandon people or turn a blind eye to slaughter.’ Yet, according to Act for Sudan in the fifth year of his [administration], he continues to oversee a disastrous approach to the ongoing genocide in Sudan. This approach has failed to prevent the tragic loss of countless civilian lives and the mass displacement and starvation of countless more innocent people. According to the national alliance, ...Obama should develop a new pro-democracy and civilian protection-oriented policy on Sudan.” (Former Bill Clinton staffer Mansoor Ijaz has stated that efforts to capture or kill Osama bin Laden were “overruled every single time by the State Department, by Susan Rice and her cronies, who were Hell-bent on destroying the Sudan.” Rice also thwarted the acceptance of anti-bin Laden intelligence aid from the Sudanese, and worked to keep Clinton from preventing genocide in Rwanda in 1994. Despite her record of incompetence, Obama named Rice the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, and then his National Security Advisor. During his 2008 campaign, Obama said, “I will make ending the genocide in Darfur a priority from day one.” He did no such thing, and has generally kept a hands-off policy on the Sudan—where the regime has engaged in an Islamic jihad and killed over two million innocent people in Sudan and Darfur.) [628, 1377, 1680, 2197, 52286]

By a vote of 56–38, the U.S Senate confirms leftist attorney Patricia Millett as the next judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia—giving Democrats a 5–4 majority on the panel. (At HotAir.com Kevin Glass writes, “Remember the controversial measure not to enforce DOMA [Defense of Marriage Act]? The legality of that maneuver would be up to the D.C. Court of Appeals. Same goes for [Obama’s] executive order on the DREAM Act, and his ability to unilaterally ‘delay’ the Obamacare employer mandate. If Obama wanted to issue an executive order that would be a workaround way to raise the minimum wage without going to Congress, that would also fall to the D.C. Court of Appeals. That’s an incredibly important judicial seat now being controlled by Democrats. Now, it might be the case that Patricia Millett will be a fair and down-the-middle type of judge, but that’s an unlikely outcome in the Obama era. The

partisan transformation of the judiciary that began with Democrats' demonization of Robert Bork has continued apace, and it's unlikely now that there will be many justices who vote against the person who nominated them. This is the main reason why Democrats changed the nominating rules: to give ...Obama an advantage on 'executive orders' that are legislative workarounds so that he doesn't actually have to compromise on anything." It is worth noting that Obama's closest advisor, Valerie Jarrett, said in October 2012, "After we win this election, it is payback time. For those who supported us, there will be rewards, for the ones who opposed us, they will get what they deserve. There will be hell to pay. Congress won't be a problem for us this time [in a second term]. No election to worry about after this is over and we have two judges ready to go." That is, Obama plans to avoid Congress and do as much as he can to advance his socialist agenda via executive orders and regulations—daring Congress to stop him and expecting leftist judges to cover for him. On behalf of Obama, Jarrett was essentially saying, "I dare you to impeach me.") [52276, 52347, 52466]

The Senate also votes 57–41 to confirm Congressman Mel Watt (D-NC) as director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency. (At WhiteHouseDossier.com Keith Koffler writes, "With barely a pause, we're headed back toward another housing crisis, and Mel Watt (D-NC), who was confirmed Tuesday as the overseer of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, is all set to lead us there. He likes to give loans to people who seem nice and deserving but who unfortunately can't afford it. And that's what caused financial Armageddon 2008." *The Wall Street Journal* observes, "Mr. Watt is a good man, but he is a man of the left, and he will use his control of Fannie and Freddie to return to the policies that brought on the mortgage meltdown in 2007 and the financial crisis in 2008. ...The stage has already been set. The Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), an agency created by the Dodd-Frank Act, has outlined a minimum quality mortgage that will permit a borrower to get a loan with a 3% down payment and a FICO credit score well below 660. Under Dodd-Frank, a lender could be subject to severe penalties if it turns out that the borrower cannot repay the loan—but the CFPB's rule protects the lender against liability if Fannie and Freddie's automated underwriting systems approve the loan. Enter Mr. Watt. The North Carolina congressman is a consistent, long-time supporter of affordable-housing quotas. He joined Barney Frank in 2003 to block the Bush administration's attempt that year to increase government oversight of Fannie and Freddie. And in 2007 he cosponsored legislation that would have pushed the two GSEs [government sponsored enterprises] even deeper into the subprime mess. One can be sure that there will be many low-quality mortgages approved by Fannie and Freddie on his watch.") [52406, 52407]

House Budget Committee chairman Director Paul Ryan (R-WI) and Senate Budget Committee chairman Patty Murray (D-WA) unveil a budget agreement that reverses some of the "sequestration" cuts from the 2011 budget agreement, resulting in increased federal spending. (Arguably, the GOP caved in—to avoid any possibility of a partial government shutdown that the Democrats were more than willing to encourage because it would work in their political favor. On the other hand, the Democrats did not get an individual or corporate income tax increase—nor did they get an extension of unemployment benefits. Various fees are increased, and the TSA tax is increased from \$2.50 per flight to \$5.60 per flight. The agreement also calls for a reduction in cost of

living increases in military pensions for veterans under age 62—a provision that will prompt considerable criticism, because the same amount of money could easily be saved by eliminating just a small portion of fraud and waste in federal spending. In fact, Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) has identified \$30 billion in examples of government waste, including a \$914,000 grant to study romance in books, movies, and songs; a \$10 million marketing plan to tie-in the Superman character with the National Guard; \$630,000 to buy Facebook and Twitter fans for the State Department’s web pages; and \$390,000 for a “Green Ninja” YouTube video to encourage children to “take action on climate change.”) [52308, 52309, 52310, 52314, 52325, 52331, 52335, 52451, 52494, 52514, 52616, 52620, 52645, 52675, 52697, 52854, 53014]

The \$1.012 trillion budget deal essentially splits the difference between the \$967 billion level of discretionary spending approved by the House and the \$1.058 trillion approved by the Senate. The bill increases spending by \$63 billion, and contains an alleged \$23 billion in future savings—that would essentially be offset by the interest on the \$63 billion that must be borrowed. (In other words, there are no savings.) Obama states, “This agreement doesn’t include everything I’d like—and I know many Republicans feel the same way. That’s the nature of compromise. But it’s a good sign that Democrats and Republicans in Congress were able to come together and break the cycle of short-sighted, crisis-driven decision-making to get this done. And I want to call on members of Congress from both parties to take the next step and actually pass a budget based on this agreement so I can sign it into law and our economy can continue growing and creating jobs without more Washington headwinds.” (Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY), fearing a Tea Party challenge in the 2014 Kentucky primary election, announces he will not support the budget deal—knowing full well it will pass without his vote.) [52308, 52309, 52310, 52314, 52325, 52331, 52335, 52451, 52494, 52514, 52616]

NationalReview.com reports, “Over \$100,000 in farm subsidies between 2008 and 2011 went [to] a charity arm of the Nation of Islam [NOI], according to a new report from a watchdog group. The group, Open the Books, traces the money to the Three Year Economic Savings Program, a NOI charity whose headquarters are listed at Louis Farrakhan’s home address. According to the NOI website, contributions from the charity were used to purchase farmland in Georgia now known as Muhammad Farms. ...The Three Year Economic Savings Program is listed as ‘Not in Good Standing’ on the Illinois Secretary of State’s website. Over the three-year period, it received \$103,529 in 19 payments ranging from about \$3,000 to nearly \$28,000. The Three Year Economic Savings Program was also granted a \$26,367 commodity loan in the final months of George W. Bush’s presidency. The report, ‘Farm Subsidies and the Big Dogs,’ is based on data released by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as well as information obtained through the Freedom of Information Act.” (Farrakhan, a virulent anti-Semite, is a Chicago neighbor of Obama and friend of his former minister, Reverend Jeremiah Wright.) [52431]

At Townhall.com Conn Carroll writes, “Yesterday, The New York Times reported that ...Obama had hired former-President Clinton Chief of Staff John Podesta as ‘counselor’ for a year. This would actually be the second time Podesta served Obama, since Podesta

led Obama's presidential transition team in 2008. Since then, Podesta has not only returned to the progressive think tank he founded, the Center for American Progress (CAP), but he has also created a brand new think tank, the Washington Center for Equitable Growth, to focus on just income inequality. ... The move to hire Podesta now, as opposed to waiting till after the 2014 elections, is an admission by the White House that their second term legislative agenda (immigration reform, gun control, and climate change) is already dead. If progressives are going to make any progress expanding government during the rest of Obama's [administration], it will only be through unilateral executive action. It will not be sanctioned by Congress." (Podesta's job as "executive power abuse czar" will be to help Obama get around Congress and the U.S. Constitution any way he can, via executive actions and other marginally legal—if not illegal—processes. Obama will push the legal envelope and dare Congress to stop him—knowing there are not enough members of Congress with the courage or clout to commence impeachment proceedings.) [52288, 52289, 52359, 52455, 52619]

Much of Podesta's influence comes from Tom Steyer, a billionaire leftist who earned his fortune as hedge fund manager of Farallon Capital Management. Matthew Continetti writes at FreeBeacon.com, "Podesta is the vehicle through which a radical billionaire's energy policies are about to enter the Oval Office. ... Long a donor to Democratic campaigns, like many liberals Steyer has become obsessed by global warming, and sees the Keystone Pipeline as a metaphor for whether Americans are serious about, and are committed to stopping, the rise in global temperatures. ... Steyer is also a pioneer in the dark money universe of post-Citizens United campaign finance. He is one reason Democratic Super PACs outspent Republican ones 2-to-1 in 2013. He has bankrolled ballot initiatives in California, helped defeat the pro-Keystone, and pro-labor, Democrat Stephen Lynch in the Massachusetts Democratic Senate primary, and most recently spent \$8 million in the Virginia governor's race electing Terry McAuliffe. That, according to Politico, is 'more money, on a per-vote basis, than the famously prolific conservative donors Sheldon and Miriam Adelson spent in the 2012 presidential election.' But it is also pittance of Steyer's \$1.5 billion fortune. ... Podesta's think tank [Center for American Progress, or CAP] takes money from, in alphabetical order, American Electric Power, the American Wind Energy Association, Anglo-American, Constellation, Covanta, Dow Corning (Silicone Manufacturing / Solar), Duke Energy, Enel Green Power, First Solar (Solar Manufacturing), First Wind, PG&E, Talisman, Westport Power, and Xcel Energy. ... CAP is also a revenue machine, a \$39 million ATM into which corporations deposit funds and withdraw influence and alliances. John Podesta has a financial interest in building and maintaining that machine, in fine-tuning it, in expanding the list of depositors and the value of their withdrawals. And his depositors in the world of alternative energy, the dreamers as much as the investors and manufacturers, have a financial interest in limiting the market-share of carbon-heavy extractive industries." [52455, 54422]

Obama's newly created "State, Local, and Tribal Leaders Task Force on Climate Preparedness" meets at the White House, despite a minor snowstorm that prompts federal offices and local schools in Washington, D.C. to (unnecessarily) close. According to CNSNews.com, "The task force's mission is to 'advise the Administration on how the

Federal Government can respond to the needs of communities nationwide that are dealing with extreme weather, sea level rise, and other impacts of climate change.” (Meanwhile, scientists report temperatures as low as a record –94 degrees Celsius, or –137 degrees Fahrenheit, in the East Antarctic.) [52321, 52322, 52323]

One of ObamaCare’s staunchest supporters, Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman-Schultz (D-FL)—who is also chairman of the Democrat National Committee—has yet to enroll in ObamaCare. She claims, “I’m a little busy...” [52340]

KGW.com reports, “For the second week in a row, the Washington [ObamaCare] Healthplanfinder website is down, and it’s causing problems for people who are dealing with billing issues. Some of them say the website is mistakenly debiting their accounts.” (One enrollee who selected December 24 as the date for her payment had her checking account debited on December 9—leaving her with a negative balance on her account. Another enrollee saw his bank account debited twice in error.) Author and columnist Mark Steyn writes, “If you like your checking account, you can keep your checking account.... When Obama has your PIN, it’s Christmas all year round. For him.” [52517, 52556, 52596]

In an interview with ChicagoMag.com, domestic terrorist and former Obama ally William Ayers claims Obama “was a guy around the neighborhood and I was a guy around the neighborhood,” suggesting they did not know each other until they became neighbors in Chicago’s Hyde Park neighborhood. (Ayers likely knew Obama as early as 1981, when Obama supposedly attended Columbia University.) As is typical with most (if not all) interviews with Ayers, he does his best to avoid giving direct answers to questions and tends to instead direct questions to the interviewer. Clearly, Obama has not moved the nation to the political left as Ayers would like. He states, “What in Obama’s [policies] reflects any of my political positions at all? ...I would close Guantanamo. I would never do drone strikes. I would close every foreign American military base. I would probably shut down the Pentagon.” Asked about a single payer health care system, Ayers responds, “I’m 68 years old. I’m on Medicare. Why shouldn’t I have been on Medicare when I was 60, why 65? And why not 55, and then, if 55, why not 50? Why shouldn’t we all be on Medicare? Obama’s Affordable Care Act is a great boon to the health insurance industry. I hate the health insurance industry. Why should they be making money on your misfortune? That’s bullshit.” On the issue of wars, Ayers says, “The war in Vietnam we lost. We lost the war in Afghanistan... you’re attributing to Obama not only good intentions but good actions around Afghanistan and Iraq. Actually he’s not acting well. He’s acting like any imperial leader would act. He wants to have an agreement with [Afghan President Hamid] Karzai because he wants to keep American troops there, trainers there, to keep our interest in oil and all the rest of it on the front burner... We are the imperial guard. Go back in history. This is true of every puppet that the Americans have put up in the last hundred years... We always say at the end of the day, why are these brown people such a disappointment to us? We gave them everything, and look they can’t do it right, they fuck it up... In [Ngo Dinh] Diem’s case we shoot him. In Karzai’s case we demean him.” [52290, 52291, 52603]

Ayers states, “I read the *New York Times* everyday. It’s like a heroin habit. It always makes me slightly sick, but I do it... I don’t read the [*Chicago*] *Tribune* or [*the Chicago*] *Sun-Times*. My favorite blog in Chicago is retired CPS teacher Fred Klonsky’s blog. He blogs on the pension fund and he’s the smartest guy on pensions that I know.” (Klonsky, a former communist party leader, ran a “Small Schools Workshop” and was given more \$1 million in grants from Obama and Ayers when they ran the Chicago Annenberg Challenged on Excellence in Education. Klonsky and his wife Susan were both members of the radical Students for a Democratic Society. Klonsky had blogged for Obama’s web site during his 2008 campaign, but his writings were scrubbed because Obama advisors feared adverse publicity from Klonsky’s links to communist groups. As noted previously in this *Timeline*, Klonsky, a political activist and leader of the New Communist Movement, was an avid advocate of Maoism who formed a pro-Chinese sect called the October League (which then evolved into a Beijing-recognized Communist Party). Klonsky, another disciple of Saul Alinsky, was chairman of the party. He was also one of the first westerners allowed to visit the People’s Republic of China, and was honored with state dinners in Beijing.) [59, 60, 61, 155, 156, 201, 204, 366, 408, 428, 1282, 52290, 52291, 52603]

Of the death of Nelson Mandela, Ayers says, “Great, great, great life... You can be sure that NPR will call him a civil rights leader, although he never called himself that. And you can be sure the *New York Times* will call him a peaceful person even though he led the armed resistance through a bombing campaign that landed him in jail for life. He’s also a Communist. He’s also a black nationalist. He’s many, many things. [Obama] goes to his prison cell on Robben Island and says, this shows what one man with vision and courage can do. I’m sorry, it was a political movement; it was not one man. And he’d be the first to say that. He’d never say, ‘I did it.’ He would say, ‘We did it.’” Ayers says he likes Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT), a socialist, and would like to see his wife, Bernardine Dohrn, on the Supreme Court: “She’d be great. ...I also think Charles Ogletree from Harvard would be fantastic. He came to my reading at the Harvard Bookstore and we had a great evening together.” (Ogletree, a friend of Obama, is a supporter of slavery reparations.) [52290, 52291, 52603]

The Ulsterman Report writes, “The Obama speech writers cranked up the ole’ partisan, walking on the grave of the just dead South African leader today as Barack Obama inserted himself directly into the narrative, and gave a not so subtle hint that all the ills of America and the world are the result of greedy, misinformed, self-serving conservatives. Ah, the irony... Here are the words of a ‘world leader’ clearly in the sunset of his influence on the global stage. It is, yet again, a petulant and partisan entreaty that does a grave disservice to the moment of its sharing:

‘In America, and in South Africa, and in countries all around the globe, we cannot allow our progress to cloud the fact that our work is not yet done. The struggles that follow the victory of formal equality or universal franchise may not be as filled with drama and moral clarity as those that came before, but they are no less important... There are too many people who happily embrace Madiba’s [Mandela’s] legacy of racial reconciliation,

but passionately resist even modest reforms that would challenge chronic poverty and growing inequality.’

You see, having the government take over your personal health choices, spending TRILLIONS we can’t afford, attempting war in Syria, covering up the deaths of Americans in Benghazi, arming dangerous criminals via Fast and Furious, etc., why those are all just ‘MODEST REFORMS’ in the mind of Barack Obama. And if people who wish to make Obama accountable for his disastrous administration, while also voicing sympathy and/or respect for the challenges that once faced Nelson Mandela and South Africa, why those people are just talking out their ass. Not that Barack Obama would know anything about that...” [52292]

The greatest buzz after Obama’s speech is not what he said, but the “funeral selfie” photograph he and two others took at the Mandela memorial service. Seated together, a smiling Obama, British Prime Minister David Cameron, and Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt take a photograph of themselves with a cell phone camera. (A photographer recording the scene captures a visibly annoyed Michelle Obama off to the side. Mrs. Obama then forces a rearrangement of seats so that she is between her husband and Thorning-Schmidt—a relatively attractive blonde.) NBC’s Andrea Mitchell calls Obama’s “selfie” “quite a human moment.” (So is farting, but one shouldn’t do it at a memorial service.) [52293, 52294, 52295, 52296, 52303, 52307, 52349, 52354, 52358, 52402, 52405]

Obama also poses for a photograph with Mohamed Abdelaziz, who FreeBeacon.com calls “the leader of the Polisario Front, a Moroccan separatist group in Algeria that commits massive human rights infractions and has been cited as a ‘prime recruiting grounds for al Qaeda.’ ...Former U.S. officials and other foreign policy insiders expressed outrage over the photo, saying that it is embarrassing for [Obama] to be seen smiling next to the longtime leader of a violent Marxist movement known for torturing innocents, snatching children, and working with one of the deadliest terror groups on the planet. ‘I don’t blame [Obama]; lots of people want their pictures taken with him. But where’s the quality control? What were his aides thinking?’ asked Michael Rubin, a former Pentagon analyst and terrorism expert. ‘The whole reason Obama travels with hundreds of people is to prevent this sort of screw up,’ said Rubin, who first flagged the photo in a column for *Commentary* magazine. ‘This is the African equivalent of accidentally shaking hands with the head of Hamas, Hezbollah, or any of the throwback Palestinian Marxist groups.’” [52684]

Deaf people point out that the person doing the sign language interpretation of the speakers at the Mandela memorial—including Obama—was a fake and was not actually signing what was said. Bruno Druchen, national director of the Deaf Federation of South Africa, tells the Associated Press, the “interpreter” “was moving his hands around, but there was no meaning in what he used his hands for.” [52316, 52320, 52352, 52373, 52374, 52481]

FoxNews.com reports, “Newly declassified documents show that former CIA Director Leon Panetta revealed secret information to ‘Zero Dark Thirty’ scriptwriter Mark Boal, who was allowed to attend Panetta’s speech at CIA headquarters marking the raid that killed Usama [Osama] bin Laden. Judicial Watch filed a request for the more than 200 pages of documents, which the CIA released Tuesday. The documents concerned the internal investigation of its role in the film about the bin Laden raid. In a statement, Panetta says he had no idea Boal was in the audience when he gave the speech. He says he assumed everyone inside had proper clearance.” [52324]

Obama’s approval rating falls to 38 percent in a Quinnipiac poll. His disapproval rating is 57 percent. Among those aged 18–29, Obama’s approval/disapproval rating is 41/49. Among Hispanics, Obama is 50/43. In the same survey, Republicans beat Democrats 41–38 in a “generic ballot” question. On the issue of honesty and trustworthiness, 44 percent say Obama is while 52 percent says he is not. Among men, the percentages are 36/61; among women, 52/44. Obama’s *overall* con game is apparently more effective with women than with men. But on the issue of health care, he is in negative territory with women: 39/55. [52298, 52326]

Obama’s approval/disapproval rating is 42/50 in a New York Times/CBS poll. [52393]

Comedian Jay Leno quips, “In a radio interview, Kanye West said he wants to be the Obama of clothing. That’s what he said. He wants to be the Obama of clothing. And to achieve his goal, he’s designing fashion nobody wants and offering it on a website that doesn’t work.” [52376]

On December 11 the Obama administration announces that 364,682 Americans have “enrolled” in ObamaCare between October 1 and November 30. (The number falls far short of expectations for Obama’s scheme to be successful. Additionally, “enrolled” does not necessarily mean committed to buying insurance by sending in a check for the first premium payment. There are estimates that as few as 5–10 percent of those enrolled have made a payment on their new policies. Depending on state insurance rules, some enrollees who do not submit a payment soon enough will have to reenroll with a later effective date of coverage.) About 803,000 people have signed up for Medicaid during the same period, all of whom will receive free health care paid by the taxpayers, and many—if not most—of the 364,682 who enrolled in ObamaCare plans may be getting taxpayer subsidies for their coverage.) [52299, 52315, 52329, 52334]

While the Obama administration brags that ObamaCare has 365,000 enrollees, the number of Americans whose individual health insurance policies have been canceled nears six million—and cancellation letters continue to be posted at MyCancellation.com. [52332, 52333]

In the *Chicago Tribune*, John Kass comments on Obama’s “funeral selfie” at the Mandela memorial service: “Why would [Obama] take a selfie at a memorial for Mandela?”

Because it wasn't about Mandela. It was about Barack. And isn't it always about Barack? Earlier, Obama sauntered through the crowd, shaking hands, waving, welcoming the love bath they gave him. He wasn't mourning as much as he was campaigning for adoration, a man determined to receive his due. And then came the... selfie. A few days ago, when Mandela passed away at 95, Obama's media managers tweeted a photograph. You'd think he'd tweet a photograph of Mandela. But it wasn't of Mandela. It was of Obama in Mandela's former prison cell, [Obama] having gone to the prison because he couldn't get that photo op he wanted with the ailing South African during Obama's \$100 million African vacation. Obama as Mandela. And then there was Obama as Rosa Parks. To commemorate Parks, who 58 years ago this month defied racists who wanted black people to sit in the back of the bus, Obama released another tweet. Not of Rosa Parks. But of Obama, sitting on the bus by himself, Obama Rosa. 'In a single moment 58 years ago today, Rosa Parks helped change this country,' said the [Obama] tweet. Yet there was Obama on the bus alone. It's all about Barack." [52305]

On MSNBC's *Morning Joe*, anchor Thomas Roberts comments on the Obama-Castro handshake: "I think, I'll tell you my theory, I don't think [Obama] knew that that was Raul Castro. I mean, 'cause, if you play that video again, you can see Castro saying to him 'I'm Castro!' He goes up there and shakes his hand... Watch... Castro pulls him back He's like [sic], 'I'm Castro.' 'Oh, well that's great. Oh, ok.' Anyway, that's my philosophy [sic]. We'll see if anybody will ever admit to that. I don't think he knew who it was! Look at this. Over 90 heads of state are there. Does [Obama] know the seating chart? I don't think so." (More than likely Obama *was* informed as to who would be seated where—if only to allow him to avoid a confrontation with Raul Castro or Iranian President Hassan Rouhani. If Obama was not warned in advance, his staffers were not doing their jobs properly.) [52318]

On *CBS This Morning*, reporter Nancy Cordes calls the budget agreement a "true compromise" and "the reason it's so important is that it could bring an end to this terrible cycle, where Congress can't agree on a yearly budget." She claims the agreement "partially rolls back those deep, across-the-board spending cuts." (There were no "deep spending cuts" to reverse, just minor reductions in spending increases in the 2011 sequestration agreement. Democrats, of course, applaud any "compromise," because that is how they advance their agenda. Democrats propose massive spending increases; establishment Republicans propose smaller spending increases; and conservatives propose spending cuts. The "compromise" always results in substantial spending increase, and the cycle repeats itself the following year. That is how the federal spending grew to \$3.7 trillion per year.) [52382]

Obama's disapproval rating reaches 54 percent in a Wall Street Journal/NBC poll conducted December 4–8. Only 37 percent of those surveyed believe Obama is honest and straightforward, and only 34 percent believe ObamaCare is a good idea. [52319]

FreeBeacon.com reports, "The White House says that an Iranian ballistic missile test would not invalidate a recently signed nuclear accord meant to temporarily halt some of

Iran's most controversial nuclear work. The White House clarified its stance just days before Iran is scheduled to launch another ballistic missile some 75 miles into the atmosphere. The statement contradicts recent remarks indicating that such a test would in fact violate and nullify the weeks-old agreement, which provides Iran with some \$7 billion in relief from economic sanctions in exchange for a partial six-month freeze of its uranium enrichment program. A White House National Security Council (NSC) spokeswoman told PolitiFact on Friday that an Iranian missile test in the next six months would in fact 'be in violation of the agreement' and that 'the agreement would cease to exist.' Asked on Wednesday morning to clarify that statement in light of Iran's intent to launch a rocket next week, a White House official said that PolitiFact got it wrong. 'That statement on ballistic missiles is incorrect,' the official told the Washington Free Beacon via email. 'We have reached out to PolitiFact to correct.' ...The White House confirmed that a ballistic missile test would not invalidate the deal. 'The prohibition would not include testing of a conventional ballistic missile,' according to the correction." (The Obama administration's agreement with Iran allows it to continue its nuclear program and intercontinental ballistic missile program. JihadWatch.org asks, "What *would* be a deal killer? A nuclear missile landing in downtown Tel Aviv? Or is that the point of the agreement in the first place, at least as far as the Iranians are concerned?" Pamela Geller writes at AtlasShrugs.com, "Iranian ballistic missile tests may not be a deal killer for Mr. Obama, but they certainly will be a killer of a great many other people, places and things. A nuclear war is inevitable. The terrible fact is that Israel must strike Iran's nukes and strike them now. Where is the opposition [to] Obama's treason and treachery?") [52432, 52433, 52434]

In *The Wall Street Journal* Norman Podhoretz writes, "The Obama administration tells us that the interim agreement puts Iran on a track that will lead to the abandonment of its quest for a nuclear arsenal. But the Iranians are jubilant because they know that the only abandonment going on is of our own effort to keep them from getting the bomb. Adherents of the new consensus would have us believe that only two choices remain: a war to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons or containment of a nuclear Iran—with containment the only responsible option. Yet as an unregenerate upholder of the old consensus, I remain convinced that containment is impossible, from which it follows that the two choices before us are not war vs. containment but a conventional war now or a nuclear war later. Given how very unlikely it is that ...Obama, despite his all-options-on-the-table protestations to the contrary, would ever take military action, the only hope rests with Israel. If, then, Israel fails to strike now, Iran will get the bomb. And when it does, the Israelis will be forced to decide whether to wait for a nuclear attack and then to retaliate out of the rubble, or to pre-empt with a nuclear strike of their own. But the Iranians will be faced with the same dilemma. Under these unprecedentedly hair-trigger circumstances, it will take no time before one of them tries to beat the other to the punch. And so my counsel to proponents of the new consensus is to consider the unspeakable horrors that would then be visited not just on Israel and Iran but on the entire region and beyond. The destruction would be far worse than any imaginable consequences of an Israeli conventional strike today when there is still a chance to put at least a temporary halt, and conceivably even a permanent one, to the relentless Iranian quest for the bomb." [52412]

Haaretz.com reports, “Senior officials in the [Obama] administration... have conceded over the past few days in conversations with colleagues in Israel that the value of the economic sanctions relief to Iran could be much higher than originally thought in Washington, security sources in Israel told Haaretz. In official statements by the United States immediately after the agreement limiting Iran’s nuclear program was signed in Geneva between Iran and the six powers at the end of November it was said that the economic relief Iran would receive in exchange for signing the agreement would be relatively low—\$6 billion or \$7 billion. Israeli assessments were much higher—about \$20 billion at least.” (Pamela Geller at AtlasShrugs.com comments, “Obama’s treachery was worse than we imagined. And Obama is laughing all the way to the bomb. Obama’s plan allowed Iran to keep enriching uranium, spinning their centrifuges, and building advanced new centrifuges, without having to dismantle a single centrifuge. Nineteen thousand centrifuges. Last week, Iran announced it had developed ballistic missile technology, which could eventually allow it to fire a nuclear payload over great distances. And the quising in the White House paid 20 billion in jizya.”) [52435, 52436]

Secretary of Health and Human Services again testifies before a House committee hearing—where she does her best to blame insurance companies for the fact that most ObamaCare enrollees will not have coverage in effect on January 1, 2014. Congressman Michael Burgess (R-TX) tells Sebelius how absurd it is to force people to go to Health care.gov and then also make them contact the insurance company. Burgess: “Do you know how hard it is to actually make that payment, hold your billfold out and actually make that payment? Have you done that yourself?” Sebelius: “I have not.” Burgess: “Well I’ll tell you, it’s almost impossible. I’ve never seen a business where you get to the point in the fundamental business transaction where you’re gonna make the payment, and you can’t do it. That is a flawed system.” (Arguably, there is no point in having Healthcare.gov at all if the consumer must also contact the insurance company to confirm enrollment and pay his premiums. The entire process could have been accomplished through the insurance company to begin with. NationalReview.com’s Jim Geraghty observes at Morning Jolt, “It’s as if Amazon.com referred you to the book publisher’s website to finalize your purchase.”) [52345, 52355, 52356, 52357, 52394, 52395, 52396]

Sebelius discounts the fact that millions of Americans have had their insurance policies canceled, saying they are now “unlocked from a policy” that they did not want. She tells the committee, “I talk to people every day [whose insurance policies were canceled] who now have 40 or 50 choices, a range of marketplace plans, and the option to pick and choose...” She adds, “A lot of individuals who received cancellation notices are thrilled with the choices that are now available to them.” (First, no one was “locked into” a policy before ObamaCare. Consumers are free to cancel policies they do not like and find a replacement policy with another insurer. Second, ObamaCare does not provide “40 or 50 choices.” It provides only four plan options: bronze, silver, gold, and platinum. Lastly, few Americans are “thrilled” that their policies were canceled and with the “choices” that are now available. Their choice has been drastically reduced, and their premiums have most likely increased because of ObamaCare.) [52417]

House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH) defends the budget deal, complaining that conservative groups opposed it “before they ever saw it. They’re using our members, and they’re using the American people for their own goals. This is ridiculous. Listen, if you’re for more deficit reduction, you’re for this agreement.” (Boehner is incorrect. The agreement will not reduce deficits.) Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) states, “I’m real disappointed in the deal. I’m sure it’s the best [Congressman] Paul [Ryan (R-WI)] could get. But it’s not anything I can support... What we ought to be doing is the hard work [needed to cut spending]. None of the waste, the duplication, the fraud—none of it [has been addressed]. And yet, we’re going to raise spending back up because the political powers that be want to spend more money rather than be responsible with what we know needs to be done up here—which is hard work, eliminating all the stupidity and fraud, duplication that’s going on.” Congressman Adam Schiff (D-CA) complains, “I’m skeptical about what I’ve heard so far. I don’t want to see an agreement that’s balanced on the backs of federal employees who have already given up over \$100 billion in terms of sacrifice over the last few years in lost wages and a freeze in terms of their income.” (The agreement requires that federal employees pay an additional 1.3 percent of their paychecks for their generous retirement benefits.) [52336, 52337, 52338, 52339, 52350, 52377, 52378, 52379, 52389]

NationalReview.com posts an analysis of the Ryan-Murray budget deal:

–It boosts spending right now, a total of \$71 billion over the next two years—\$63 billion in new discretionary spending, and \$8 billion for a 3-month extension of the doc fix.

–The deficit increases under the Ryan/Murray plan for at least the next 3 years. Net deficit reduction would not begin until FY2017, after ...Obama leaves office.

–It is not ‘paid for’ over the Budget Control Act (BCA) window of 2014–2021, eroding the \$2.1 trillion in spending cuts that were achieved in the BCA in exchange for the \$2.1 trillion debt ceiling increase in 2011.

–Under the Ryan/Murray package, claimed savings during the BCA period come predominately from fee/revenue increases rather than lower spending. So, it doesn’t reduce government, but rather enables a larger government.

–About half of the \$85 billion in ‘savings’ in Ryan/Murray are achieved in 2022–2023, after the BCA period ends. Most of those savings are from the continuation of policies not included in the baseline, so are the result of baseline games rather than genuine reforms of bankrupt entitlements.

–Accounting for interest costs, which are higher near-term because of the new spending endorsed in the Ryan/Murray package, net reduction in the debt is no more than \$15 billion in 10 years. The \$23 billion in deficit reduction claimed by Ryan/Murray does not include interest costs.

–The Ryan/Murray package raids certain Federal trust funds, employing policies that should be used for fixing programs and possible deficit reduction instead for higher spending, like federal retirement contributions changes.

–This bill reduces retirement benefits for current military members and retirees—who gave 20 or more years of service—but spares current federal civilian employees from any changes to their retirement benefits.

–It wipes out the need for a budget resolution in 2015, allowing Senate Democrats to again avoid taking hard votes on budget issues on the Senate floor. And, with all the reserve funds included in the Ryan/Murray package, it allows Harry Reid and Senate Democrats the chance to duck votes on Budget Act points of order against specific bills.” (In other words, there are more than a few reasons for conservatives to oppose the agreement.) [52350, 52351]

FoxNews.com reports, “Democratic senators appeared to gloss over new allegations—as well as an internal investigation—against a Homeland Security nominee, voting Wednesday to advance his nomination over the stiff objections of Republicans. Alejandro Mayorkas, tapped for the No. 2 position at the Department of Homeland Security, and others are facing an inspector general probe over allegations they helped a company with ties to Virginia Gov.-elect Terry McAuliffe secure visas for investors. Adding to the controversy, The Washington Times reported overnight that Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid [D-NV] reached out to Mayorkas to help speed along visas for foreign investors of a politically connected casino hotel in Las Vegas. But the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee on Wednesday voted 9-0 to advance his nomination to the full Senate—with all Republicans sitting out and voting ‘present.’ ...[Mayorkas] currently heads U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. In that role, he has come under criticism for his handling of the EB-5 program, which allows foreigners investing at least a half-million dollars in a U.S. project to seek a special visa. The Times report, citing internal government documents, claimed the Obama administration expedited visa applications for about two dozen foreign investors for a Las Vegas casino hotel after pressure from Reid and his staff.” [52342, 52441]

Mayorkas’ main “qualification” for the job is his fundraising for Obama in 2008. According to Michelle Malkin at Townhall.com, “During the Clinton years, then U.S. Attorney Mayorkas phoned the White House on behalf of convicted drug dealer Carlos Vignali. Mayorkas joined other high-profile California liberals in the dialing-for-pardons campaign. Vignali’s father (also suspected of drug trafficking) had dumped \$200,000 in the coffers of Hillary Clinton’s brother, Hugh, to secure his son’s commutation. Mayorkas pleaded ignorance and admitted failure to do his ‘due diligence.’ Like fellow Clinton corruptocrat and current Attorney General Eric Holder, Mayorkas’ pardongate ‘mistake’ cost him nothing. He was instead rewarded with plum government positions and access.” [52342, 52441]

Senator Mary Landrieu (D-LA), desperately trying to keep her Senate seat, runs an ad criticizing Obama for his “you can keep your plan” promise and arguing she is doing all she can to make him keep his promise. (The ad conveniently neglects to note that Landrieu herself made the *same* promise, or that she voted *against* a 2010 Republican effort to protect existing individual plans by reversing Obama administration regulations to outlaw them.) [52343]

At WashingtonPost.com Sarah Kliff points out the obvious: there has been “a big increase in privately-insured women obtaining contraceptives without any co-payment

over the past year” because of ObamaCare. (If the government forced employers to provide employees with free automobiles there would be “a big increase” in the number of new cars on the road as well. Whether Kliff is in the running for a Pulitzer Prize for her incisive reporting is not known.) [52360]

Breitbart.com reports, “On Wednesday, House Oversight Committee Chairman Darrell Issa [R-CA] sent a letter to Secretary of Health and Human Services [HHS] Kathleen Sebelius, angrily telling her that HHS’ attempts to block contractors from giving information to Congress on Obamacare was a violation of law. On December 6, HHS told Creative Computing Solutions, Inc. not to give information to the Oversight Committee, stating, ‘If you receive a request for this information from Congress, CMS [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services] will respond directly to the requestor.’ Issa wrote, ‘The Department’s most recent effort to stonewall, however, has morphed from mere obstinacy into criminal obstruction of a congressional investigation.’ He added, ‘Obstructing a Congressional investigation is a crime. The federal obstruction laws reflect the fact that Congress’ right of access to information is constitutionally based and critical to the integrity and effectiveness of our oversight and investigative activities. For that reason, it is widely understood that private citizens and companies cannot contract away their duty to comply with a congressional request for documents.’ Under the law, Issa pointed out, ‘any effort to enforce a contract that prevents a federal employee—or in this case, a contractor—from communicating from Congress is unlawful.’” [52361, 52364]

Author, attorney, and talk show host Mark Levin comments on the budget deal: “We have over a 90 trillion dollar unfunded liability... And ladies and gentlemen, soon it’s 100 trillion dollars. You know what that means? That means our kids and their kids and every future generation is going to be destroyed. Because there’s not enough currency on the face of the earth to address that. Then we have what’s called the fiscal operating debt. And I distinguish that from the unfunded liabilities, the entitlements, the fiscal operating debt built up from one budget after another—not even counting Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. It’s almost 17.3 trillion dollars. ...And as a nation, we’re focused on 23 billion dollars over 10 years which is never going to happen? And the media running around talking about, ‘Wow, Washington actually works’ and the Republicans saying ‘anything but a government shutdown.’ Do they not understand that the whole damn thing is gonna shut down and collapse? And it won’t just be 17 percent of the government. It’ll be your savings. It’ll be your mutual funds. It’ll be your pensions. It’ll be the value of your paycheck. It’ll be your college fund. It’ll be EVERYTHING. Because once the spiral occurs there’s no undoing it. Because man makes a situation that cannot be fixed until there’s an ultimate collapse. It’s called the laws of economics and they are as serious and real as the laws of physics.” [52362]

On Heartland Talk Radio, Sara Marie Brenner interviews cancer patient Bill Elliott—who had recently related the tale of his canceled health insurance policy to Megyn Kelly on the Fox News channel’s *The Kelly File*. After that television appearance, both Elliott and his insurance agent, C. Steven Tucker, were both notified that they were being audited by the IRS. Elliott tells Brenner that a Congressman told him that someone “from the top

ordered the [IRS] investigation of me and Steve [Tucker].” Elliott also says the IRS action has been ended, thanks to a Democrat Senator from North Carolina. (Kay Hagan is that state’s Democrat Senator. Whether “from the top” means someone at the IRS, the Treasury Department, or the White House is not made clear.) [52368, 52369]

FoxNews.com reports, “Congressional staffers were warned Wednesday not to rely on information provided by the ObamaCare exchange website, in an email alert informing them they might not be enrolled for coverage even if they technically signed up. The ‘very important’ message, sent to Capitol Hill officials Wednesday afternoon, is the latest sign that the government has concerns about the reliability of the system. Despite improvements in the basic operation of the exchange websites, and increased enrollment, there are lingering concerns about whether those signing up will actually be covered on Jan. 1. ‘Please DO NOT ASSUME you are covered unless you have seen the Confirmation Letter from the Disbursing Office!’ the email to staffers said. The email urged staffers who have signed up via the DC Health Link—the health care exchange for the District of Columbia—to double check with the office that they’re enrolled.” [52363]

At BizJournals.com Dawn Kurry reports, “Nearly half of America’s chief financial officers say their firms are considering reducing employment in response to the Affordable Care Act, according to the latest quarterly survey of CFOs conducted by Duke University’s Fuqua School of Business. The survey says that 40 percent of CFOs say they may limit some workers to 30-hour work weeks to avoid ACA provisions, 20 percent say they may hire fewer workers and 10 percent say they may lay some people off. ‘An unintended consequence of the Affordable Care Act will be a reduction in full-time employment growth in the United States,’ says John Graham, Duke Fuqua School of Business finance professor and director of the study. ‘Companies plan to increase full-time employment by 1.4 percent in 2014, a rate of growth which is down from last quarter and unlikely to put a dent in the unemployment rate. CFOs indicate that full-time employment growth would be stronger in the absence of the ACA.’” [52365]

At CanadaFreePress.com Doug Hagmann reports on a series of emails exchanges between William Ayers and a man named Dan Popa: “On Sunday, December 8, 2013, Mr. Popa wrote to Bill Ayers about the release of his new book, and posed the following: ‘Now, why don’t you come out for REAL and admit you wrote [Obama’s book] DREAMS [From My Father] and throw a monkey wrench in Obama’s war plans by derailing him. If you are truly so war despising as you claim... PROVE IT. Give Obama a real Christmas present.’ ...On Monday, December 9, 2013, Bill Ayers answered Mr. Popa with the following response, copied in exact form from the exchange: **‘I WROTE DREAMS!!! Read p 197 198 of [my latest book] Public Enemy. I wrote it, but nobody believes me.’ Bill**” (*The Obama Timeline* agrees with author Jack Cashill and others that Ayers wrote *Dreams From My Father* for Obama.) [52366]

The state of Michigan passes legislation that prohibits taxpayer-financed abortions unless the life of the mother is at risk. [52371]

AtlasShrugs.com reports, that London-based Shi'ite Cleric Abdallah Al-Khilaf has issued a "fatwa that permits sodomy to widen the anus as a means to place explosives in the anus for the purpose of Jihad." (Obama has no comment.) [52372]

At Breitbart.com Mike Flynn reports, "Kentucky Republicans picked up a seat in the state House Tuesday in a special election. Republican Suzanne Miles edged Democrat Kim Humphrey to capture a seat that had been held by Democrats for decades. Trailing late in the race, Miles made the race a referendum on ObamaCare. Her success in using a federal issue to capture a seat in the state legislature could be a harbinger for 2014. Republican polling at the end of November showed Miles trailing the Democrat by 6 points. Miles' ability to turn the campaign around so quickly, in a little more than a week, shows the potency of the increasingly unpopular ObamaCare law as a political issue." Republican National Committee deputy press secretary Raffi Williams says, "This election proves ObamaCare will be toxic for every Democrat running for office in 2014. If ObamaCare can flip a state house seat that has been held by Democrats for decades, then just think what it will do to 2014 Democrats who actually voted for the bill." [52370]

WND.com reports, "European religious-rights advocates meeting at a recent conference in Berlin expressed disbelief that the U. S. didn't obtain the release of Pastor Saeed Abedini as a condition for its nuclear deal with Iran. American Center for Law and Justice Chief Counsel Jay Sekulow said representatives he met in the German capital from countries such as Germany, Britain, France and Turkey are 'stunned that the U.S. failed to secure the freedom of one of its own citizens.' 'While there is growing global concern about Pastor Saeed, there's also confusion as well,' Sekulow said." [52413]

DailyCaller.com reports, "The bureaucracy tasked with Obamacare implementation may be violating a law that requires government agencies to keep private information safe. Under the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), the Department of Health and Human Services' Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is required to have an 'Authority to Operate,' or ATO. In order to receive an ATO, new information tech systems must perform a set of tests, including 'Security Control Assessments' (SCA). But according to CMS's 2014 budget request, no such security assessment took place. The Federal Healthcare Marketplace website was rolled out without full end-to-end testing. Indeed, the large number of new systems created because of Obamacare created a backlog of testing. CMS could not complete its required security. Failing to complete the required means no ATO, and hence a violation of federal law under FISMA." [52383]

Loretta Fuddy, the director of Hawaii's Department of Health—and one of few human beings who has ever claimed to have seen Obama's "real" birth certificate—is killed in the crash of a small plane off the coast of Molokai. Eight others aboard the 2002 Cessna Grand Caravan survive. At ThePostEmail.com editor Sharon Rondeau writes, "Fuddy was appointed by Gov. Neil Abercrombie and had reportedly made available two certified copies of Barack Hussein Obama's purported long-form birth certificate to

[attorney] Judith Corley of [the law firm] Perkins Coie on April 25, 2011. On April 27, 2011, an image was posted on the White House website purported to be Obama's long-form birth certificate acquired by special request from Obama to Fuddy and also through Corley. It was reported that on April 25, 'Director Fuddy personally witnessed the copying of the original Certificate of Live Birth and attested to the authenticity of the two copies.' It has been speculated that Perkins Coie and Fuddy have been involved in the cover-up surrounding the birth certificate, which has been declared by a law enforcement investigation to be a 'computer-generated forgery.'"[52380, 52381, 52399, 52400, 52404, 52414, 52415, 52422, 52464, 52465, 52469, 52471, 52478, 52527, 52723, 52760, 52772, 52812, 53394, 53396]

Rondeau reports that Fuddy "had replaced Dr. Neal Palafox, who was nominated by Abercrombie but after three weeks withdrew his name from consideration. ...Abercrombie reportedly told CNN that he was 'there when he [Obama] was born [in Hawaii]', but the criminal investigation carried out by the Cold Case Posse revealed that there is no record of Obama having been present in the state before the age of five. ...In December 2011, Fuddy was named as a defendant in a lawsuit compelling the Health Department to release Obama's official records. She was also named as the defendant in the case of Duncan Sunahara, who sought a certified copy of his deceased sister's long-form birth certificate. Investigators suspect Ms. Sunahara's birth certificate could have been utilized to provide Obama with an approximate birth certificate number for the time in which he claims he was born." (Virginia Sunahara was born on August 4, 1961 and died the next day. It has been suggested that her birth certificate number was used for the Obama forgery because Virginia would certainly never request a copy. When her brother Duncan asked for a copy of Virginia's birth certificate, Fuddy's office responded, "We have no records responsive to your request." Fuddy later filed a motion to dismiss in *Sunahara v. Department of Health*, a lawsuit filed by Duncan Sunahara to force the release of records.) [20083, 20094, 20095, 20127, 20162, 20179, 20180, 20181, 20182, 20272, 20966, 20967, 20986, 22089, 22090, 22148, 22182, 22209, 22547, 22583, 22615, 22809, 22880, 22918, 22930, 23294, 23295, 23296, 23305, 23311, 23312, 23313, 23317, 23318, 23319, 23360, 25383, 25394, 25395, 27066, 27067, 27309, 27310, 27311, 27877, 27878, 27804, 27805, 27806, 27807, 27823, 27824, 27837, 27854, 27870, 27900, 27912, 27941, 27942, 27962, 28056, 28057, 28091, 28585, 37322, 43750, 43760, 43761, 43910, 52380, 52381, 52464, 52465, 52469, 52471, 52478, 52527, 52723, 52760, 52772, 52812, 53394, 53396]

Cold Case Posse lead investigator Mike Zullo has stated, "I was shocked by the lengths the Hawaii Department of Health has gone to deny the family of Virginia Sunahara a copy of the original long-form birth certificate that the family is lawfully entitled to request and obtain. I had to ask the question why this little girl's 1961 long-form birth certificate was so disconcerting to the Hawaii Department of Health?" The reasonable questions to ask are, "If Fuddy could find Obama's birth certificate, why could she not find Sunahara?" and, "If there is nothing to hide, why is Hawaii hiding it?" Fuddy had refused to comply with subpoenas in every lawsuit related to the Obama birth certificate fraud. (It is worth noting that the husband of Hawaii's deputy attorney general is an attorney for the Obama/Dunham family.) Some believe that Fuddy ordered someone to

forge Obama's birth certificate and reluctantly did so—but left “clues” to make it obvious that it was a forgery. Others may believe that Fuddy herself was the forger. Document expert Douglass Vogt has claimed that the forger was a woman in Hawaii, and that he has identified those clues. [20083, 20094, 20095, 20127, 20162, 20179, 20180, 20181, 20182, 20272, 20966, 20967, 20986, 22089, 22090, 22148, 22182, 22209, 22547, 22583, 22615, 22809, 22880, 22918, 22930, 23294, 23295, 23296, 23305, 23311, 23312, 23313, 23317, 23318, 23319, 23360, 25383, 25394, 25395, 27066, 27067, 27309, 27310, 27311, 27877, 27878, 27804, 27805, 27806, 27807, 27823, 27824, 27837, 27854, 27870, 27900, 27912, 27941, 27942, 27962, 28056, 28057, 28091, 28585, 37322, 43750, 43760, 43761, 43910, 52380, 52381, 52464, 52465, 52469, 52471, 52478, 52527, 52723, 52760, 52772, 52812, 53394, 53396]

It bears repeating that Tim Adams, a former Senior Elections Clerk (2008) of the City and County of Honolulu Elections Commission, has stated in a sworn affidavit, “Senior officers in the City and County of Honolulu Elections Division told me on multiple occasions that no Hawaii long-form, hospital-generated birth certificate existed for Senator Obama in the Hawaii Department of Health and there was no record that any such document had ever been on file in the Hawaii Department of Health or any other branch or department of the Hawaii government. In addition to the lack of a genuine Hawaii long-form birth certificate Adams notes that there was no evidence that Obama was born at any Hawaiian hospital. Senior officers in the City and County of Honolulu Elections Division further told me on multiple occasions that Hawaii State government officials had made inquiries about Sen. Obama's birth records to officials at Queens Medical Center and Kapi'olani Medical Center in Honolulu and that neither hospital had any record of Senator Obama having been born there, even though Governor Abercrombie is now asserting and various Hawaii government officials continue to assert Barack Obama, Jr. was born at Kapi'olani Medical Center on Aug. 4, 1961.” [52478, 52479, 52480]

Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) discusses the Ryan-Murray budget deal with Neil Cavuto on Fox News: “This budget deal is worse than a continuing resolution because it actually increases spending by \$60 billion in the first two years and we know the history of Congress is that they lie. They don't keep their word. So after two years, no budget deal is worth the paper it's written on, it's only worth something in the first year or two and, mark my words, they'll go back on this deal also after a year or two and they don't like it. So we should increase the spending cuts.” Cavuto: “I think it is an example of the type of deal—maybe I'm wrong, I don't want to put deals in his mouth or head—that a Chris Christie would come up with where they get deal done, it might not be perfect to either side but it keeps moving the ball forward. What do you think of that?” Paul: “But here's the problem, it doesn't. It moves it backwards. It is worse than the status quo. The status quo will spend \$60 billion less than the budget deal over the next two years. They do some ledger domain and do some shell games and they want to say that there's less addition to the deficit, but over ten years, this deal will add \$7 trillion to the deficit. It does not significantly alter our course. We're still on a course for disaster.” [52392]

On MSNBC's *Hardball*, former Obama campaign guru David Axelrod addresses Obama's broken ObamaCare promises: "I think part of it is, is, is, is being honest about it, and he has been honest about it. Part of it is getting it fixed as best that you can. Uh, there's no doubt that that is at the core of the problem when you come to this measure [Obama's plummeting poll numbers], and, uh, I think he was ill-served, uh, because, uh, I, I'm sure when he said what he said he believed it. When they put the grandfather clause in, he believed that that would take care of, uh, these kinds of transitional problems. It didn't. Uh, and, you know, I think the real lesson here is don't ever speak in absolutes because there's always gonna be an exception and that exception is going to become an example that your opponents, uh, lift up. And in this case, there were many examples." (Axelrod is lying, just as Obama certainly knew he was lying when he said, "If you like your plan, you can keep your plan, period." Further, the "grandfather clause" was never intended to allow people to keep their existing plans because the Affordable Care Act language *already provided for that*. The "grandfather clause" added restrictions to that language so that plans could *not* be retained. *Not adding the clause* would have done a better job of protecting Americans with individual health insurance policies.) [52388]

On *Hannity*, Congressman Paul Ryan (R-WI) tells host Sean Hannity, "This is not an agreement to balance the budget—that's what our [House] budget does. Guess what, Sean? Elections have consequences. We're going to have to win a couple of elections to actually pass the kind of budgets that you and I are in favor of, the one I passed in the House just last spring. The House Republicans have passed three budgets in a row that actually balance the federal budget—" Hannity: "So this is not your ideal budget." Ryan: "No! It's not even close to my ideal budget. ... Here's the problem Sean: Barack Obama is [in the White House] and Harry Reid is the Senate Majority Leader. Sean, we're gonna have to win some elections to [reduce spending]... Sincerely, I don't think ... Obama is gonna be our solution to our fiscal crisis. So the question is, what can we do in the meantime to buy the country time?"

At NationalReview.com Jonathan Strong writes, "Senate Republicans scrubbing the Ryan-Murray budget deal have come across a little-noticed provision that will limit the GOP's ability to block tax increases in future years. The bill includes language from the Senate Democrats' budget that voids senators' ability to raise a budget 'point of order' against replacing the sequester cuts with tax increases. The process is quite complicated, but in practice it grants Harry Reid the authority to send tax increases to the House with a bare majority, rather than the 60-vote threshold that would be required under a point of order. The provision has angered key Republican senators. Reeling from Harry Reid's unprecedented use of the 'nuclear option' to end the filibuster on executive-branch nominations, they are dismayed that Paul Ryan would have backed another limit to their power. 'This is an appalling power grab that should never have been allowed to be in a final agreement. It's essentially the 'nuclear option' part two, eroding minority rights in the Senate even further. Harry Reid must be very happy,' a Senate GOP aide says. A House aide says Reid can send tax bills to the House all he wants, since they will never fly in the lower chamber. 'House Republicans would never approve a tax increase,' he says. While that's true, the change will likely give Reid a potent political cudgel to hit

Republicans, since passage of one bill can put pressure on the other chamber to take it up.” [52390, 52391]

North Korean dictator Kim Jong Un has his uncle, Jang Song Thaek executed for allegations of corruption, drug use, gambling, womanizing and leading a “dissolute and depraved life.” (Onyango “Omar” Obama is no doubt happy to be living in the United States. The method of execution, according to an unconfirmed and likely false story in the Chinese newspaper *Wen Wei Po*, was for Song-Thaek to be fed alive, “along with five assistants,” to “120 starving dogs... While the dictator and 300 of his frightened underlings watched for one hour. ...The extended families of the dead officials may have been sent to concentration camps, where most will die over the next few months and years.”) Some news reports speculate that Kim Jong Un’s aunt, Kim Kyong-hui, may also have been “taken care of,” and the 28-year-old dictator’s own wife has reportedly not been seen in public for seven weeks, and according to the *Daily Mail*, “reports suggest that the day after the execution, Ministry of State troops arrived in the Pyongyang area of Pyongyang and took away hundreds of people.” [52401, 52403, 52644, 52749, 52824, 53150, 53192, 53252]

Late in the evening, the Senate votes 51–44 to confirm Cornelia “Nina” Pollard, Obama’s radical leftist nominee for the D.C. Circuit Court. [52385]

On December 12 DailyCaller.com reports, “Starting Jan. 1, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) will begin slashing 14 percent of their Home Health Care Prospective Payment Program budget, driving small home health-care providers out of business and potentially affecting millions of poor, elderly citizens in need of physical rehabilitation. The cuts—which are being made to fund Obamacare—will slash the homecare budget 3.5 percent every year for the next four. ‘By CMS’s own calculation, 40 percent or nearly 5,000 home health companies—mainly small businesses—will experience a ‘net loss’ in revenue due to the cuts and go into the red by 2017,’ The Washington Examiner reports. ‘That will put many of them out of business.’ The cuts to Medicare are part of approximately \$176 billion Obamacare takes from the program between now and 2022.” [52384, 52817]

On MSNBC, former White House press secretary Robert Gibbs says, “It’s very tough to see how the Democrats retain the Senate [in the November 2014 mid-term elections].” (At NYPost.com John Podhoretz writes, “Obama’s belly flop has solidified the likelihood that the GOP will take control of three Democratic seats—Montana, South Dakota and West Virginia [where Democrat incumbents are retiring, along with Iowa]. And for the same reason, incumbents are increasingly threatened in Louisiana, Arkansas, Alaska and North Carolina. Meanwhile, Republicans don’t seem in much danger of losing any of their seats.”) [52426]

By a vote of 332–94 the House of Representatives approves the Ryan-Murray budget deal. (The Senate is likely to approve the legislation—albeit with limited Republican support—and Obama will sign it into law.) [52397, 52398, 52440]

By a vote of 350–69 the House passes a compromise defense authorization bill.

At WeeklyStandard.com Daniel Halper reports, “Congressman Tom Rice of South Carolina, a Republican, is sponsoring a resolution in the House of Representatives that would, if adopted, direct the legislative body ‘to bring a civil action for declaratory or injunctive relief to challenge certain policies and actions taken by the executive branch.’ In other words, Rep. Rice wants to take ...Obama to court for not faithfully executing the laws.” In a letter to other members of Congress asking for their support, Rice writes that Obama “has adopted a practice of picking and choosing which laws he wants to enforce. In most cases, his laws of choice conveniently coincide with his Administration’s political agenda. Our Founding Fathers created the Executive Branch to implement and enforce the laws written by Congress and vested this power in the President. However, ...Obama has chosen to ignore some of the laws written by Congress and implemented by preceding Presidents. This resolution allows the House of Representatives to bring legal action against the Executive Branch and challenge recent actions, inactions, and policies.” [52408]

At Townhall.com Heather Ginsberg reports on Obama’s reliance on celebrities (Adam “I hate this country” Levine, Tayana Alia, Fran Drescher, Wilmer Valderrama, and Obama boy-toy Kal Penn) to help sell ObamaCare to wary citizens: “The [propaganda] campaign will consist of messages from celebrities, web videos, a new website and a live-streamed event in January. ‘The idea is a drumbeat of dialogue, a drumbeat of discussion about coverage—not about glitches, not about the politics, not about the pundits,’ said Peter Lee, executive director of Covered California, according to Bloomberg. I can’t say I am surprised that the Obama administration is trying to do everything they can to get people engaged in the health care discussion. They are trying to revive a policy that has completely failed the people and has been a disaster so far. Maybe [*People* magazine’s] sexiest man alive [allegedly the skinny, highly-tattooed, high-pitched singer Levine] will be able to convince people to sign up for health care?!” [52409, 52452, 52453]

Reuter reports, “Fifteen people on their way to a wedding in Yemen were killed in an air strike after their party was mistaken for an al Qaeda convoy, local security officials said on Thursday. The officials did not identify the plane in the strike in central al-Bayda province, but tribal and local media sources said that it was a drone. ‘An air strike missed its target and hit a wedding car convoy, ten people were killed immediately and another five who were injured died after being admitted to the hospital,’ one security official said. Five more people were injured, the officials said. The United States has stepped up drone strikes as part of a campaign against Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), regarded by Washington as the most active wing of the militant network. Yemen, AQAP’s main stronghold, is among a handful of countries where the United States acknowledges using drones, although it does not comment on the practice. Human Rights Watch said in a detailed report in August that U.S. missile strikes, including armed drone attacks, have killed dozens of civilians in Yemen.” [52411]

JNS.org reports, “Egypt’s new draft constitution, to be voted on in a national referendum in January, is being hailed for its improvements over the 2012 Islamist-backed

constitution. But the new constitution still has a number of shortcomings regarding religious and personal freedoms, according to concerned Egyptian Christians and human rights groups. ‘Personally I’m cautiously optimistic,’ said Halim Meawad, co-founder of Coptic Solidarity, a U.S.-based international Coptic Christian human rights organization. Meawad said the draft constitution is an improvement over the Muslim Brotherhood constitution of 2012, particularly with elimination of Article 219, which defined aspects of Sharia law on which legislation could be based. Article 219 and other features of the 2012 constitution led many liberal and Christian leaders to boycott the Muslim Brotherhood government, eventually culminating in popular protests and the military’s ouster of Islamist President Mohamed Morsi in July 2013.” (Pamela Geller writes at AtlasShrugs.com, “Now if only Obama can keep his grubby sharia-happy mitts off the newly restored and fragile political process in Egypt. The Muslim Brotherhood and their patron, Obama, are the threat to freedom-loving people and religious minorities living under the sharia.”) [52560, 52561, 52562]

StarTribune.com reports, “Last month, while Minnesota’s new health insurance exchange site was scrambling to fix glitches and under fire from critics, its director was on vacation. MNsure director April Todd-Malmlov took a two-week vacation to Costa Rica around Thanksgiving. Gov. Mark Dayton defended her right to take a pre-scheduled trip, but critics of the fledgling health insurance exchange pounced. The conservative group Watchdog.org put out a press release Thursday, condemning her absence while ‘thousands of frustrated Minnesotans were notified about glitches and errors in their applications on the state insurance exchange.’” [52423, 52665, 52727, 52835]

The White House announces \$100 million in new spending for mental health programs. At FoxNews.com Barnini Chakraborty writes, “[W]hile many applauded the monetary commitment, a closer look shows that the federal funds pale in comparison to what the states have been committing over the past year—and may do little to reverse decades of neglect. Texas alone is committing more than twice the federal amount, having boosted its mental health funding by \$259 million—the largest increase in state history. According to the White House, \$50 million of the \$100 million will go to the Department of Health and Human Services budget to help community health centers hire more mental health professionals and provide additional services. The rest will be used by the Agriculture Department to improve mental health facilities in rural areas. ...John Grohol, founder and CEO of Psych Central, ...called it a ‘good start’ in an online posting Thursday. ‘But once you divide that amount by the approximately 750 community mental health centers in the country, it comes out to just \$67,000 per center,’ Grohol said. ‘That’s one additional mental health professional per center—if that professional were a psychologist or such; maybe 2 if they were master’s level or less.’” (That more Americans will be added to Medicaid because of ObamaCare may mean little, as large numbers of mental health professionals do not accept Medicaid—or even private health insurance.) [52416]

In a tacit—if not explicit—admission that the HealthCare.gov disaster is continuing, the Obama administration asks health insurance companies to “deem” people to have coverage even if they have not yet paid their premiums for ObamaCare policies. The

Department of Health and Human Services moves the payment deadline from December 23 to December 31 and calls on insurers to cover customers on January 1 even if payments have not been processed. Yevgeniy Feyman, a Manhattan Institute scholar, tells Fox News, “The administration needs [ObamaCare] to work, so they want to give it as much time as humanly possible. Whether that means people have coverage or not, is something else. If someone goes on the exchange on Dec. 31 and signs up for coverage at 11 p.m., I find it hard to believe that on Jan. 1 they will have coverage. ... This screws insurers. I don’t know any insurer that can get coverage ready to go in one day.” Rory Cooper, communications director for House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA), states, “It’s clear the administration knows Obamacare’s problems are only going to get worse, and patients will be the ones who suffer. What’s not clear is whether they understand the confusion and chaos they continue to cause.” [52418, 52424, 52450]

Devon Herrick, senior analyst at the National Center for Policy Analysis, tells Fox News, “This will kill insurance companies. I don’t think insurance companies will be there on New Year’s Day figuring out what they owe, who they need to bill and who has legitimate coverage. You can see what a mess this is—I can’t imagine insurance companies can solve this in one day, especially when that day is a holiday.” [52473]

Politifact calls Obama’s “If you like your health care plan you can keep it. Period,” the “lie of the year.” (Arguably, Politifact is five years late in its characterization of Obama’s statement. In 2008 Politifact said of Obama’s promise, “Obama is accurately describing his health care plan here. He advocates a program that seeks to build on the current system, rather than dismantling it and starting over. Obama’s plan essentially takes today’s system and seeks to expand it to the uninsured. It creates national pools for individuals to buy their own cheaper insurance. It increases eligibility for the poor and children to enroll in initiatives like Medicaid and the State Children’s Health Insurance Program. And it has several strategies to rein in costs for everyone, such as streamlining medical record-keeping and emphasizing preventive care. ... It remains to be seen whether Obama’s plan will actually be able to achieve the cost savings it promises for the health care system. But people who want to keep their current insurance should be able to do that under Obama’s plan. His description of his plan is accurate, and we rate his statement True.” Politifact’s statement was, in fact, the lie of the year in 2008.) [52419, 52421, 52442, 52461, 52497]

At Newsbusters.org, Kyle Drennan notes how “All three [major television] networks on Wednesday engaged in damage control for the White House following criticism of ... Obama’s selfie during Tuesday’s Mandela memorial service. On *CBS This Morning*, senior White House correspondent Bill Plante even made this absurd assertion: ‘[Obama] might have caused a diplomatic incident if he had declined the invitation to be in a photo with two long-time allies.’ ... The cast of NBC’s *Today* also justified the incident, with co-host Savannah Guthrie arguing: ‘I think some people thought it’s not appropriate because it’s a funeral. On the other hand, it wasn’t a funeral, it was a memorial service.’ ... In a preceding report on *Today*, correspondent Lester Holt argued that the picture would have been ‘a get-together moment Mandela himself may have relished.’” Matt Lauer defends Michelle Obama’s sour expression: “She could have been thinking about a

thousand other things and you have no idea, no way to read into that.” (Apparently it is not acceptable to read anything into Mrs. Obama’s expression, but it is perfectly acceptable to read things into her husband’s actions.) [52427]

Politico reports, “The presence of a fake sign-language interpreter with mental health issues at the Nelson Mandela memorial service ...Obama attended in South Africa on Tuesday may have been the least of the security dangers at the event. Thousands of members of the general public appear to have entered the 95,000-seat, open-air Johannesburg arena with no security screening whatsoever, local press accounts and foreign journalists who attended the ceremony said. ...Some analysts said Thursday that the security arrangements—ultimately the responsibility of the South African authorities, sounded so chaotic and haphazard that Obama should not have attended. ...Concerns over Obama’s security were raised after it was revealed that the sign language interpreter hired for Mandela’s memorial service, Thamsanqa Jantjie, was gesturing meaninglessly. Jantjie later revealed that he is schizophrenic and told the Associated Press that he was hallucinating during the service.” WJLA’s Scott Thuman comments, “I was shocked at the apparent lack of any real security measures, precautions or deterrents. We entered the stadium along with a steady but manageable crowd of people through the main gates which were completely unattended. There were no workers performing bag checks or patdowns—there were no magnetometers to walk through, no metal detector wands being used—anywhere.” (DCClothesline.com explains how Jantjie may have gotten his job: “The [South African hiring] laws are designed to redress past wrongs by ensuring that black business ownership is increased and white men are precluded from applying for jobs in South Africa. Work and contracts are awarded on a points system based mainly on colour. The top points would be given to a black, female with a disability and the lowest to a white male. Ability, credentials and experience are low down on the criteria list. This is how someone who was clearly incompetent could land a job that placed him next to the world’s top leaders and watched by millions. It was not his fault, or for that matter the fault of the organizers. It was a result of the legal way things are done in the so called Rainbow Nation—Black Economic Empowerment (BEE).” Jantjie has reportedly been charged with rape (1994), theft (1995), housebreaking (1997), malicious damage to property (1998), murder, attempted murder and kidnapping (2003).) [52428, 52454, 52477, 52481]

At FreeBeacon.com Adam Kredo writes, “No new sanctions will pass Congress in 2013, insiders say House lawmakers are lashing out at their Senate counterparts over the upper chamber’s failure to pass tighter Iran sanctions before Congress recesses. With only two weeks left on the legislative calendar, congressional insiders say that a new Iran sanctions measure currently under consideration by the Senate is all but dead in the water. Senate Democratic leaders appear poised to give in to White House demands that no new sanctions be imposed on Iran for the rest of the year and likely through most of 2014. The two key avenues that senators could use to push through new sanctions—the Senate Banking Committee and the annual defense authorization bill—appear to have been shut down by the White House’s Democratic allies. The situation has proved frustrating to House lawmakers who overwhelmingly voted months ago to approve a new Iran sanctions measure only to see it stall in the Senate under White House pressure. ...[I]t

remains unlikely that Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) will allow the amendment to come to a vote.” Congresswoman Michele Bachmann (R-MN) states, “It’s very important we send a very strong signal in the Middle East that the U.S. will not stand for Iran undercutting our words on not obtaining a nuclear weapon. [Obama], unfortunately, has already sent the signal that he would willingly abide by Iran enriching uranium.” Congressman Peter Roskam (R-IL) comments, “The Senate Democratic leadership’s capitulation to White House demands to ease pressure on Iran is deeply disappointing. This has long been a unifying issue for Congress, and even today, prominent voices in both parties in the House and the Senate agree that action must be taken to thwart Iran’s nuclear ambitions at all costs. The Senate’s refusal to consider House-passed sanctions legislation significantly weakens U.S. negotiation leverage with Iran. Unfortunately, some Senate leaders are choosing not to follow through on their long-held commitment to take every necessary step to prevent a nuclear Iran.” [52490]

The White House issues a Twitter message with an obvious spelling error: “Get covered [by ObamaCare] because it’ll give your mother piece of mind.” [52444, 52445]

Politico reports, “The Health and Human Services Department told House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Chairman Darrell Issa [R-CA] that it won’t turn over documents related to the security of the Healthcare.gov website because it can’t trust him to keep secret information that could give hackers a roadmap to wreak havoc on the system.” (The public is expected to believe that Healthcare.gov is secure simply because the Obama administration says it is.) [52448, 52449, 52496]

Breitbart.com reports, “Paul Teller, the conservative Executive Director of the Republican Study Committee (RSC), was reportedly fired unilaterally by RSC Chairman Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA), who is a close ally of House Speaker John Boehner (R-OH), much to the shock of some RSC members. ...RSC member Rep. Tim Huelskamp (R-KS) said he was ‘very disappointed’ by the news because ‘Paul’s one of the most effective staffers on the Hill. He helps our cause. And firing him does not.’ Teller was reportedly fired for ‘undermining’ establishment Republicans by working with grassroots conservatives. The Tea Party Patriots declared Teller’s firing an act of war on Wednesday and conservative talk radio host Mark Levin said Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA) was a Boehner lackey who purged Teller, whom Levin referred to as a ‘patriot.’” (There is clearly a war within the Republican Party, between establishment “Republicans in name only,” or “Democrat-lites,” and conservatives.) [52458]

CNSNews.com reports, “Although Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius said on Oct. 30 that she would provide Congress with a list of the Obamacare plans in the federal health exchange that do not cover abortion, she has yet to do so and, testifying on Dec. 11, backed away from that pledge and urged consumers to just look at the plan benefits on the exchange website.” [52462]

At WSJ.com Kimberly Strassel writes, “...Obama keeps claiming that he had no knowledge of the Internal Revenue Service’s abusive muzzling of conservative groups. That line is hard to swallow given that his Treasury and IRS are back at it—this time in

broad daylight. In the media blackout of Thanksgiving week, the Treasury Department dumped a new proposal to govern the political activity of 501(c)(4) groups. The administration claims this rule is needed to clarify confusing tax laws. Hardly. The rule is the IRS's new targeting program—only this time systematic, more effective, and with the force of law. That this rule was meant to crack down on the White House's political opponents was never in doubt. What is new is the growing concern by House Ways and Means Committee investigators that the regulation was reverse-engineered—designed to isolate and shut down the same tea party groups victimized in the first targeting round. Treasury appears to have combed through those tea party applications, compiled all the groups' main activities, and then restricted those activities in the new rule. 'The committee has reviewed thousands of tax exempt applications,' says House Ways & Means Chairman Dave Camp [R-MI]. 'The new regulation so closely mirrors the abused tea-party group applications, it leads me to question if this new proposed regulation is simply another form of targeting.' ... What the proposed Treasury/IRS regulation would do is to re-categorize [Tea Party activities] as 'political activity'—thereby making it all but impossible for tea party groups to qualify for 501(c)(4) status. Say an outfit's primary purpose is educating voters on our unsustainable debt, which it does mainly with a guide explaining the problem and politicians' voting records. Under the new rule, that guide is now 'political activity' (rather than 'social welfare'), which likely loses the group tax-exempt status. The rule, in other words, is not designed to provide helpful 'guidance' on allowable activities. It was designed, rather, as Mr. Camp explains, 'to put tea party groups out of business.'" [52539, 52540]

Breitbart.com's Joel Pollak adds, "The [new IRS] rules would not apply to unions (organized under Section 501(c)5 of the federal tax code) or to pure non-profits (organized under 501(c)3). Rather, they would [only] target 501(c)4 'social welfare' groups, which the Democrats fear because they have been effective vehicles for conservative advocacy. Meanwhile, there has been precious little accountability for the IRS scandal, which the mainstream media has all but forgotten. It is still unclear whether the White House was involved, but the frequent visits of senior IRS officials to the White House have yet to be explained, and the old excuse—planning for Obamacare—no longer holds water, given new revelations about how rarely [Obama] met with senior officials responsible for it." [52539, 52540]

At TheEconomicCollapseBlog.com Michael Snyder, author of *The Beginning of the End*, provides economic predictions from "Some of the most respected prognosticators in the financial world" who "are warning that what is coming in 2014 and beyond is going to shake America to the core." Among the predictions: "Our best long-term and intermediate cycles suggest another slowdown and stock crash accelerating between very early 2014 and early 2015, and possibly lasting well into 2015 or even 2016. The worst economic trends due to demographics will hit between 2014 and 2019. The U.S. economy is likely to suffer a minor or major crash by early 2015 and another between late 2017 and late 2019 or early 2020 at the latest."—Harry Dent, author of *The Great Depression Ahead*. "You have to say that we are again in a massive financial bubble in bonds, in equities, in [other] asset prices that have gone up dramatically.—Marc Faber, editor and publisher of the *Gloom, Boom and Doom Report*. "Any self-respecting adult

that hears [Mitch] McConnell, [Harry] Reid, [John] Boehner, [Paul] Ryan, one after another, and buys this baloney... they deserve what they get. And as for the international scene... the whole thing is collapsing. That's our forecast. We are saying [is] that by the second quarter of 2014, we expect the bottom to fall out... or something to divert our attention as it falls out."—Gerald Celente, publisher of *Trends Journal*. "I think the crash of 2008 was just a speed bump on the way to the main event... the consequences are gonna [sic] be horrific... the rest of the decade will bring us the greatest financial calamity in history."—Mike Maloney, host of *Hidden Secrets of Money*. "You saw what happened in 2008-2009, which was worse than the previous economic setback because the debt was so much higher. Well now the debt is staggeringly much higher, and so the next economic problem, whenever it happens and whatever causes it, is going to be worse than in the past, because we have these unbelievable levels of debt, and unbelievable levels of money printing all over the world. Be worried and get prepared. Now it [a collapse] may not happen until 2016 or something, I have no idea when it's going to happen, but when it comes, be careful."—investment guru Jim Rogers. "Eventually somebody recognizes this and starts dumping the bonds, and interest rates go up, and inflation takes off, and were off to the races."—Boston University Economics Professor Laurence Kotlikoff. [52613]

On December 13 a student at Arapahoe High School in Centennial, Colorado shoots and injures two other students with a shotgun, and then kills himself. The shooter, Karl Halverson Pierson, is described by classmate as "a very opinionated socialist" and someone who had opinions "outside the mainstream." According to *The Denver Post*—which chose not to report the "very opinionated socialist" observation—the police are "investigating reports that Pierson was seeking to settle a score with a teacher after a confrontation [about his removal from the debate team]." (Claire Davis, one of the students shot by Pierson, dies about one week later.) [52468, 52472, 52507, 52508, 52509, 52510, 52526, 52643, 52837]

At PJMedia.com Bryan Preston writes, "Friends described [Karl Pierson] as a 'good political thinker,' but [his] social media postings show no evidence of it or of any gift at debate. It's not debate at all. Those are the DNC's crude talking points. [House Minority Leader] Nancy Pelosi [D-CA] used almost the exact same talking points in an appearance on MSNBC the same day Pierson went on his attack. ... Democrats don't debate issues or facts anymore, ever. They never take responsibility for their missteps or failures. They pick outrageous fights based on nothing and smear those of us who disagree with them, relentlessly. Their favored pundits almost never deal in facts. They spread hatred and lies and deliver talking points designed expressly to dehumanize their opponents. They go out of their way to create offense and provoke reactions. The media seldom if ever challenge any of it. Clearly, Karl Pierson was influenced by what he heard Democrats say day after day, year after year about Republicans. He internalized that hatred and spread it in his own life. Pelosi, Reid, Obama and the Democratic Party are all far more culpable for spreading hatred in our country now than any other single group of people. They spend most of their time dehumanizing and degrading and verbally assaulting all who disagree with them. There are bound to be serious consequences for that." [52526]

A defensive White House press secretary Jay Carney is excoriated by reporters who complain about the administration's lack of transparency. One even says, "Anyone here can tell you there's less access here than under the Bush administration." [52447, 52460]

According to *The Washington Post*, [T]he federal [Healthcare.gov] marketplace has accumulated a backlog of 50,000 to 60,000 paper [ObamaCare] applications as cracks have appeared in that low-tech method offered this fall as a backup plan, according to government officials. Federal health officials and workers at an outside contractor hired to handle those applications have been racing to try to eliminate the backlog by the Dec. 23 enrollment deadline. The backlog accounts for nearly one-third of about 170,000 paper applications that people have submitted since the marketplace opened in October, the officials said. ...The effort was hindered when a computer portal on which the contractor relies went down for three days in the past week, according to an individual with knowledge of the system who spoke on the condition of anonymity about information that has not been made public." [52575, 52576]

WhiteHouseDossier.com reports, "The Obama administration in recent days has finally launched the Spanish version of Healthcare.gov, more than two months later than it was supposed to go up and with just days to spare before everyone's required to be all signed up. Um, where's the outrage? CAN ANYONE IMAGINE THE OUTPOURING OF FURY IF BUSH DID THIS???" This is no mere screw up. With everything about the Obamacare rollout going wrong, the Obama administration months ago decided to perform emergency triage, leaving some projects for dead while trying to salvage whatever else it could. One thing intentionally chucked aside was the Spanish version of Healthcare.gov. See, that's the thanks Latinos get for supporting Obama. No immigration reform and no Obamacare website." [52590]

Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius visits Miami, Florida to promote ObamaCare, and is asked by a reporter, "PolitiFact, which is based here, just found that the administration committed the lie of the year by saying that 'if you like your plan, you can keep it.' I was wondering, as the person in charge of the agency at the heart of that lie, what do you think of it?" Sebelius responds, "I think that, um, the statement about keeping your plan was one that is applicable to the vast majority of Americans in the health insurance market. What we know is that we also designed the implementation of the Affordable Care Act to make sure that plans that were in place in March of 2010 that kept the same benefits in place, didn't shift, uh, costs to consumers, and, uh, stayed in place were actually, uh, eliminated from needing to conform to any of the consumer protections in the, uh, 2014 Affordable Care Act. So, a number of customers in the individual market had those grandfathered plans in place, it varies by company and by market. I think [Obama] felt it was important to make sure that individuals as much as possible, uh, did not lose coverage that they had, so in addition to early renewals, which I think virtually every company in this market offered to their consumers, he asked us to use our discretion [sic; discretionary] authority and asked insurers to consider allowing their customers, if they were interested in staying in those same plans [sic]. And that's going on, again, across the country. Florida has decided to, um, take up that transition plan, uh, so a number of individuals who are in individual market plans that they like,

which is certainly not 100 percent of all people in the individual market, uh, will be able, uh, to work with their insurers about either choosing a new plan in the marketplace, choosing a competitive plan, or, uh, staying in their same plan.” (Sebelius ignores the reporter’s follow-up question: “So you don’t think it was a lie then? You’re not going to answer that?”) [52579]

Sebelius is also asked about rising insurance premiums. She responds, “There are some individuals who may be looking at increases. I think you cannot make a statement based on cost unless you compare what they had to what they’re going into.” (Her statement is a far cry from, “The average family will save \$2,500 in annual premiums.” In July 2012 then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) said on *Meet the Press*, “[E]verybody will have lower rates, better quality care, and better access.”) [52624, 52640, 52641, 52642]

Katie Pavlich reports at Townhall.com, “[I]n the spirit of bipartisanship, Republicans and Democrats agree that lawmakers should *only* be allocated \$20,000 in taxpayer funds to have their portrait done.” (The portraits have sometimes cost more than \$50,000.) [52446]

At the White House, Obama meets with several newly-elected mayors, including New York City communist Bill de Blasio. [52457]

HotAir.com reports that health insurers may end 2013 with a net *loss* in enrollments for the year, with fewer people signing up for coverage because of ObamaCare than have seen their policies canceled. [52459]

NYTimes.com reports, “Many in New York’s professional and cultural elite have long supported ...Obama’s health care plan. But now, to their surprise, thousands of writers, opera singers, music teachers, photographers, doctors, lawyers and others are learning that their health insurance plans are being canceled and they may have to pay more to get comparable coverage, if they can find it. They are part of an unusual, informal health insurance system that has developed in New York, in which independent practitioners were able to get lower insurance rates through group plans, typically set up by their professional associations or chambers of commerce. That allowed them to avoid the sky-high rates in New York’s individual insurance market, historically among the most expensive in the country. But under the Affordable Care Act, they will be treated as individuals, responsible for their own insurance policies. For many of them, that is likely to mean they will no longer have access to a wide network of doctors and a range of plans tailored to their needs. And many of them are finding that if they want to keep their premiums from rising, they will have to accept higher deductible and co-pay costs or inferior coverage. ...Some have received notices already; others, whose plans have not yet expired, will soon receive letters in the mail. It is unclear exactly how many New Yorkers are affected; according to state health officials, as many as 400,000 independent practitioners get health insurance through job-related group plans, but that number also includes people who receive coverage through their spouses’ employers. ...[M]any professionals make too much money to qualify for the [ObamaCare] subsidies, and even

if they are able to find comparably priced insurance, the new policies do not have the coverage they are accustomed to.” [52482, 52589, 52742]

“It is not lost on many of the professionals that they are exactly the sort of people—liberal, concerned with social justice—who supported the Obama health plan in the first place. [Barbara] Meinwald, [a Manhattan] lawyer, said she was a lifelong Democrat who still supported better health care for all, but had she known what was in store for her, she would have voted for Mitt Romney. [In other words, she was happy to support a national health care plan as long as she thought someone else would have to pay for it. The phrase, “Hoist with her own petard” may come to mind.] It is an uncomfortable position for many members of the creative classes to be in. ‘We are the Obama people,’ said Camille Sweeney, a New York writer and member of the Authors Guild. Her insurance is being canceled, and she is dismayed that neither her pediatrician nor her general practitioner appears to be on the exchange plans. What to do has become a hot topic on Facebook and at dinner parties frequented by her fellow writers and artists. ‘I’m for it,’ she said. ‘But what is the reality of it?’” (Commenting on the sudden “plight” of New York City professionals—who were apparently totally unaware they had the “junk insurance plans” ObamaCare supporters have relentlessly mocked—PJMedia.com’s Michael Walsh writes, “As Oscar Wilde famously observed, ‘One must have a heart of stone to read the death of Little Nell without laughing.’” The reference is to the main character in Charles Dickens’ *The Old Curiosity Shop*.) [52482, 52589, 52742]

At Reason.com Peter Suderman writes, “Obamacare has lost the uninsured. A *Wall Street Journal*/NBC News poll released this week asked uninsured individuals whether or not they thought the law was a good idea. Just 24 percent said they thought it was. In contrast, half the uninsured polled said they thought it was a bad idea. As the *Journal* points out, that represents an 11 point drop in support for the law amongst the uninsured since September. The same poll also finds that 56 percent of the uninsured believe the law will have a negative effect on the U.S. health care system. Let that sink in: What that means is that regardless of how bad the old system—the system that for whatever reason left them uninsured—was, a majority of people without health coverage now think that Obamacare makes it worse. That’s how poorly the rollout of the health law is perceived to have gone. The exact group the law was designed to help have instead turned on the law. It’s never been particularly popular with the wider public, but now even those who were supposed to be beneficiaries are skeptical.” [52498]

LATimes.com reports, “For all its success enrolling tens of thousands in health insurance, California is struggling to translate Obamacare into Spanish. The state’s enrollment so far among Latinos is anemic—even though they represent more than half of California’s 7 million uninsured residents. Only 5% of enrollees, or fewer than 4,500 people, in the first two months of enrollment are primarily Spanish speakers, new data show. ... Without a large pool of people and enough younger policyholders to balance out older, sicker patients, rates could spiral up, and insurers may drop out of the state-run marketplace.” [52518, 52519]

At NationalReview.com Yuval Levin writes, “As usual, it’s hard to tell just what’s going on inside the administration regarding Obamacare, but I don’t think we can really take the steps announced by HHS yesterday as anything but a bright, red, flashing warning light about the internal expectations regarding January. ...[T]hey are asking insurers to pay claims for consumers who haven’t paid their premiums, to treat out-of-network doctors and hospitals as though they were in-network, and to pay for prescription drugs not actually covered by the plans they offer. The administration is trying to present this as a set of perfectly ordinary kind of transition measures that insurers normally make available to new customers, and some of the more reliable members of their amen chorus on Obamacare have echoed that. But that’s not what this looks like to me, and a few conversations today suggest it’s not what it looks like to the insurers. To ‘strongly encourage’ insurers to take these kinds of steps (to use the Orwellian phrase of the HHS announcement), and to do it just a couple of weeks before the new system is supposed to start, suggests that the administration’s health experts mapped out how January is shaping up and had a collective heart attack. ...The move also puts HHS in the position of playing the role [of] central manager of the American health-care system—telling private insurers to do various things that have nothing in particular to do with the law, as though they work for the government. It is an eerie prefiguration of where the administration would like to get with this system, but it’s also surely something they didn’t want to be doing so publicly at this stage. ...My guess, and it is just that, is that the administration has taken these steps because their internal projections at this point suggest some kind of disastrous replay of the politics of October and November in January, and this time they are intent on getting people to blame the insurers instead of the administration. I think that’s very unlikely to work, but it’s not hard to see why they would be desperate to try. But who knows? The administration is being secretive as ever about the information that is driving its decisions, and we are left to read vague tea leaves.” [52716]

InvestigativeProject.com reports, “An FBI sting has led to the arrest of a Wichita, Kan. man who thought he was about to die in a suicide car bombing that targeted a terminal at the city's Mid-Continent Airport. Terry Lee Loewen, 58, worked at the airport as an avionics technician. This gave him access to airport grounds. He was arrested before dawn Friday after he tried to open a security gate and get on the tarmac, the Kansas City Star reports. According to a three-count complaint, Loewen discussed his view of faith as a Muslim. That included expressing ‘his desire to engage in violent jihad on behalf of al-Qaeda’ during an online conversation with someone whom, unbeknownst to him, was an FBI employee. ...Loewen was trying to drive a van packed with explosives to a terminal as part of a plan he spent months developing, a Department of Justice statement says. He ‘talked about his commitment to trigger the device and martyr himself.’ The explosives were rendered inert by the FBI and the public was never in danger. Agents were drawn to Loewen early last summer after he made statements about jihad. He is charged with trying to use a weapon of mass destruction, and attempting to provide material support to al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, a designated foreign terrorist organization.” Loewen purportedly wanted to be “martyred in the path of Allah.” [52483, 52484, 52485, 52486, 52513, 52558, 52559]

The White House announces that the Obama family will leave December 20 for a 17-day vacation in Hawaii. [52525, 52847]

At Shoebat.com Walid Shoebat and Ben Barrack report, “Another complaint has reportedly been filed with Egypt’s Attorney General, Hisham Barakat. According to multiple Arabic sources (Al Wafd and Vetogate among them), this one is said to allege that the wife of ousted President Mohammed Mursi [Naglaa Mahmoud] not only admitted in an interview with Turkey’s Anatolia news agency that she sought to excite domestic insurrections to overthrow Abdel Fatah Al-Sisi but that she collaborated with Hillary Clinton.” In the interview, Naglaa Mahmoud says, “I have between my fingers, a treasure trove of secrets from the White House and Mrs. Clinton fears my wrath. ...I will not speak about [Hillary Clinton’s close aide] Huma Abedin. ...When my husband returns from his kidnapping, the one who led the coup will pay a hefty price. ...We [Hillary Clinton and I] have a long friendship of many years. We lived in the U.S. and my children learned there. This friendship increased further when my husband became the legitimate president of the country. ...We also have routine business dealings with the Clintons. ...Hillary depends on us tremendously to help her succeed in the coming presidential elections, just as we helped Barack Obama win twice.” [52470, 52533, 52557, 52659]

Shoebat and Barrack note, “A key revelation in these reports is Mahmoud’s claim that the Clintons befriended her family in the 1980s while living in the U.S. As one of 63 leaders in the Muslim Sisterhood, Mahmoud is a colleague of Saleha Abedin, another one of those 63 leaders. Saleha is the mother of Huma Abedin, who is a close adviser to Hillary Clinton and wife of former Democratic Congressman, Anthony Weiner. Huma first landed a job with Hillary in 1996 after attending George Washington University and having served on the Board of her University’s Muslim Students Association (MSA), a Muslim Brotherhood group. Were the seeds sown for the relationship between Hillary and Huma years prior via Mursi and Mahmoud? ...The claims that Mursi [often reported as Morsi] and Mahmoud worked with the Clintons, the Obama administration, and the CIA seem to further bolster a report that came out last month that was posted by Egyoffline. The report, translated by Eman Nabih, alleged that documents had been obtained that showed the Obama administration’s complicity in exciting domestic insurrections in Egypt in order to overthrow the current government in Egypt, a goal shared by Mahmoud.” [52470, 52533, 52557, 52659]

Cold Case Posse lead investigator Mike Zullo appears on Freedom Friday and, according to ThePostEmail.com, tells radio host Carl Gallups the death of the Hawaii Department of Health’s Loretta Fuddy was a “tragic accident” and not the result of foul play. “While her death certainly is a tragedy,” says Zullo, “it in no way hampers our investigation in this matter. If people truly believe that her untimely demise was somehow related to an attempt to silence her for ‘what she may or may not know,’ then there are several more people in Hawaii who should be very, very concerned. Again, I want to emphasize, Sheriff [Joe] Arpaio and I do not, at this time, believe her death was connected to any nefarious circumstances.” Zullo insists he has “iron-clad evidence” that Obama’s birth certificate is a computer-generated forgery. Zullo also says the evidence his team has

gathered does not necessarily support the same conclusions as those of document expert Douglas Vogt, who also believes the document is a forgery. Zullo states that the results of his team's investigation "may be released as early as March," and, "The whole [issue] is more nefarious than you can imagine. [Arpaio] knows in his gut that something is wrong." [52474, 52475, 52476, 52495, 52527, 52606, 52772, 52812, 53394, 53396]

FreeBeacon.com reports, "Iranian negotiators abruptly ended nuclear talks with Western powers in Vienna on Friday just a day after the Obama administration announced tighter sanctions on Tehran. Iran had threatened that new or tighter sanctions would nullify the recently reached Geneva interim deal, which is not yet in effect. The Iranians abruptly 'halted' the talks and left Vienna so that they could consult with higher-level officials about how to proceed with talks following the tighter sanctions, which were announced Thursday morning by the U.S. Treasury Department. ...Lawmakers on Capitol Hill had been trying to increase sanctions on Iran before the end of the year. However, the White House and its Democratic allies on Thursday successfully prevented the measure from coming to a vote. The move was accompanied by Treasury's sanctions announcement, which was viewed by experts as a middle ground meant to appease sanctions supporters in Congress. 'This was an action taken by the executive,' FDD's Schanzer told the Free Beacon on Friday. 'What this shows is that the White House is trying to on the one hand put a halt on new sanctions to placate the Iranians but enforce existing sanctions to placate Congress and their constituents. It's a fine line.'" AtlasShrugs.com's Pamela Geller comments, "They say it was because 'the Obama administration announced tighter sanctions,' but those 'tighter' sanctions were effectively toothless. The Iranians know that Obama is disposed to give them whatever they want, and so they walked out of the nuke talks to intimidate him into pressuring the Republicans to drop all talk of new sanctions. And given the weakness of both Obama and the Republicans, it is virtually certain that the Iranians will soon get their way." [52488, 52489]

The Associated Press reports, "An American who vanished nearly seven years ago in Iran was working for the CIA on an unapproved intelligence-gathering mission that, when it came to light inside the government, produced one of the most serious scandals in the recent history of the CIA—but all in secret, an Associated Press investigation found. The CIA paid Robert Levinson's family \$2.5 million to head off a revealing lawsuit. Three veteran analysts were forced out of the agency and seven others were disciplined. The U.S. publicly has described Levinson as a private citizen. 'Robert Levinson went missing during a business trip to Kish Island, Iran,' the White House said last month. That was just a cover story. In an extraordinary breach of the most basic CIA rules, a team of analysts—with no authority to run spy operations—paid Levinson to gather intelligence from some of the world's darkest corners. He vanished while investigating the Iranian regime for the U.S. government. Details of the disappearance were described in documents obtained or reviewed by the AP, plus interviews over several years with dozens of current and former U.S. and foreign officials close to the search for Levinson, who is from Coral Springs, Fla. Nearly all spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss the sensitive case. ...The AP first confirmed Levinson's CIA ties in 2010 and continued reporting to uncover more details. It agreed three times to delay publishing the story because the U.S. government said it was pursuing promising

leads to get him home. The AP is reporting the story now because, nearly seven years after his disappearance, those efforts have repeatedly come up empty. The government has not received any sign of life in nearly three years. Top U.S. officials, meanwhile, say his captors almost certainly already know about his CIA association.” [52511, 52512, 52515]

WatchDog.org reports, “A confidential training manual for Obamacare navigators that threatens prosecution for unauthorized dissemination is on the Internet for the world to see. The 217-page manual reads like a primer for Amway or novice car salesmen, offering sales advice on how to disarm potential customers who could be lured into purchasing insurance through exchanges created under the Affordable Care Act. Section headers include ‘Smile: Maintain a Positive Demeanor,’ ‘Make the Customers Feel Welcome,’ ‘Listen’ and—in what must now seem ironic given Barack Obama’s troubles with over-promising—‘Build Trust: Be True to Your Word.’ ...Nothing in the manual seems to rise to the level of a state secret—raising questions about why the federal government felt it necessary to classify information that has no reason to be classified.” Advice to ObamaCare navigators includes, “Smile. Smiles are contagious; usually when you smile at somebody they will smile back at you. Do not pretend to smile, or produce a false smile; these are easy to spot and send the wrong messages. Relax, gain eye-contact [sic], and smile naturally. This will help consumers to feel at ease and welcomed. You will come across as friendly and approachable, setting the scene for positive interaction. If you are talking to somebody on the telephone, you can still smile; your voice sounds different when you smile and are happy. Consumers are more likely to want to talk to a cheerful person with an enthusiastic personality and by smiling while you talk you can help to project this.” [52522, 52523, 52524]

Connecticut’s TheDay.com reports, “Undocumented immigrants are expected to make up a larger share of Connecticut's uninsured population next year, putting ‘new financial pressures on safety-net hospitals’ that provide emergency care to everyone, state and national health experts predict. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) provides coverage options for legal immigrants, but those in the U.S. illegally cannot apply for Medicaid, even if they are poor, or buy coverage at Access Health CT (the new insurance marketplace), even if they have cash. That means undocumented residents without coverage will continue turning to local emergency departments for care at a time when Connecticut hospitals face the loss of millions of dollars in federal and state subsidies to help defray the cost of uncompensated care. ...The dilemma sheds light on the uncertain future of the so-called safety-net hospitals in Connecticut and the nation as health care reform unfolds. Often located in urban areas, safety-net hospitals treat a disproportionate number of low-income, uninsured, and otherwise vulnerable populations, including undocumented residents. Federal law requires hospitals to provide emergency care, regardless of a patient’s ability to pay or immigration status. ...In 2012, Connecticut hospitals spent \$233.6 million in uncompensated care, including charity care and bad debt, according to the state Office of Health Care Access. These facilities spent another \$868.3 million to cover Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement shortfalls in 2012, reports the Connecticut Hospital Association. Hospital officials expect the budget gaps to widen in 2014 when the health law [ObamaCare] begins to sharply reduce government subsidies

known as ‘disproportionate share hospital (DSH) payments’ on the assumption that more people will be covered by Medicaid or private insurance due to reform. Connecticut hospitals also face a \$550 million cut in state funds that previously covered Medicaid expenses.” [52531, 52532]

On December 14 Attorney Orly Taitz posts a letter from Harry Butler, a former Navy SEAL and professional pilot who has a float plane rating. He writes, “The [Cessna] Caravan Aircraft Loretta Fuddy crashed in had a large cargo pod attached to the aircraft’s belly. From my observation of this coupled with the Caravan’s ability to fly at slow speeds, this aircraft could... intentionally [and] safely be landed on water. The pod would essentially be a large water ski. The aircraft should be able to be recovered, with a forensic engine inspection it could be determined easily if the engine failed or was shut down. They said the aircraft could not be recovered which is BS. The Danes recovered a Russian Submarine in 500+ feet of water not too far from HI [Hawaii]. ...An additional thought on the Fuddy crash, the aircraft flight path may have been recorded. It looks to me the flight path the aircraft would have normally flown to their destination was not followed. It’s hard to tell on a short flight such as that but a right turn out instead of a left could mean a lot in the investigation. Especially if the aircraft engine was intentionally shut down + did not fail. Additionally the Cockpit Data + Voice Recorders (Black Boxes) if the Caravan has them will have that information.” [52493, 52812, 53394, 53396]

The crash occurred after only a minute or two in the air and within one mile from shore. All the passengers had time to exit the floating plane and put on life preservers, yet only Fuddy died. Loss of engine power would have made a safe water landing difficult, but possible. Some will therefore suspect that the plane did not lose power and the pilot made a water landing for some other reason. An examination of the aircraft might answer some key questions, yet the decision has been made (at least initially) not to recover the plane—despite it being near the shore. At ThePostEmail.com editor Sharon Rondeau notes that there were conflicting news reports. One report claimed that passenger Keith Yamamoto helped Fuddy put on her life jacket while they were in the water and she then let go of his hand; another quotes Honolulu Fire Captain Terry Seelig as saying that Fuddy “remained in the fuselage of the plane” and “It’s always a difficult situation when you’re not able to get everybody out,” and still another report claimed Fuddy’s body had been recovered from the wreckage. According to ABCNews.com, “the aircraft glided toward the ocean and made a remarkably smooth belly landing,” and the pilot “expertly maneuvered the plane after the engine failed, avoiding what could have been a catastrophic impact on the water.” (ABC does not explain how Fuddy could have died under such circumstances.) [52493, 52538, 52555, 52772, 52812, 53394, 53396]

Fuddy’s name will certainly be added to the list of suspicious deaths of people with Obama connections (Obama’s “Death Pool”): Rolling Stone reporter Michael Hastings; Lt Quarles Harris, Jr., who had been cooperating with federal investigators in connection with the 2008 illegal access of Obama’s passport information, and who was found shot to death in his car in Washington, D.C.; Donald Young, the gay choir director of Obama’s Chicago church, who was murdered in December 2007; Larry Bland, another gay member of Obama’s church, who was murdered a few weeks before Young; Clinton ally

and Arkansas Democratic Party Chairman Bill Gwatney, who was murdered two weeks before the 2008 Democrat National Convention in Denver; Kam Kuwata, a Democrat campaign worker who died under suspicious circumstances after reportedly telling others he witnessed a drugged Obama backstage at the 2008 convention; Jamie Zapata; Michael Cormier; the members of SEAL Team Six; Stephanie Tubbs Jones; Christopher Kelly; Mercedes Hugley; Tanika Hill; Hasad Al Shareez; Darsano Rahardjo; Christopher Hargrove; Curtis “Pookie” Jackson; Paul Rothchild; Harvey Kenyon; Sheila Baugh; Lawshanna Martin; and Gandy Baugh. [134, 135, 136, 392, 393, 409, 842 pp. 143, 352–353, 358; 1242, 1991, 2278, 2438, 2475, 9276, 9297, 28336, 28337, 28338, 28339, 28342, 28420, 28421, 28422, 28423, 28424, 28425, 28426, 28427, 28428, 28429, 28481, 28482, 28483, 28484, 28766, 29249, 29371, 30804, 30851, 30913, 31019, 34612, 43929, 43935, 43950, 43975, 52493, 52505, 52506, 52528, 52529, 53394, 53396, 53652]

At ThePostEmail.com Montgomery Blair Sibley writes, “It is now common knowledge that a key player in the Obama birth certificate controversy—Loretta Fuddy—has died in a plane crash in Hawaii. ...What isn’t common knowledge is the new facts about Fuddy and Obama’s Certificate of Live Birth contained in the Sealed Affidavit now pending at the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeal. Now, she will never be questioned about those facts. I think the timing of the filing of that Sealed Affidavit and Fuddy’s death is more than curious. Maybe it is just a tragic accident. But as a young lawyer I was taught that if it walks like a duck, talks like a duck and looks like a duck, then chances are it is a duck. ...So, just for the record, if a drone falls on my head and the government claims it was an accident, know that it wasn’t.” [52527, 53249]

In his weekly radio/Internet address, Obama marks the anniversary of the Sandy Hook school shootings in Newtown, Connecticut with a call for gun control legislation. He says, “We haven’t yet done enough to make our communities and our country safer. We have to do more to keep dangerous people from getting their hands on a gun so easily. We have to do more to heal troubled minds. ...We can’t lose sight of the fact that real change won’t come from Washington. It will come the way it’s always come—from you. From the American people. ...[If] we want to live in a country where we can go to work, send our kids to school, and walk our streets free from fear, we have to keep trying.” (The White House also notes the anniversary by tweeting a photo of Obama and his wife.) [52536, 52546]

Iran claims it launched a missile into space and safely retrieved a monkey that was aboard the flight. [52849]

DailyCaller.com reports, “Nearly 15,000 enrollment records from Americans trying to sign up for Obamacare never made it to insurers—but the federal government does not know which records never made it to which insurer. The federal analysis merely compares the number of times Obamacare enrollees clicked ‘enroll’ to the number of plans HealthCare.gov sent to insurers, according to The Washington Post. Consumers who send the vanishing enrollments, or ‘orphan files,’ are not notified that their information has not been processed and an insurer did not receive sensitive financial and

health-related data, meaning that they could be in for an unpleasant surprise when the Dec. 23 deadline—the last day for customers to sign up for health insurance—comes and goes.” [52541, 52542, 52543]

GlendaleNewsPress.com reports that Obama’s recent “visit to DreamWorks Animation last month cost the city [Glendale, California] about \$61,000 and at least one City Council member thinks that Glendale shouldn’t be the only one footing the bill for the increased security. When Obama came on Nov. 26, he met DreamWorks executives and employees, giving an afternoon speech about the importance of the film industry to the American economy and international diplomacy... But [Obama’s] visit was solely focused on DreamWorks and not the rest of the city, so Glendale residents who didn’t have a chance to meet him shouldn’t have to pay for the DreamWorks staff who did, Councilman Zareh Sinanyan said during a council meeting this week. ‘Is it not fair for [DreamWorks] to foot at least part of the bill?’ Sinanyan said. ‘It’s not like [Obama] came and met with the residents of Glendale.’” (Obama’s west coast visit was primarily for fundraising; the side trip to DreamWorks was for the purpose of making the trip “official”—which dumped the cost of Air Force One on the taxpayers.) [52580, 52581]

Saturday Night Live’s opening segment ridicules Obama, his appearance at the Nelson Mandela memorial service, his “selfie” photograph, the handshake with Raul Castro (“He told me he was Edward James Olmos”), and the fake sign language interpreter. [52530, 52550]

On December 15 Congressman Paul Ryan (R-WI) defends the Ryan-Murray budget deal on *Meet the Press* and on *Fox News Sunday*, where veteran journalist Bob Woodward says, “I think this deal worked, quite, uh, frankly—let’s, uh, go right to the center of this—because Obama was not part of the negotiations. He is not a good negotiator.” [52537, 52544, 52551, 52569]

On *This Week*, Secretary of State John Kerry defends the administration’s agreement with Iran. Asked about North Korea’s execution of dictator Kim Jong Un’s uncle, Kerry says, “I mean it really reminded me of, of video that we saw of Saddam Hussein doing the same thing, having people plucked out of an audience and people sitting there sweating and nobody daring to move or do anything. This is the nature of this ruthless, horrendous dictatorship and of his insecurities. And, and, and I think we, we need to factor that into the urgency of getting China, Russia, Japan, South Korea, all of us, uh, to stay on the same page and to put as much, uh, effort into the denuclearization as possible. To have a nuclear weapon, potentially, in the hands of somebody like, uh, Kim Jong In... Jun [sic] just becomes even more unacceptable.” (Kerry is apparently unaware that North Korea already has nuclear weapons and has tested them.) [52537, 52553, 52585]

Also appearing on the program is former Clinton Labor Secretary Robert Reich, who says, “What [Obama] wanted to talk about this week was the fact that there are 350,000 [or] 360,000 enrollees in November, new enrollees in November at the—on the—the healthcare.com. And, in fact, he can’t talk about that. I mean the attacks on ObamaCare,

on the Affordable Care Act, have been absolutely relentless. It was a terrible mistake for him to say what he did [“You can keep your plan, period”]. Uh, but, uh, you know, after a while, you’ve got to look at the fact that we have one of the most important reforms of the health care system of the United States ever enacted. ...At the present rate of enrollment, we’re going to have over a million people enrolled by January and people are going to stop complaining.” (Even if more than one million people have enrolled in ObamaCare, another five or six million will have lost their coverage because of the legislation. Reich is mistaken, and the complaints will go on and on.) [52537, 52553, 52585]

Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich labels “baloney” Reich’s claim that the war on poverty failed because of Republican “intransigence,” and says, “Every major city which is a center of poverty is run by Democrats. Every major city. Their policies have failed. They are not willing to admit it.” [52578]

On *America’s News HQ*, Congressman Trey Gowdy (R-SC) discusses Obama’s abuse of Constitutional power with Shannon Bream. Gowdy, a co-sponsor of a resolution calling for a lawsuit challenging Obama’s “executive fiat” abuses via actions that conflict with passed legislation, says, “I just think the pervasiveness of his ignoring Congress has reached the point that we don’t have a choice [but to file a lawsuit].” Gowdy asks, “If you [Obama] can turn off immigration laws, if you can turn off the mandatory minimums in our drug statutes, if you can turn off [some of] the so-called Affordable Care Act [regulations]—why not election laws? Assume, Shannon, that a statute said you had to provide two forms of ID to vote. Can [Obama ignore that law and] require three forms of ID? Can [Obama] require one form? Can you suspend all requirements [that] you show ID? And if not, why not? If you can turn off certain categories of law, do you not also have the power to turn off all categories of the law? ...[Obama’s abuses have] reached an unprecedented level, and we gotta [sic] do something about it.” (The proper course of Congressional action would be impeachment, rather than a lawsuit. But because the Senate would not vote to convict Obama even if the House were to impeach him, there are few avenues left to challenge Obama. A lawsuit is unlikely to advance very far because the court would likely rule that Congress has no standing to sue and should rely on the power it already has: impeachment. Working in Obama’s favor is his packing of the D.C. appeals court with leftist judges—who are unlikely to side with Gowdy, regardless of whether he has the law on his side.) [52605]

Meanwhile, Senator Mike Lee (R-UT) tells *Punchline’s* Vandon Gene that Obama “acts without any check on his authority. [Obama] is acting outside of his constitutional and statutory authority. Congress has got to do something about it because the courts are not in a position to do so.” On ObamaCare Lee says, “All proponents of ObamaCare, including and especially the mainstream media, would love for all of this discussion to be about the web site. It’s not about the web site. Look, the web site is a huge problem. There’s no question about it. But it’s one of many, many problems and it is probably the most minor of the major problems that we face. I don’t know whether 20 years from now people are necessarily going to remember how rocky the unveiling, the unfolding of the web site was. I don’t know. I don’t care. But, what I do know is that they are not going to

forget the fact that they lost access to their insurance plan that they've come to rely on. They are not going to forget how many people lost their jobs as a result of this law. They are not going to forget how many people lost access to important care providers. And they are not going to forget the fact that a lot of people with really significant ailments are probably going to lose access to the treatments that they need, that today they have been relying on, that today is covered by their insurance that may or may not be covered next year once this law kicks in." [52632]

TheHill.com reports, "The two-year budget deal approved by the House has hidden political benefits for Senate Democrats, Republicans charge. Because it sets a top-line budget number for 2015, Democrats won't have to write and pass a budget resolution in the midterm election year. That means vulnerable Democrats like Sens. Mark Pryor (Ark.), Mark Begich (Alaska), Kay Hagen (N.C.) and Mary Landrieu (La.) won't have to take tough votes as part of a budget vote-o-rama. Republicans are unhappy, as they believe the tough votes would have made it easier to defeat those candidates next fall and take control of the Senate in 2015. With ObamaCare's difficult rollout, forcing members to vote on many aspects of the healthcare law would be especially appealing. The Senate is expected to vote on the budget deal on Tuesday. Until this spring, when the Senate approved its first budget resolution in four years, Senate Democrats had repeatedly avoided passing a budget in part because of the problems it would have created for vulnerable members." [52552, 52620]

Actor Peter O'Toole dies at age 82. Author and columnist Mark Steyn notes that "O'Toole had two valid, government-issued birth certificates—one stating he was born in Connemara in Ireland in June 1932, the other stating he was born in Leeds in England in August 1932. He had no idea which one was correct, but, being in showbiz, chose to celebrate his birthday on the later date." (Loretta Fuddy could not be reached for comment.) [52554]

At NYPost.com Paul Sperry writes, "After the 9/11 attacks, the public was told al Qaeda acted alone, with no state sponsors. But the White House never let it see an entire section of Congress' investigative report on 9/11 dealing with 'specific sources of foreign support' for the 19 hijackers, 15 of whom were Saudi nationals. It was kept secret and remains so today. President Bush inexplicably censored 28 full pages of the 800-page report. Text isn't just blacked-out here and there in this critical-yet-missing middle section. The pages are completely blank, except for dotted lines where an estimated 7,200 words once stood... A pair of lawmakers who recently read the redacted portion say they are 'absolutely shocked' at the level of foreign state involvement in the attacks." Congressmen Walter Jones (R-NY) and Stephen Lynch (D-MA) "can't reveal the nation identified by it without violating federal law. So they've proposed Congress pass a resolution asking ...Obama to declassify the entire 2002 report, 'Joint Inquiry Into Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001.' ...Is the federal government protecting the Saudis? Case agents tell me they were repeatedly called off pursuing 9/11 leads back to the Saudi Embassy, which had curious sway over White House and FBI responses to the attacks. Just days after Bush

met with the Saudi ambassador in the White House, the FBI evacuated from the United States dozens of Saudi officials, as well as Osama bin Laden family members. Bandar made the request for escorts directly to FBI headquarters on Sept. 13, 2001—just hours after he met with the president. ...Bill Doyle, who lost his son in the World Trade Center attacks and heads the Coalition of 9/11 Families, calls the suppression of Saudi evidence a ‘coverup beyond belief.’ Last week, he sent out an e-mail to relatives urging them to phone their representatives in Congress to support the resolution and read for themselves the censored 28 pages.” [52563, 52564, 52584]

In *The Jerusalem Post*, Pamela Geller writes, “Syria, Israel’s northern neighbor, is becoming a destination for jihadists from all over the world; Who is to blame? ...Obama. Syria is the new rallying point for the worldwide jihad. There has not been a secular fighting force in Syria for close to a year. Instead, it has become the destination for jihadists across the world to engage in holy war. This war is not about nationality, borders, geography. Jihadists in Syria include British, American, French, German, and Norwegian Muslims. It has come to this: Israel and the world have to choose between [Syrian President] Bashar Assad and al-Qaida. ...This is Barack Obama’s doing. He has supported every single transition in the Middle East from secular Arab state to brutal Sharia thugocracy. And he supports the jihadi savages in Syria. ...Why are our elected officials standing by while a traitorous administration backs the very enemy that has vowed to destroy us and has brutally attacked us at home and abroad? In the middle of this fresh hell stands the indefatigable Jewish state. They face the Muslim Brotherhood to the south, al-Qaida to the north, and hostile invaders within their own borders, with the tacit support of [Obama,] who is aligned with these vicious, Jew-hating supremacist forces. A terrorist takeover of Syria promises death and destruction not just for Israel, but for all free nations. Is this the objective of Obama’s statecraft? What does he expect the region to look like in ten or twenty years? A sheet of glass?” [52564, 52565]

“...The terrible fact is that in every situation, in every conflict, Obama supports the jihadists. In Libya, Obama involved the United States in the efforts to overthrow Qaddafi without congressional approval, and without anything close to national self-interest. And while Qaddafi was a somewhat madcap barbarian, he was secular. And yes, as can be seen by what followed his overthrow, he contained the jihadist threat in that part of Africa. Obama aided and abetted the rise of the Islamic supremacist regime in Libya, which has now ‘transitioned’ to Sharia government. ...Libya was just one in a long string of Obama interventions on behalf of jihadists. As soon as Obama came into office in 2009, he made an apology tour to the Muslim world. At its center was his historic June 4, 2009 speech to the ummah, which he delivered from Al-Azhar University in Cairo. ...[H]e invited the then-banned Muslim Brotherhood to that speech. That invitation prohibited Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak or his cabinet from attending that speech. Obama had, in effect, decided then where he was going with Egypt. And so it went. Concurrently, the Iranian people were marching and taking to the streets for freedom—the only real freedom revolution that took place in the Middle East. ...This was a real freedom revolution, led by women. We never see that in the Muslim world. But Obama ignored that revolution. This was the most consequential failure to act in the twenty-first century. Iran is the head of the snake. Besides Saudi Arabia, Iran is the world’s leading

sponsor of terrorism in the cause of Islam. Had Obama supported that revolution, the trajectory of the world would have been completely different, and we would be in a far different place from where we are now and where we are going. All this was preventable, and foreseeable: I predicted it all in my book, *The Post-American Presidency*. But now Obama has effectively switched sides, making disastrous concessions to Iran, betraying Israel and numerous other longtime U.S. allies. The effects of his actions have only just begun to be felt. Unless a sharp reversal comes quickly, historians will remember this as the time the U.S. went into irretrievable decline.” [52564, 52565]

Breitbart.com reports, “As the investigation into the shooting at Arapahoe High School continues, law enforcement officials stress that the presence of an armed guard in the school ‘was the key factor in preventing more deaths and injuries.’ ...According to *The Christian Science Monitor*, the school’s armed guard began running toward the sound of the shooter as soon as the first shots were fired. Arapahoe County Sheriff Grayson Robinson said that as a result of the guard’s action, ‘the heavily-armed shooter realized he was about to be confronted by an armed officer and took his own life.’” [52566, 52567, 52571, 52572]

The Associated Press reports, “Americans who already have health insurance are blaming ...Obama’s health care overhaul for their rising premiums and deductibles, and overall 3 in 4 say the rollout of coverage for the uninsured has gone poorly. ...The [Associated Press-GfK] poll found a striking level of unease about the law among people who have health insurance and aren’t looking for any more government help. Those are the 85 percent of Americans who the White House says don’t have to be worried about [Obama’s] historic push to expand coverage for the uninsured. In the survey, nearly half of those with job-based or other private coverage say their policies will be changing next year—mostly for the worse. Nearly 4 in 5 (77 percent) blame the changes on the Affordable Care Act, even though the trend toward leaner coverage predates the law’s passage. Sixty-nine percent say their premiums will be going up, while 59 percent say annual deductibles or copayments are increasing.” [52573, 52574, 52582]

60 Minutes broadcasts a one-sided, “puff-piece” segment on the National Security Agency (NSA) by CBS reporter John Miller—who once worked in the office of the Director of National Intelligence. (The embarrassing report is essentially a public relations vehicle for the NSA. BusinessInsider.com later notes, “But what drew more criticism was the fact that in the lengthy piece, no on-camera interviews took place with NSA dissenters or skeptics.”) [52602]

On December 16 Townhall.com political editor Guy Benson writes, “A new report produced by [Congressman] Darrell Issa’s [R-CA] House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform reveals that Obamacare’s controversial ‘Navigator and Assister’ program has suffered from chronic poor management, resulting in widespread disarray, since the law’s October 1 launch date. An advanced copy of the document obtained by Townhall raises a number of competency and security concerns.” White House press secretary Jay Carney charges that the Republicans are simply using the issue to sabotage

ObamaCare. [52570, 52583]

DailyCaller.com reports, “The media is now reporting that the White House delayed major environmental regulations until after the 2012 elections. This is all well and good, except that Oklahoma Republican Sen. James Inhofe made the very same findings more than one year ago. Last year, Inhofe issued a report saying that the Obama administration was ‘punting’ a slew of Environmental Protection Agency regulations into 2013, well after voters had hit the polls in November. ‘...Obama has spent the past year punting on a slew of job-killing EPA regulations that will destroy millions of American jobs and cause energy prices to skyrocket even more,’ Senator Inhofe said in a statement. ‘From greenhouse gas regulations to water guidance to the tightening of the ozone standard, the Obama-EPA has delayed the implementation of rule after rule because they don’t want all those pink slips and price spikes to hit until after the election.’ Now the mainstream media has caught on. The Washington Post reported this weekend that the White House had delayed key environmental and Obamacare regulations until after the all the votes had been counted in the 2012 election. The Post was told by anonymous current and former officials that ‘the motives behind many of the delays were clearly political, as Obama’s top aides focused on avoiding controversy before his re-election.’” [52577, 52586]

Judge Brian Cogan, of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of New York, rules against the Obama administration in *The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York, et al. v. Kathleen Sebelius, et al.*, rendering invalid ObamaCare’s requirement that Catholic organizations must provide their employees with contraceptives, abortifacients, and sterilization. Cogan writes in his ruling, “There is no way that a court can, or should, determine that a coerced violation of conscience is of insufficient quantum to merit constitutional protection. ...Tens of millions of people are exempt from the Mandate, under exemptions for grandfathered health plans, small businesses, and ‘religious employers’ like the Diocesan plaintiffs here. Millions of women thus will not receive contraceptive coverage without cost-sharing through the Mandate. Having granted so many exemptions already, the Government cannot show a compelling interest in denying one to these plaintiffs. ...Nor is the Mandate the least restrictive means by which the Government can improve public health and equalize women’s access to healthcare. ...The Government could provide the contraceptive services or insurance coverage directly to plaintiffs’ employees, or work with third parties—be it insurers, health care providers, drug manufacturers, or non-profits—to do so without requiring plaintiffs’ active participation. ...The Government first argues that the alternatives above are infeasible because the defendants lack statutory authority to enact some of them. This argument makes no sense; in any challenge to the constitutionality of a federal law, the question is whether the federal government could adopt a less restrictive means, not any particular branch within it. It would set a dangerous precedent to hold that if the Executive Branch cannot act unilaterally, then there is no alternative solution. If defendants lack the required statutory authority, Congress may pass appropriate legislation.” (The Obama administration will no doubt appeal the ruling.) [52587, 55288, 52639, 52752, 52964]

U.S. District Court Judge Richard Leon rules that the National Security Agency phone surveillance program is almost certainly unconstitutional, based on the Fourth Amendment. (“The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.”) Politico reports, “Acting on a lawsuit brought by conservative legal activist Larry Klayman, Leon issued a preliminary injunction barring the NSA from collecting so-called metadata pertaining to the Verizon accounts of Klayman and one of his clients. However, the judge stayed the order to allow for an appeal.” In his 68-page ruling Leon writes, “I cannot imagine a more ‘indiscriminate’ and ‘arbitrary invasion’ than this systematic and high-tech collection and retention of personal data on virtually every single citizen for purposes of querying it and analyzing it without judicial approval.” (Politico notes the “awkwardness” of Barack “We don’t have a domestic spy program” Obama having won the 2008 election “in part by railing against the national security state established by President George W. Bush [and] trying to defend much of that establishment while also maintaining his vow to restore civil liberties and bring an end to what seemed like a permanent war on terror.”) [52593, 52595, 52607, 52611, 52612, 52623, 52628, 52646, 52660, 52736]

Klayman, founder of Judicial Watch and FreedomWatch, tells WND.com he was placed under surveillance by the government after he filed his Verizon lawsuit. “People began receiving from me emails that I had never sent,” states Klayman. “The government just wanted me to know they were watching me.” He comments, “The judge today let the government know there would be serious consequences if the NSA continues to violate the rights of 300 million Americans. This was just the first case, against Verizon. I have cases filed in federal court against all the telephone providers involved with the NSA in telephone surveillance in the USA.” Klayman calls the lawsuit “potentially one of the biggest legal cases against the government ever. ...The ruling by Judge Leon sets a very high bar if the government wants to continue NSA electronic surveillance of U.S. telephone conversations until the government has a chance to appeal. The judge made it clear that the NSA activities were suspect under the Fourth Amendment, would not be well received and could result in additional damages.” (*The Obama Timeline* believes that if Klayman—who has called for Obama’s impeachment—is under surveillance, it likely began long before his Verizon lawsuit. *The Obama Timeline* also believes Klayman is overly optimistic, and that Leon’s decision will be quickly reversed upon appeal—when it reaches the Obama-leaning D.C. Circuit Court, which will simply cite the 1979 case *Smith v. Maryland* and be done with Klayman.) [52626, 52628, 52646, 52660]

Attorney Orly Taitz issues a press release: “Judge [Ellen Lipton] Hollander in Maryland gives Attorney Orly Taitz 21 days to file a second amended complaint and add allegations in regards to an improper withholding by the Social Security Administration [SSA] of records of Harry Bounel, whose Social Security number is being illegally used by Barack Obama. When Taitz filed the complaint, SSA did not respond at all. After the law suit was filed, SSA responded by fraudulently claiming that the records were not

found. Taitz responded that this is a fraudulent assertion, since the records were found before and denied to another petitioner due to privacy concerns, however Social Security has no right to claim privacy as according to their own 120 year rule they have a duty to release the records. The judge stated that the plaintiff Taitz might be correct, however at this time she cannot rule in her favor as her original complaint was filed before SSA responded, so the judge gave Taitz an opportunity to refile a second amended complaint and add new allegations, stating the SSA responded but [had] improperly hidden the records. This is a great development. This all but assures that the judge will order the SSA to release the SS-5, Social Security application of resident of CT, Harrison (Harry) Bounel, whose CT SSN 042-68-4425 was stolen by Obama and used in Obama's 2009 tax returns, which initially were posted on WhiteHouse.gov without proper redaction, without flattening of the file. Taitz will be very careful not to be Breitbart or Fuddied in the next 21 days." (The case is *Taitz v. Carolyn Colvin, Commissioner, Social Security Administration, et al.* Under SSA's "120 year rule," records of individuals who were born 120 or more years in the past are subject to Freedom of Information Act requests. Taitz is likely exaggerating with her statement, "This all but assures that the judge will order the SSA to release the SS-5" form of Bounel, as the government can respond to an amended and more specific complaint with another claim that it "cannot find" the records she is requesting.) [42621, 52597, 52598, 52786]

The Senate votes 78–16 to approve multimillionaire lawyer and Obama campaign donor Jeh Johnson as the next Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). (DailyCaller.com has reported that Johnson once "represented a disgraced scientist who was sentenced to 30 months in prison for planting a fried rat's tail in his son's Happy Meal french fries as part of a failed extortion attempt. Michael Zanakis took a rat's tail from the medical research laboratory where he worked, had it fried and then placed it in a package of french fries he bought at a Long Island McDonald's on Jan. 15, 1996, prosecutors said at the time. Zanakis threatened to go public with accusations that McDonald's served the fried rat's tail to his son—who he said had bitten into and swallowed part of the tail—unless the company paid him \$5 million.") Senator Tom Carper (D-DE) says, "I've been impressed by his forthrightness, his thoughtfulness, his core values and impeccable moral character, as well as his deep commitment to public service." Columnist Michelle Malkin notes that Johnson, who "has never actually held an executive position governing a state or managing a complex organization," is now in charge of 240,000 DHS employees and a \$40 billion budget. "Let me summarize his relevant experience in border security, port security, airport security or immigration enforcement: Zero. Zip. Nada. News coverage instead stresses that Johnson is the 'first African-American' to hold the No. 1 position at DHS. Because, you know, diversity will keep us safe." [50083, 50385, 52599, 52636, 52664]

The Senate also votes 78–16 to confirm Anne Patterson as Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs. (As ambassador to Egypt, Patterson once criticized planned protests against then-President Mohamed Morsi and his authoritarian Muslim Brotherhood regime: "Some say that street action will produce better results than elections. To be honest, my government and I are deeply skeptical. Egypt needs stability to get its economic house in order, and more violence on the streets will do little more

than add new names to the lists of martyrs.” At FrontPageMag.com author and Middle East expert Raymond Ibrahim wrote that “...many Egyptian activists are condemning Patterson for flagrantly behaving like the Muslim Brotherhood’s stooge. Leading opposition activist Shady el-Ghazali Harb said Patterson showed ‘blatant bias’ in favor of Morsi and the Brotherhood, adding that her remarks had earned the U.S. administration ‘the enmity of the Egyptian people.’ Coptic activists like George Ishaq openly told Patterson to ‘shut up and mind your own business.’ And Christian business tycoon Naguib Sawiris—no stranger to Islamist hostility—posted a message on his Twitter account addressed to the ambassador saying ‘Bless us with your silence.’” Obama rewarded Patterson’s incompetence with a promotion.) [46028, 46029, 46030, 46074, 46141, 46169, 46175, 46181, 46190, 46194, 46195, 46279, 46280, 46298, 46315, 46316, 46392, 52636]

TheHill.com reports that Congresswoman Donna Edwards (D-MD) “and seven other Democrats have proposed legislation that would eliminate the possibility of imposing the death penalty for a range of federal offenses, including several categories of murder and crimes against the government like treason and espionage. The Federal Death Penalty Abolition Act, H.R. 3741, would end the death penalty for assassination or kidnapping that results in the death of the president or vice president, and also ends it for the murder of a member of Congress. Under the bill, the death penalty could no longer be used to punish people for using a weapon of mass destruction, or murder done via torture, child abuse, war crimes, aircraft hijackings, sexual abuse, bank robberies or the willful wrecking of a train. Using chemical or biological materials to kill could also no longer result in the death penalty, nor could deaths related to treason or espionage. The death or injury of an unborn child could not result in the death penalty either. ...Others sponsoring the bill are [Congressmen] Elijah Cummings (D-MD), Keith Ellison (D-MN), Barbara Lee (D-CA), Hank Johnson (D-GA.), John Lewis (D-GA), Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) and José Serrano (D-NY).” (Arguably, treason could include birth certificate forgery and fraud in order to gain entry into the White House and providing aid and comfort to America’s jihadist enemies by providing them with weapons in Libya and Syria. Whether the eight Congressmen—who are farther to the political left than most—have the protection of Obama in mind is not known.) [52600, 52634, 53218]

Asked if Obama has signed up for ObamaCare, White House press secretary Jay Carney responds, “Uh...I have no updates on that... [Obama] will, uh, uh, purchase insurance on the exchanges... When we have an update, we’ll provide it to you, but our guidance on that has not changed.” [52601, 52630]

At Reason.com Matt Welch writes, “As recently as November 2012—more than two years after the administration published grandfathering regulations as part of its health care legislation, rendering ludicrous [Obama’s] frequently repeated pledge that ‘if you like your health plan you can keep it’—much of the liberal commentariat was calling the electoral contest between Obama and Republican Mitt Romney a referendum on political honesty. The only way for truth to prevail, they argued, was to vote for the Democrat. ...The estimated scores of millions of eventual health-plan cancellations that Americans will soon face are not some weird unintended consequence of ObamaCare. They are

fundamental to making the law work as written. The Affordable Care Act relies on previously uninsured young people to overpay for coverage they don't need, and for previously insured adults to pay for health contingencies they will never face, be it childbirth for men or pediatric dental care for grandparents. That is what is supposed to allow more people to be covered and to keep overall rates in check. Since making people's health insurance more expensive is not particularly popular, Obama lied about it, and not only when he claimed you could keep your plan and your doctor. In fact, [Obama] promised at least 15 times while running for president in 2008 that his health insurance reform would reduce premiums by an average of \$2,500 per family. In May 2009, he said the law would 'end up saving \$2 trillion,' leading to 'lower premiums.' ...For years, liberal commentators have accused conservatives of living in an intellectual 'bubble' of their own creation, impervious to reality. But through official intent and intellectual laziness, Democrats have created a bubble of deception surrounding ObamaCare that will affect millions of Americans for years to come. A lie this ignoble should stain the credibility of everyone who perpetuated it." [52714]

Pravoslavie.ru reports, "Over 80 civilians in a town northwest of the Syrian capital of Damascus have been executed by [Obama-backed] Islamist rebels, sources within the Syrian military told RT. Many others were kidnapped to be used as human shields. Government forces are continuing a large-scale operation against Jabhat al-Nusra and Liwa Al-Islam fighters, who captured the town earlier this week. The area is located some 20 kilometers away from Damascus. According to SANA news agency, around 1,000 militants were in the town when it was enveloped by the army on Friday. The military sources said the 'armed groups have performed an execution of civilians' in Adra, RT Arabic correspondent Abutaleb Albohaya reported from Syria. 'For now it's established that over 80 people were killed in the areas now taken over by the army. Often whole families were murdered,' he said. The number of executed civilians is expected to rise after government troops manage to recover the rest of the town—which has a population of around 20,000—from the Islamists, the military source added. ...What the Islamist rebels did when they entered Adra on Wednesday morning was a 'massacre,' one a local resident told RT. 'The situation was terrible—with killing, atrocities, and fear as the background. Unidentified armed men came into town, but it was obvious that they were Jabhat al-Nusra militants,' Muhammad Al-Said said. 'The worst crime they committed was that they toasted people in ovens used to bake bread when those people came to buy it. They kidnapped and beat up many,' he added. According to Al-Said, the rebels committed the atrocities so they could place blame on government forces. But the resident said that Adra citizens are 'waiting for Syrian troops to save us from the terrorists, who came from other countries.'" [52608, 52609, 52631, 52719]

Meanwhile, rebels are holding several nuns they abducted from the Christian town of Ma'loula, Syria. AtlasShrugs.com reports, "Jihad spokesman Mohannad Abu al-Fidaa said that the nuns 'will not be released until several demands have been implemented.'" The demands reportedly include the release of one thousand captured rebels. (Syrian Christians have been escaping to Turkey, even though they are not particularly welcome there either. But, at least in the short term, the Christians will not be killed by the Turks.

By late January, 2014 every Christian church in Ma'loula is either destroyed or desecrated.) [52610, 52720, 63658]

On December 17 Donald Trump issues Twitter messages: “Who thinks that ...Obama is totally incompetent?” and “Incompetent, ineligible, and a liar. Also party to a conspiracy to create a fraudulent BC and SS registration form.” [52682]

Congressman Jim Matheson (D-UT) announces he will not seek reelection in 2014. He states, “It has been a tremendous privilege to serve the people of Utah during my time in the United States House of Representatives, but my time in the House should not be the sum total of my service. Today, I am announcing that I will not seek reelection to the House of Representatives.” (Matheson, who is only 53 years old, barely won reelection in 2012. His Republican opponent, Mia Love, the daughter of Haitian immigrants, lost by a mere 76 votes and is running again in 2014.) [52614, 52617, 52625, 52651, 52767, 52718]

Congressman Frank Wolf (R-VA) also announces he will not seek reelection in 2014, as does Tom Latham (R-IA). [52651]

While media attention has focused more on health insurance premium increases for individual policies, increases are also on the way for employer-provided group plans. According to Tom Howell, Jr. at WashingtonTimes.com, Midwest Renewable Biofuels, in Prairie City, Iowa, has been notified that its premium for 2014 is going up by 81 percent. Howell notes, “While most of the early Obamacare rollout problems have focused on the uninsured and those who get their policies through the individual market exchanges, more than 150 million Americans who get coverage through their employers are likely to feel the fallout as well. ...Already reeling from criticism over his flawed promise that people who like their health care plans will be able to keep them, Mr. Obama risks further erosion of his credibility if people believe his health care law is cutting into job-based plans they figured were safe.” [52615, 52627, 52635]

DailyCaller.com reports, “Former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden stole vastly more information than previously speculated, and is holding it at ransom for his own protection. ‘What’s floating is so dangerous, we’d be behind for twenty years in terms of access (if it were to be leaked),’ a ranking Department of Defense official told the Daily Caller. ‘He stole everything—literally everything,’ the official said. Last month British and U.S. intelligence officials speculated Snowden had in his possession a ‘doomsday cache’ of intelligence information, including the names of undercover intelligence personnel stationed around the world. ‘Sources briefed on the matter’ told Reuters that such a cache could be used as an insurance policy in the event Snowden was captured, and that, ‘the worst was yet to come.’ ...According to the official, there are at least two others in possession of the code to access the information, and, ‘if we nail him—he’ll release the data.’” [52618]

In a letter to the people of Brazil—where he is seeking asylum—Snowden writes, “There is a huge difference between legal programs, legitimate spying... and these programs of

dragnet mass surveillance that put entire populations under an all-seeing eye and save copies forever. These programs were never about terrorism: they're about economic spying, social control, and diplomatic manipulation. They're about power.” (The Associated Press notes, “The documents [leaked by Snowden] revealed Brazil is the top NSA target in Latin America, with spying that has included the monitoring of Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff’s cellphone [sic; cell phone] and hacking into the internal network of state-run oil company Petrobras. The revelations enraged Rousseff, who in October canceled an official visit to Washington that was to include a state dinner. She’s also pushing the United Nations to give citizens more protections against spying.”) [52821, 52822]

WashingtonPost.com notes that Obama “is ending his fifth year in office... with record numbers of Americans saying they disapprove of his job performance and his once-hefty advantages over Republicans in Congress eroded in many areas, according to a new Washington Post-ABC News poll. His position is all the more striking when compared with his standing a year ago, as he was preparing for his second inauguration after a solid reelection victory. ...Obama’s standing is of particular concern to congressional Democrats as they look to next year’s midterm elections. Parties that control the White House suffer—sometimes significantly—in midterm campaigns when the president’s approval rating is below 50 percent. ...Obama also has lost the lead he enjoyed on who could better deal with the economy. Today Republicans are at 45 percent to Obama’s 41 percent. Last year at this time, it was Obama at 54 percent and congressional Republicans at 36 percent. A 26-point Obama advantage a year ago on who would better protect the middle class has fallen to just six points in the latest survey. He has lost ground on these measures among women, liberals and younger Americans—key members of his winning electoral coalition. [Obama’s] overall approval rating stands at 43 percent, while disapproval is at 55 percent. Those numbers are virtually identical to a poll taken a month ago. At this time last year, 54 percent approved of Obama’s overall performance and 42 disapproved. Even after the huge losses his party suffered in the 2010 midterms, Obama’s approval rating was higher, at 49 percent, than it is today and was slightly more positive than negative. ...At this point in 2005 ...former president George W. Bush was at 47 percent positive, 52 percent negative. All other post-World War II presidents were at or above 50 percent at this point in their second terms, except Richard M. Nixon, whose fifth year ended in 1973 with an approval rating of 29 percent because of the Watergate scandal that later brought impeachment and his resignation.” [52622, 52637, 52743]

According to the same poll, 82 percent of Americans say they have some form of health insurance; the percentage was 87 when ObamaCare was passed in 2010. [52700, 52701]

Twelve Senate Republicans join with the Democrats to invoke cloture and advance the Ryan-Murray budget deal. All Senate Democrats—apparently unable to find a mere \$6 billion in waste anywhere in the federal budget—shamelessly block an amendment to restore \$6 billion in cost-of-living-allowance reductions to military pensions. (The amendment would have reduced an IRS credit improperly used by illegal immigrants.) [42629, 52654, 52666, 52677, 52688]

The Obama administration announces that Jeffrey Zients, who in late October was brought in to coordinate efforts to repair problems with Healthcare.gov, will be replaced by former Microsoft executive Kurt DelBene. DelBene will be “senior advisor” to Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius. CNBC.com writes, “Before Microsoft, DelBene was a management consultant with McKinsey and Company, and a software developer and systems engineer for AT&T Bell Laboratories. Officials said DelBene has agreed to stay on the job of managing HealthCare.gov for at least the first half of 2014, which would include the March 31 deadline for open enrollment on that and other Obamacare exchanges.” (DelBene is married to first-term Congresswoman Suzan DelBene (D-WA). PJMedia.com asks, “Is the man who inflicted the world with Clippy really the best person to fix Obamacare?” (“Clippy” is the infamous paper clip icon hated by users of Microsoft Office.) [52633, 52686, 52687]

Obama’s approval/disapproval rating plunges to 43/55 in a December 12–15 Washington Post-ABC News poll—his lowest rating in that poll. [52647]

In *The Washington Times*, former ambassador to the U.N. John Bolton writes, “Nero ‘fiddled,’ so they say, while Rome burned. Today, this epigram all too accurately describes ...Obama’s approach to U.S. national security. For five years, he has resolutely consigned foreign and defense issues to the bottom of his policy agenda, resulting in increasing disarray both domestically and abroad. The United States needs strategic thinking internationally, and we are getting the opposite. Mr. Obama’s personal Rome, the Affordable Care Act, is indeed self-immolating, and he responds by giving speeches (his version of playing Nero’s cithara) rather than taking command to save his eponymous program before the administration itself is consumed. Domestic troubles, however, in no way justify indifference to foreign affairs. If anything, political weakness at home only exposes [Obama] to greater risks internationally, as adversaries take advantage of U.S. inattention, indecision and unpreparedness. ...Inexplicably, fiddling is precisely what the Obama administration is doing. The vaunted Geneva agreement on Iran’s nuclear-weapons program is already collapsing. [Obama] himself at the United Nations in September designated this issue, along with the Israel-Palestinian dispute, as his top international priorities. While [Secretary of State John] Kerry waited for Ben Gurion Airport’s runways to be cleared of snow last week, the Associated Press headlined, ‘As ties warm, EU parliament delegation visits Iran,’ and the Financial Times blared, ‘Iran thaw cheers French carmakers.’ These news headlines are the visible manifestation of Iran’s massive psychological breakthrough in the Geneva talks, extending beyond the specifics regarding its nuclear program or the increasingly porous sanctions regimes. Iran has flipped international expectations to its advantage, while Mr. Kerry has worried about Israeli construction of apartment buildings near Jerusalem.” [52663]

“In Eastern Europe, The New York Times wrote, ‘Signs of Momentum Shifting to Protesters in Ukraine’—not that the Obama administration has done anything to affect the ongoing struggle and its implications for this large, strategic country. Make no mistake, given Russian President Vladimir Putin’s determination to re-establish Moscow’s hegemony over the space of the former Soviet Union, Ukraine today is the very paradigm

flash point where armed intervention and conflict are not inconceivable. Mr. Putin will not watch quietly as Ukraine slips out of Moscow's orbit to join the West, but Mr. Obama and Mr. Kerry seem completely inattentive. ... Ultimately, perhaps nothing can pry Mr. Obama away from his domestic obsessions. Nonetheless, other American political leaders have a larger duty to alert their fellow citizens to international threats and to propose solutions before the threats become insoluble. Neither political party is meeting this responsibility, yet time is growing ever shorter. Ask Nero how it turns out." [52663]

The *Daily Mail* reports, "During a White House meeting called to brief America's largest tech companies today about government overreach in electronic surveillance, ... Obama changed the subject—angering some meeting participants by shifting gears to address the failed launch of healthcare.gov. 'That wasn't what we came for,' a vice-president of a company whose CEO attended told MailOnline. 'We really didn't care for a PR pitch about how the administration is trying to salvage its internal health care tech nightmare.' One executive said that meeting participants were dead-set against straying from the principal focus of the meeting—the uncomfortable and legally untenable position they are in when the National Security Agency demands access to their digital records. The White House said in advance that the meeting would include a discussion of healthcare.gov, but the company executive said the only subject that mattered to the participants was the NSA. 'He basically hijacked the meeting,' the executive said. 'We all told the White House that we were only there to talk about what the NSA was up to and how it affects us.' Yet Obama, according to insiders, repeatedly peppered the discussion with reassuring words about how the Affordable Care Act's marquee website was well on its way to becoming functional." [52648, 52683]

According to TheHill.com, Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) "is threatening to keep the Senate in session by dragging out Janet Yellen's confirmation as head of the Federal Reserve. The noted central bank critic said Tuesday that he was prepared to force the Senate to exhaust the full 30 hours of debate on Yellen's nomination if he did not receive a vote on his legislation to fully audit the Fed. His push comes as senators are trying to wrap up their work for the year. Paul opposes Yellen's nomination to head the Fed but said he would get out of the way if the Senate agreed to hold a vote on his legislation to fully audit the central bank. If not, he's prepared to slow the process as much as possible. 'We'll try to slow it down or stop it as much as we can,' he said. 'We've told them that we will allow it to move forward and expedite it if they give us a vote on 'Audit the Fed.' Paul and his supporters do not have the ability to actually block Yellen's confirmation, after Senate Democrats changed the chamber's rules to let nominees be confirmed with a simple majority vote. But he can drag out the process, something that could irritate colleagues hoping to get out of Washington for a holiday break." (At her November confirmation hearing, Yellen expressed her opposition to an audit of the Federal Reserve, saying, "I would be very concerned about legislation that would subject the Federal Reserve to short-term political pressures that could interfere with that independence." (That is, "Just trust me and my money-printing schemes.") [51178, 51214, 51316, 51933, 52649]

Meanwhile, USNews.com reports that Paul “is moving closer to filing a lawsuit in federal court against National Security Agency surveillance programs. A senior Paul staffer says U.S. District Court Judge Richard Leon’s Monday decision that NSA opponents have standing to sue over the bulk collection of phone records makes Paul ‘much more likely’ to file his own lawsuit. The senior staffer... says hundreds of thousands of people volunteered online as possible plaintiffs after Paul first floated the idea of a class-action lawsuit in June. The senator has not firmly decided to file suit and it’s still possible Paul will choose to instead assist with three already-filed lawsuits against the NSA. If Paul does file a lawsuit it would be the fourth major legal attack against the NSA’s bulk collection and five-year storage of American phone records.” [52650]

Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), head of the Senate Intelligence Committee, expresses her dissatisfaction with the court’s ruling against the NSA, saying, “There are differing opinions now. That’s the state of play. And the assumption is that it’s going to be appealed and the Supreme Court will eventually make a decision, which is really the appropriate thing.” WashingtonTimes.com adds, “The White House was mostly mum [about the court ruling], but ...Obama’s nominee to be the next top attorney at the CIA, Caroline Krass, said she also disagreed with Judge Leon. ‘I have a different view about the Fourth Amendment. I think that under Smith versus Maryland, which I still consider to be good law, there is not a reasonable expectation of privacy in telephony metadata,’ she said.” [52662]

At CainTV.com Robert Laurie writes, “It’s called ‘estate recovery’ and although it’s been around for 20 years, most Americans have never heard of it. Sadly, this arcane bit of Medicaid fine print is about to become much more familiar. Basically, what it says is this: If you’re over 55 and are on Medicaid, when you die the state can seize your assets in an effort to repay the cost of your care. In the past it didn’t affect too many people, because ‘asset tests’ were included in the Medicaid enrollment requirements. The bar varied significantly from state to state, but the gist of it was that if your assets rose above a certain level you were disqualified, regardless of your income. However, that was before [Obama] signed his ‘signature legislation’ [the Affordable Care Act]. Now, the requirements for Medicaid have been simplified to allow more low income non-elderly people onto the rolls. As a result, folks with low incomes—but substantive assets—are suddenly finding themselves trapped in a situation where they have no choice but to sign up for Medicaid. In the 26 states that have opted to implement the Medicaid expansion, asset tests have been eliminated and eligibility is based on income alone. If you earn less than 138% of the federal poverty level, you’ll probably qualify. If you do, you’re no longer able to receive subsidies that help pay for the other plans on the exchange. The only alternative is to purchase a full price, un-subsidized, plan. Since ObamaCare is driving premiums and deductibles up, more people are being thrust into Medicaid and they’re shocked to find out that—after they die—their states can come after the assets they’d been planning to leave to their children.” [52652, 52713, 52953]

Politico reports, “Rejecting one of the Obama White House’s most aggressive attempts to preserve executive branch secrecy, a federal judge Tuesday ordered the disclosure of a government-wide foreign-aid directive ...Obama signed in 2010 but refused to make

public. The Justice Department asserted that the Presidential Policy Directive on Global Development was covered by executive privilege, even though it is unclassified and reflected standing guidance to agencies rather than advice given to [Obama]. Acting on a Freedom of Information Act lawsuit brought by the Center for Effective Government, U.S. District Court Judge Ellen Huvelle concluded that the presidential order is not properly within the bounds of the so-called ‘presidential communications privilege.’ The judge went further, calling ‘troubling’ the sweeping nature of the government’s argument’s in the case. ...The judge also suggested the administration had lost sight of the purposes of the Freedom of Information Act and transparency itself. ‘The government appears to adopt the cavalier attitude that [Obama] should be permitted to convey orders throughout the Executive Branch without public oversight... to engage in what is in effect governance by ‘secret law,’ Huvelle said.” [52653]

According to BuzzFeed.com, Obama, Vice President Joe Biden, and their wives will not be attending the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. “A former federal official, Janet Napolitano, will instead be leading the U.S. delegation, the White House announced Tuesday, and two out LGBT athletes—Billie Jean King and Caitlin Cahow—will be a part of the delegation as well. In addition to the Obamas and Bidens not attending the Olympics, no current cabinet members will be a part of the country’s delegation either.” (Including two lesbians in the delegation is no doubt intended to draw attention to Russia’s recent anti-gay legislation. Delegation member Brian Boitano says, “As an athlete, I hope we can remain focused on the Olympic spirit which celebrates achievement in sport by peoples of all nations”—immediately after announcing that he is gay, thereby giving the media an opportunity to not focus on the Olympic spirit.) [52694, 52695, 52696, 52780]

The Guardian reports, “In an angry exchange with Barack Obama, Angela Merkel has compared the snooping practices of the US with those of the Stasi, the ubiquitous and all-powerful secret police of the communist dictatorship in East Germany, where she grew up. The German chancellor also told [Obama] that America’s National Security Agency cannot be trusted because of the volume of material it had allowed to leak to the whistleblower Edward Snowden, according to the New York Times. Livid after learning from Der Spiegel magazine that the Americans were listening in to her personal mobile phone, Merkel confronted Obama with the accusation: ‘This is like the Stasi.’ The newspaper also reported that Merkel was particularly angry that, based on the disclosures, ‘the NSA clearly couldn’t be trusted with private information, because they let Snowden clean them out.’” [52658]

April Todd-Malmlov, head of Minnesota’s ObamaCare exchange, called MNSure, resigns. FoxNews.com reports, “She had been under increasing pressure over insurance sign-up problems and failed to get a vote of confidence from Democratic Gov. Mark Dayton last week. ...Questions over Todd-Malmlov’s leadership ramped up after disclosure of an extended trip to Costa Rica in late November, as critical insurance enrollment deadlines neared and issues were unresolved. Minnesota's exchange has had so many technical issues that some health insurance companies expressed concerns about whether people signing up for coverage would have it starting Jan. 1. ...One of Dayton’s

2014 challengers, Scott Honour, called Monday for Todd-Malmlov to resign. Even with her departure, Republican critics didn't let up. 'Today's resignation of MNSure's executive director does not change the fact that MNSure is a fiasco,' said Ben Golnik, chairman of the Minnesota Jobs Coalition and a leading critic of Dayton's administration. ...Todd-Malmlov was earning an annual salary of \$136,680. It wasn't immediately clear if her departure came with a severance package.' (Fewer than 5,000 Minnesotans have purchased insurance via MNSure.) [52655, 52656]

TheHill.com reports, "Michelle Obama will sit for a trio of interviews with urban radio stations as part of a coordinated White House blitz intended to promote ObamaCare coverage among mothers and minorities. The first lady will be interviewed Wednesday evening by Yolanda Adams, Al Sharpton and Joe Madison, three of the nation's most popular African American talk radio hosts. 'Her interviews are part of a broader effort by the White House and partnerships with outside groups, faith leaders, and health professionals to encourage African Americans to get covered,' a White House official said. The first lady's radio appearances are intended to compliment [sic; complement] an afternoon event with [Obama] and mothers who have worked to promote ObamaCare in the Oval Office [sic]. The White House believes women are crucial to their push to get uninsured consumers to sign up for coverage." (Obama and his advisors are using a page from the community activist playbook, trying to encourage support for ObamaCare through *emotions* rather than reason—perhaps mistakenly believing that women are more gullible than men. But in many households it is the wife who writes the checks to pay the bills, rather than the husband, and millions of them certainly know—or will soon know—that ObamaCare will place a financial strain on the family budget. The reliance on Obama's wife to promote ObamaCare is an indication of desperation; the White House knows that Michelle Obama is considered more trustworthy than her husband.) [52715]

In her interview with Al Sharpton, Michelle Obama says, "You know, young people aren't just living out there on their own. If they get sick and can't afford it, who's going to have to come in and clean up that financial mess but the parents and grandparents who care about them? So young people owe it to their mothers, to give mothers the peace of mind to know that they are insured and that they can take care of themselves if something goes wrong." [52766]

At Shoebat.com Walid Shoebat and Ben Barrack write, "The recent claims attributed to [Naglaa Mahmoud] the wife of ousted Egyptian president Mohammed Mursi [often spelled Morsi] are shocking—very shocking. If they are true, they would be extremely damaging to the Obama administration generally but perhaps even more so, to Bill and Hillary Clinton. Naglaa Mahmoud is reported to have divulged some extremely specific details. ...Among other things Mahmoud reportedly said in an interview was that the Clintons 'recruited' her and her husband in the 1980's while the Egyptian couple resided in the U.S. and that the two families became close friends. ...Earlier this year, it was reported that Gehad el-Haddad had been arrested by Egyptian security forces; el-Haddad also worked for the foundation of the 42nd U.S. President [the William J. Clinton Foundation]. Gehad el-Haddad was also the Chief of Staff to Khairat al-Shater, a top Muslim Brotherhood leader in Egypt who was the front-running Brotherhood candidate

for President until Mursi took that mantle and ultimately won the presidency in 2012. El-Haddad's father—Essam el-Haddad—was an aide to Mursi as his top foreign policy adviser according to Politisite.” [52659]

Shoebat and Barrack continue, “We have presented overwhelming evidence that Egypt—under the control of the Muslim Brotherhood at the time—was involved in the attack in Benghazi on 9/11/12 that resulted in the deaths of four Americans, including Ambassador Christopher Stevens. Mahmoud's claims may bolster the case even more. ...Mohammed Mursi was passionate about wanting the release of [1993 World Trade Center bombing mastermind] Omar Abdel-Rahman (the Blind Sheikh). ...The [U.S.] Special Mission Compound (SMC) [in Benghazi] was woefully and inexplicably insecure, just begging to be attacked. Even the Accountability Review Board (ARB) commissioned by [Hillary] Clinton found State Department leadership failures to be ‘systemic’ and that security was ‘grossly’ inadequate. This SMC came under the ultimate authority and responsibility of Hillary Clinton. These two facts taken together instantly become more relevant in light of claims attributed to Mursi's wife. If the Clintons and the Mursis are truly close, with [close Hillary Clinton pal Huma] Abedin having served as a Brotherhood operative inside the State Department, claims made by retired four-star Admiral James Lyons, that the attack was likely about a kidnapping operation gone wrong (to exchange Stevens for the Blind Sheikh) may take on added significance as well. ...The ‘grossly’ inadequate security at the SMC would be like low-hanging fruit for Muslim Brotherhood terrorists to capture Stevens and demand the Blind Sheikh's release in exchange for Stevens' release.” [52659]

It bears repeating that in one of the videos taken during the Benghazi attack a gunman can be overhead saying, in Arabic, “Don't Shoot us! We were sent by Morsi!” There is no explanation for such a statement other than Morsi's involvement in the plan. Morsi likely also engineered the anti-video demonstrations in Cairo as a cover for the attacks. As Shoebat and Barrack suggest, the plan may have been to kidnap ambassador Christopher Stevens and then exchange him for Abdel-Rahman. But, despite Clinton's cooperation in reducing security at the facility, the kidnappers fouled up the scheme by killing Stevens, thus making it impossible for Obama to engage in a “brilliant plan to save him” with a prisoner exchange. Suddenly, Obama was denied the chance to look like a diplomatic genius right before the election, and all he and Clinton could do was continue to push their cover story (“A YouTube video sparked the demonstration!”) and hope to make it past November 6. If this theory is correct, Obama, Hillary Clinton, and their accomplices in the plan (possibly Huma Abedin, National Security Advisor Susan Rice, and CIA Director John O. Brennan) may be guilty of treason. [39292, 39293, 39294, 39295, 39305, 52661]

Newsmax.com reports, “The number of Americans receiving Social Security disability payments has increased 20 percent since ...Obama took office and the influx of new recipients has pushed the program close to insolvency. The annual deficit in the Social Security Disability Trust Fund hit \$31.49 billion in fiscal 2013 and the remaining balance of \$100.49 billion in the fund will be depleted by 2016, the Social Security Administration predicts. ...When Obama took office there were over 7.4 million workers

on disability. The Social Security Administration announced in October that the number is now more than 8.9 million, a 20 percent jump. Another 2 million spouses and children of disabled workers also receive SSDI [Social Security Disability Insurance] benefits, bringing the total number of beneficiaries to some 10.9 million Americans. The fund has run a deficit every year since Obama took office, after 15 straight years of surpluses. In the 57-year history of the program, there have been 19 years where the trust fund ran a deficit, five of them under [Obama]. Since Obama took office, the annual deficits in the disability trust fund totaled \$8.46 billion in fiscal 2009; \$20.83 billion in 2010; \$25.26 billion in 2011; and \$29.70 billion in 2012. Adding in the fiscal 2013 deficit of \$31.49 billion brings the program's red ink under Obama to \$115 billion, according to SSA." (There is no doubt that a large percentage of the individuals receiving SSDI benefits are not, in fact, "totally and permanently disabled," and are instead Americans who, unable to find work in the weak economy, filed for benefits claiming bad backs, depression, or other hard to disprove ailments. A significant problem is that many of those individuals are unlikely to seek employment even after the economy recovers.) [52681]

On CNN, Piers Morgan asks ABC's Barbara Walters, "Why is Obama facing so much opposition now? Why is he struggling so much to really fulfill the great flame of ambition and excitement that he was elected on originally in 2009?" Walters responds, "...He made so many promises. We thought that he was going to be, I shouldn't say this at Christmastime, but, the next Messiah. And the whole ObamaCare, or whatever you want to call it, the... Affordable Health Act [sic], it just hasn't worked for him, and he's stumbled around on it, and people feel very disappointed because they expected more. It's very difficult when the expectations for you are very high. You're, you're almost better off when they are low and then they rise and rise. His were very high and they've dropped. But you know, he still has several years to go. What does he have, three years more, Piers? And, you know, there will be a lot of changes, one, one thinks in that time." [52657, 52693, 52702]

Also appearing on CNN is attorney Larry Klayman, to discuss the court ruling in his favor in his lawsuit against Verizon and NSA spying. Klayman, harshly insulted by CNN in its introduction, tells host Don Lemon, "I think it is important to note that you're a big supporter of Obama, that you have favored him in every respect. You have to try to do a hit piece [on me] to diminish a very important decision." Lemon responds, "None of that is true, but go on." Klayman: "Well, it is true. I've watched you for many years. You're an ultra-leftist and you're a big supporter of Obama. Let's talk about the NSA, let's not talk about Larry Klayman. This victory is for the American people. It wasn't for me. And you, as somebody from the left ...should appreciate that you don't have a police state in this country that's going to be able to intimidate Americans to chill their free speech rights." After more contentious conversation, Lemon threatens to turn off Klayman's microphone. Lemon's other guest, leftist legal analyst Jeffrey Toobin—another Obama sycophant—says, "This case is based on Larry Klayman's tin-foil hat paranoia about the NSA being after him. He had some fantasy that the NSA was after him. This case is not about Larry Klayman, it's about the metadata program that affects everybody, but the idea that Larry Klayman is the representative is simply outrageous. He is a professional litigant and lunatic who should not be a representative of the very important issues of this

case.” Klayman replies, “It’s not about me, Jeffrey, and the fact that you want to try to do a hit on me shows me that you’re not a serious person and, frankly, should not be doing legal commentary for CNN. I think you should read the complaint rather than shooting your mouth off. ... This is a disgrace.” Lemon then does have the producer cut Klayman’s microphone, but then brings him back on the air “to show you we’re going to be the bigger person.” Klayman responds, “The last word is you’re not the bigger people. Don’t kid anybody. Let anybody watch this and see that CNN removes you from the screen when it doesn’t like what you think. You know what, you’re not CNN, Don, and Toobin, you’re not CNN. CNN is a reputable organization, but you have not acted in a respectful way, and it’s in fact disgraceful. You’re more like Martin Bashir.” [52698, 52815]

Klayman later tells WND.com, “You have to try to do a hit piece to diminish a very important decision,” and the Democrat National Committee (DNC) “used Lemon as a skill. ... Obama and the Clintons know this was a key decision, and they don’t want us to have any oxygen. The DNC wants to cut me down to size. What Lemon did was classless and sleazy. Lemon is a well-known ultra-leftist African-American political activist who pursues a LGBT sexual agenda [Lemon is gay]. ... The entire segment with me yesterday was structured as a hit piece, designed to bring in CNN legal analyst Jeffrey Toobin whose job was to call me a lunatic even though he appeared not to have read Judge Leon’s decision. ... The NSA is listening to us right now. The Obama administration is lying about the extent to which the NSA monitors on a continuous basis the ongoing telephone conversations of countless numbers of Americans.” [52724, 52815]

Obama’s propaganda arm, Organizing for Action, sends a Twitter message that asks, “How do you plan to spend the cold days of December?” The message includes a photograph of an effeminate-looking young man in plaid flannel pajamas holding a cup in both hands, and the text, “Wear pajamas. Drink hot chocolate. Talk about getting health insurance.” (It does not take long for the “pajama boy” ad to be ridiculed. At Townhall.com Katie Pavlich writes, “The jokes write themselves, but my take is that the Obama administration wants American males living in their parents’ basements forever.”) [52667, 52668, 52669, 52670, 52671, 52672, 52673, 52674, 52730, 52928]

December 18 DailyCaller.com reports, “In a meeting with “eight moms from around America,” according to a White House pool report, ... Obama encouraged the mothers to sing the praises of Obamacare while they’re out shopping at grocery stores. Obama, speaking to the moms in the Oval Office, acknowledged that there had been problems with the roll-out of his signature health legislation, but insisted that a solid P.R. campaign will rescue Obamacare. When people ‘hear about preventive care, the more they hear about no lifetime limits,’ Obama said. ‘The more information they get, the more satisfied they’re going to be.’ ... ‘There’s something about moms,’ Obama said, according to the report. ‘Nothing can replace telling stories in the grocery store to somebody who may be skeptical.’” Mrs. Obama tells the mothers, “And we urge people to reach out. And if they signed up their child, then signed up—sign up their friends. You know, if you’ve got grandkids, make it a Christmas treat around the table to talk about a little health care. You know, ring in the new year with a—new coverage. ... And as Barack said, your stories are powerful. And it’s our job as mothers to make sure that our young people are informed

about, you know, their invincibility [sic; she means lack of invincibility], to make sure that other moms and families out there really understand what this law provides, and that they can take advantage of it. This is the beauty of it. People have choices. They can go onto the website, they can talk to a navigator, they can learn for themselves what the law means and what it doesn't mean." [52679, 52709, 52711, 52747]

For Michelle Obama to give health care advice is laughable. As noted previously in this *Timeline*, when her husband was a U.S. Senator he pushed for a \$1 million earmark for the University of Chicago Hospitals. She was then promoted to Vice-President of Community and External Affairs for the hospitals, and her salary jumped from \$121,900 to \$316,962. Her main responsibility, in promoting what was called an "Urban Health Initiative," was to act as a "bouncer"—to encourage the poor, uninsured area residents to go to neighborhood clinics rather than diminish hospital profits by using the hospital emergency rooms. Assisting her with the public relations was Obama campaign guru David Axelrod. An executive vice-president of the University of Chicago Hospitals was Obama's friend Eric Whitaker; Obama had previously arranged for Whitaker to be hired as the head of the Illinois Department of Public Health, at a salary of \$150,000. Obama later said of the \$1 million he obtained for his wife's employer, "I don't think that I was obligated to recuse myself from anything related to the university... but you could make a good argument that this is something that slipped through our cracks, through our screening system." [110, 111, 112, 664, 1945]

Despite Obama's enthusiasm, forced or real or delusional, the odds of supermarket shoppers "signing the praises" of the end of lifetime limits on insurance payout are minimal when those shoppers will be more concerned about the increased monthly premiums and sky-high deductibles required to pay for unlimited lifetime limits, free strep throat tests, abortifacients—and maternity coverage for old men. Later in the day ABC's Jonathan Karl asks White House press secretary Jay Carney, "On the event with the moms, in the Oval Office, you said 'because moms play a unique role, moms have a unique role to play.' I mean, are you... is there a little gender stereotyping...?" After briefly trying to ridicule the question, Carney says, "I think this is a recognition of the role that moms play in their families, and they, I think, bear truths to their children, and one of the truths that we hope moms around the country will convey is that it is very important to get covered, get insured, to protect themselves against the potential of falling ill with a debilitating disease, or breaking a leg, or anything that can befall young people who otherwise feel invincible." [52679, 52709, 52711, 52747]

An LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual] group at Out2Enroll.org—which is sponsored in part by John Podesta's leftist Center for American Progress—posts a YouTube video of four homosexuals prancing around a Christmas Tree in their underwear during a song, "Get Enrolled [in ObamaCare]." (*Duck Dynasty's* Phil Robertson was not available for comment.) According to *The Washington Post*, "A disproportionate number of LGBT Americans are uninsured and qualify for federal premium subsidies to help buy coverage, and the administration is intensifying its efforts to get them enrolled before the end of the year." (Of the Out2Enroll ad, the Log Cabin Republicans, a gay rights conservative group, states, "This ad is... an example of the left

promoting harmful stereotypes that gay men are nothing more than sex-crazed lechers. If anyone on the right made such a comparison, liberals would be apoplectic. At a time when left-wing propagandists are decrying Duck Dynasty's Phil Robertson for equating homosexuality with promiscuity and deviance, Out2Enroll and others should take a look in the mirror and ask if the truth is that they are the ones responsible for promoting such harmful stereotypes. ...This cynical ad betrays the depths Obamacare advocates will sink to in order to pad their pathetic enrollment numbers.") [52793, 52794, 52795, 52871, 52983]

The Senate votes 64–36 to approve the Ryan-Murray budget agreement. Nine Republicans join the Democrats in passing the bill. [52680]

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) blocks amendments to the defense reauthorization bill in order to prevent the addition of any new sanctions against Iran. [52688]

Obama's approval/disapproval rating falls to 41/53 in a December 14–16 Fox News poll. Only 45 percent believe Obama is "honest and trustworthy." (Adding insult to injury for Obama, former President George W. Bush's favorable/unfavorable rating is 50/47.) [52753]

The *New York Sun* writes, "Congratulations are in order for Elie Wisel for his advertisement calling on Congress to strengthen sanctions on Iran. The ad doesn't go as far as the Sun would go, in that it wants ...Obama and Congress to demand 'as a condition of continued talks' the 'total dismantling of Iran's nuclear infrastructure and the regime's public and complete repudiation of all genocidal intent against Israel.' We oppose negotiations with the mullahs outright, preferring instead a strategic aim of regime change and democratization. But the statement by Mr. Wiesel, and the highly public way in which he is making it, are newsworthy. Mr. Wiesel is a towering figure. He emerges as the first of those who have befriended our Democratic presidents to break with Mr. Obama over [his] agreement in principle with the mullahs. Mr. Wiesel's statement appeared in an ad in the *New York Times* this morning. It is reportedly set to appear in the *Wall Street Journal*, which has distinguished itself with its hard-headed editorials [with] respect [to] Mr. Obama's demarche. 'If there is one lesson I hope the world has learned from the past it is that regimes rooted in brutality must never be trusted,' Mr. Wiesel says in his statement. 'The words and actions of the leadership of Iran leave no doubt as to their intentions,' he adds. He asks whether the civilized nations can trust a 'regime whose 'supreme leader said yet again last month that Israel is 'doomed to annihilation,' and referred to my fellow Jewish Zionists as 'rabid dogs?'" He asks whether those 'whose believe in the United States' should trust 'a regime whose parliament last month erupted in "Death to America' chants.'" (AtlasShrugs.com's Pamela Geller remarks, "I guess Obama won't be making any phony joint appearances at Buchenwald with Elie Wiesel, now that the little Jew is no longer shilling for Rouhani's stooge in the White House. Obama's atrocious surrender to Iran in Geneva is a catastrophic failure of historic proportions.") [52763, 52764]

Great Britain's Prince Charles states, "I have for some time now been deeply troubled by the growing difficulties faced by Christian communities in various parts of the Middle East. It seems to me that we cannot ignore the fact that Christians in the Middle East are increasingly being deliberately targeted by fundamentalist Islamist militants. Christianity was, literally, born in the Middle East, and we must not forget our Middle Eastern brothers and sisters in Christ. ... Yet, today, the Middle East, and North Africa, has the lowest concentration of Christians in the world, just four percent of the population, and it is clear that the Christian population of the Middle East has dropped dramatically over the last century, and it's falling still further. This has an effect on all of us, although of course primarily on those Christians who can no longer continue in the Middle East. We all lose something immensely and irreplaceably precious when such a rich tradition dating back 2,000 years begins to disappear." (Obama has no comment.) [52773]

The Federal Reserve announces it will reduce its "qualitative easing" policy, reducing its bond and debt purchases from \$85 billion per month to \$75 billion per month. The stock market responds positively; many analysts had worried that the Fed's "tapering" action would be more abrupt. Federal Reserve Board chairman Ben Bernanke says, "The recovery clearly remains far from complete"—which essentially means, "I have no idea what I'm doing, so I'll keep printing money but I'll print a little less—and I'll keep interest rates at near-zero for as long as I can." At WholesaleDirectMetals.com Damon Geller writes, "Now that the Fed has announced they are barely tapering their enormous stimulus program, it's more obvious than ever that a few powerful men have hijacked our economic, financial and political structure. And here's a news flash: They aren't socialists or capitalists. They're criminals. The Fed's decision to continue buying \$75 billion dollars worth of toxic banking assets and U.S. debt per month means the money-printing factory has just gone into high gear. Not only can you say goodbye to your paper-based savings and retirement, but the Fed just guaranteed \$9 gas and \$3800 gold. ... The Fed is on pace to monetize roughly half of the US budget deficit in 2013. Putting it all together, the Fed's balance sheet has increased to \$4 trillion. A total increase of \$1.17 trillion in one year! And tapering to \$75 billion isn't going to change much." [52692, 52725, 52746, 52857]

Euro Pacific Capital's Peter Schiff writes, "There can be little doubt that today's Fed announcement is an epic attempt at rhetorical audacity. The message they hope to convey is that they are tightening monetary policy by loosening it. Based on the early market reactions, the trick has seemed to work. I believe the Fed was forced into this exercise in rabbit pulling because it understands far better than the cheerleaders on Wall Street that the economy, despite the soaring gains in stocks and real estate, remains dependent on continued stimulus. In my opinion the seemingly positive economic signs of the past few months are simply the statistical signature of the QE itself. There is little evidence to suggest that the trends are self-sustainable. But seemingly strong data had made the arguments in favor of continued QE increasingly untenable. As they could no longer stay the course the Fed had to do something. Ultimately they decided to play it both ways. ... I suspect that when the economic data begins to disappoint, the Fed will quickly reverse course and increase the size of its monthly purchases. In fact, today's Fed statement was careful to avoid any commitments to additional tapering in the future. It merely said that

further changes in the amount of purchases will be dependent on the data. This means that QE could go in either direction.” [52765, 52887]

“...[The Fed has] now committed [itself] to keep[ing] rates at zero until ‘well after’ the unemployment rate has fallen below 6.5%. On this score the Fed is not simply moving the goalposts, they are [sic; it is] running away with them. With such amorphous language in place the FOMC appears to be hoping that it will never have to face a day of reckoning in which they will be forced to actually raise rates. On that score they are similar to the legislators on Capitol Hill who want to pretend that America will never have to pay down its debt. ...As the amount of bonds on their books surpass the \$4 trillion threshold, market watchers need to dispel illusions that the Fed has any intention to actually shrink its balance sheet, or even stop its growth. Already fears of such moves have pushed up yields on 10-year Treasuries to multi-year highs. Any actual tightening could push them significantly higher. But we are still seeing much higher leverage than what would be expected in a healthy economy, and as a result, the gains in stocks, bonds and real estate markets are highly susceptible to rate spikes. If yields move much higher I feel that the Fed will have to intervene to bring them back down. In other words, the Fed will find it much harder to exit QE than it was to enter.” [52765, 52887]

FoxNews.com reports, “Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted announced Wednesday that his office found 17 non-citizens illegally cast ballots in the 2012 presidential election—and has referred the case for possible prosecution. ...As part of Ohio’s efforts to clean up the voting rolls, election officials discovered that more than 257,000 dead people were still listed as active voters. Their names and status, Husted said, have since been removed. In addition, election authorities note they have drastically reduced the number of duplicate registrations, from 340,000 in 2011 to just four this past November—and that more than 370,000 Ohio voters who have moved have been contacted to update their voting information. ‘Now that we have the ability to cross-check citizenship information with Ohio’s voter rolls, I will continue to be vigilant and to push the General Assembly for additional tools to modernize our elections systems, making it easy to vote and hard to cheat,’ Husted said.” [52690]

WesternJournalism.com reports that attorney Orly Taitz “is behind an effort to obtain a copy” of the autopsy report for Loretta Fuddy, the head of Hawaii’s Department of Health who was killed in a bizarre aircraft incident on December 11. “Taitz is not alone in speculating that there might be more to Fuddy’s death than has been reported; however, she alleges several eyewitness accounts cast aspersion on official accounts of the crash. For instance, she said there is some debate regarding whether the plane’s pilot made a mayday call prior to the incident. Initial reports, she explained, indicate that no such call was sent. ‘A supporter of mine reached Richard Schuman, the owner of Makani Kai Air that owns the plane,’ she said. ‘He stated there was a mayday call.’” Additionally, the pilot managed to glide the plane to safe water landing, allowing all passengers to exit the plane and put on life jackets. Yet Fuddy was the only passenger to die; none of the others were even injured, and no cause of death has been reported for Fuddy. [52691]

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) states, “I think for sure [ObamaCare] will be a net positive” for Democrats in the November 2014 elections. “It’s gotten significantly better, but it was significantly bad so it has a long way to go. ...[Obama’s approval] numbers are going to go up. It’s a question of what’s gone on with this healthcare thing. It will get better. I’ve seen this over the years. You’d be surprised what three months’ difference makes. ...We’re going to come back [after the Christmas recess] and we’re going to do unemployment [extend unemployment benefits]. ...Then we’re going to do flood insurance. Then we’re going to do minimum wage. Those things are not going to take care of the income inequality although it would help significantly.” (The strategy is clear: Reid will ram legislation through the Senate to extend unemployment benefits and increase the minimum wage, daring Senate and House Republicans to vote against the measures. Meanwhile, Obama will travel around the country making speeches in which he calls Republicans insensitive. With that strategy, the Democrats hope to retain the Senate in the November 2014 election. Working against them, however, is the reality of ObamaCare. Middle class Americans who have lost their health insurance or who have to pay thousands of dollars more per year to keep it will be focused on their own problems—not the unemployed or minimum wage counter clerks at fast food restaurants.) [52699, 52728]

Politico’s Glenn Thrush confirms the widespread assumption that the job of new White House advisor and “Executive Fiat Czar” John Podesta will be to help Obama work around Congress, rather than with it: “This is not just about providing added muscle to a beleaguered and undermanned West Wing staff. According to interviews in recent weeks with an array of Obama insiders and a dozen current and former senior aides, Podesta’s hire is explicitly meant to shake things up inside the White House. In effect, I was told, it represents the clearest sign to date of the administration’s interest in shifting the paradigm of Obama’s [administration] through the forceful, unapologetic and occasionally provocative application of White House power. Podesta, whose official mandate includes enforcement of numerous executive orders on emissions and the environment, suggested as much when he spoke with me earlier this fall about Obama’s team. ‘They need to focus on executive action given that they are facing a second term against a cult worthy of Jonestown in charge of one of the houses of Congress,’ he told me. ‘I think [White House officials] were naturally preoccupied with legislating at first, and I think it took them a while to make the turn to execution. They are focused on that now,’ Podesta added. ‘They have to realize that [Obama] has broad authority, that he’s not just the prime minister. He can drive a whole range of action. They always grasped that on foreign policy and in the national security area. Now they are doing it on the domestic side.’”

At Townhall.com Conn Carroll responds, “That’s right. Obama’s new counselor, the man in charge of saving his [second term], believes the Republican Party is a murderous cult and that this justifies Obama’s extra-constitutional use of executive power. Every Republican in Washington, DC, should read this [Politico] article on Podesta’s power grab, and those Republicans contemplating working with Democrats on immigration reform should read it twice. Whatever legislation you write with Democrats, and Obama signs into ‘law,’ will not be worth the paper it is printed on. Obama’s new counselor

believes Republicans are evil and therefore Obama ought to be empowered to do whatever he wants no matter what the law says. That is the new normal in Washington as long as Obama is still [in the Oval Office].” (More than 900 people died in the “Jonestown Massacre” near Georgetown, Guyana in 1978, when they engaged in a mass murder/suicide at the encouragement of their cult leader, Jim Jones. California Congressman Leo Ryan visited the commune to investigate reports of strange activities—the commune had previously been located in Redwood Valley, California—and was murdered by guards from Jones’ “People’s Temple.” The “drink the Kool-Aid” phrase refers to the fact that the suicides were the result of drinking poisoned fruit punch. Podesta’s remark is, of course, absurd—and arguably far more applicable to the cult-like followers of Obama than Congressional Republicans. Podesta later issues a weak apology for his Jonestown remark via Twitter.) [52703, 52704, 52705, 52706]

According to Vermont’s NPR station, employees who maintain the state’s ObamaCare exchange have been ordered to work 56 hours per week through the end of the year. Human Resources Commissioner Kate Duffy says, “We wouldn’t do this unless we absolutely had to, but we do.” (It is assumed the employees will not have to work on Christmas Day.) According to Townhall.com, the Vermont web site was produced by CGI Group, “the same contractor behind the disastrous failure of Healthcare.gov. ...[T]he federal government gave Vermont \$172 million to build its health website, and that CGI received an \$84 million contract from Vermont to make sure the site is built and functional.” [52707, 52708]

Babble.com and other media outlets post a sophomoric Michelle Obama piece pushing ObamaCare, using her daughter Sasha’s bout with meningitis 12 years earlier as a scare story. She writes, “Sadly, too many families with medical crises like ours aren’t so fortunate. Week after week, my husband and I hear from mothers whose children have serious illnesses, or whose babies were born prematurely, requiring months or years of special care. As a result, these kids have blown through their lifetime caps by the time they reach elementary school. We also hear from parents whose children were diagnosed with conditions like asthma, or diabetes, or cancer who have to pay outrageous rates for health insurance because those illnesses are considered pre-existing conditions. For decades, these kinds of coverage caps and this kind of discrimination were perfectly legal, so many parents were terrified of losing or leaving their jobs because they knew they would be unable to afford insurance for their families. And many kids grew up terrified of aging out of their parents’ insurance plans because they knew they could never afford coverage on their own. ...Having these kinds of [ObamaCare] choices and protections is vitally important for all our families, because in the end, none of us knows what kinds of accidents or illnesses our children might experience over the course of their lives. And that’s really one of the hardest things about being a parent: no matter how careful and attentive we are, no matter how much love we pour into our kids, we simply can’t protect them from every from every [sic] hardship or crisis they might face. But fortunately, because of the Affordable Care Act, we now have the security of knowing that no matter what life throws their way, we’ll be able to get our kids the care they need. As a mother, I can’t think of a better gift this holiday season.” (Despite Mrs. Obama’s

pleading, *The Obama Timeline* believes few children will wake up on Christmas morning to find an ObamaCare gift certificate with their name on it under the tree.) [52733]

Politico reports that a panel appointed by Obama “to review U.S. surveillance practices is proposing new safeguards and limits on a variety of intelligence programs, including an end to the government’s collection of a massive database of information on virtually all telephone calls made to, from, or within the U.S. In a report released by the White House Wednesday following a meeting with Obama, the five-member Review Group recommends that call data be stored in the private sector—either by a new entity which would gather the information from phone companies or by the firms themselves.” (The “solution” does not comply with a judge’s ruling that the collection of the data is itself a violation of the Fourth Amendment. Moving the data from the NSA to another location does not alter the illegality of the process by which it was collected.) According to *WashingtonTimes.com*, “The panel told Mr. Obama to scrap the National Security Agency’s phone-records collection program, saying it’s an infringement of privacy, and said the government instead should ask phone companies to store the records. The NSA would be able to ask for the records only when it deems national security is at stake. ‘As a general rule and without senior policy review, the government should not be permitted to collect and store mass, undigested, non-public personal information about U.S. persons for the purpose of enabling future queries and data-mining for foreign intelligence purposes,’ the panel said. The recommendation is a major blow to Mr. Obama, who has fought to preserve the phone-snooping program in the face of stiff criticism from privacy advocates and from conservatives and liberals on Capitol Hill.” [52722, 52731, 52734, 52739]

At *LawFareBlog.com* Benjamin Wittes writes, “This [security recommendation report] is a really awkward document for the Obama administration. *Really awkward*. [Obama], after all, has stood by the necessity of the Section 215 program and objected to legislative proposals to curtail it. Then the White House handpicks a special review group, and it kind of pulls the rug out from under the administration’s position. The review group concludes ‘that the information contributed to terrorist investigations by the use of section 215 telephony meta-data was not essential to preventing attacks and could readily have been obtained in a timely manner using conventional section 215 orders.’ It also reflects skepticism that the program functions as a kind of insurance policy, ‘alleviating concern about possible terrorist connections...’ Ouch. ...To put the matter bluntly, there is no way the administration will embrace a bunch of these recommendations. And from this day forward, any time the White House and the intelligence community resist these calls for change, the cry will go out that Obama, in doing so, is ignoring the recommendations of his own review panel. And the cry will be right.” *HotAir.com* comments, “The panel’s recommendations obviously aren’t binding on [Obama], but this report was supposed to be a fig leaf for O so that he could make some cosmetic changes and then declare the program ‘fixed.’ As it is, they’re suggesting at least one change, i.e. placing the NSA and America’s Cyber Command under different directors, that the White House has already rejected out of hand. And certain others, like having the NSA stop trying to undermine encryption standards so that it can stay ahead of the technological privacy curve, are bound to be rejected too.” [52740, 52741]

CNSNews.com reports, “Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), whose salary is \$193,400 a year, said he has purchased a health care plan through the D.C. Obamacare exchange and that he is accepting the federal subsidy that can run up to \$11,378 per year for a member of Congress to purchase a plan. Private citizens buying an insurance plan in an Obamacare exchange can only get a federal subsidy if their income is less than 400 percent of the poverty level—which equals \$94,200 for a family of four.” (ObamaCare does not allow the federal subsidy for Reid or other members of Congress, but earlier in the year Obama ordered the Office of Personnel Management to issue a regulation to allow them to receive the subsidy.) [52710]

According to a Gallup poll, 72 percent of Americans consider “big government” a greater threat to the nation than “big business” (21 percent) or “big labor” (5 percent). [52712]

AmericanOverlook.com reports the unveiling of a portrait of Obama at the U.S. Embassy in London. Hanging between full-figure portraits of Abraham Lincoln and George Washington, Obama’s “close up head shot... is disturbingly large and appears to be overpowering the viewer.” [52717]

Heritage.org lists 10 broken ObamaCare promises: “If you like your health care plan, you’ll be able to keep your health care plan, period.” “[T]hat means that no matter how we reform health care, we will keep this promise to the American people: If you like your doctor, you will be able to keep your doctor, period.” “In an Obama administration, we’ll lower premiums by up to \$2,500 for a typical family per year.” “[F]or the 85 and 90 percent of Americans who already have health insurance, this thing’s already happened. And their only impact is that their insurance is stronger, better and more secure than it was before. Full stop. That’s it. They don’t have to worry about anything else.” “Under my plan, no family making less than \$250,000 a year will see any form of tax increase.” “I will not sign a plan that adds one dime to our deficits—either now or in the future.” “[W]hatever ideas exist in terms of bending the cost curve and starting to reduce costs for families, businesses, and government, those elements are in this bill.” “I will protect Medicare.” “I will sign a universal health care bill into law by the end of my first term... that will cover every American.” “So this law means more choice, more competition, lower costs for millions of Americans.” [52729]

According to a CBS News/New York Times poll, 58 percent of uninsured Americans have not yet even bothered to access Healthcare.gov or the relevant web site in their state. Additionally, only 49 percent of those who did access the sites were able to get the information they sought. (The poll is apparently not very trustworthy: it claims that 10 percent of the uninsured have applied for insurance at the exchanges—yet even the Obama administration admits that only about 365,000 have done so, and there are certainly far more than 3.65 million Americans without health insurance.) [52735, 52769, 52799]

Senator Rand Paul (R-KY) tells CNN’s Wolf Blitzer that Director of National Intelligence James Clapper’s lying to Congress about the agency’s surveillance of

telephone calls is a far worse crime than whistleblower Edward Snowden's release of NSA documents. Paul says Snowden "probably technically broke the law but [did so] in favor of a higher law, which is the Constitution. ...I think there have to be rules about leaks. I don't think you can give away national security secrets. But at the same time, I'm very offended that the intelligence director [Clapper] lied to Congress—which is perjury and punishable by time in jail—and [Obama] has glibly gone on his way, has not asked for his resignation, has not said that he will try him in court for lying to Congress. I find that, really, that Clapper's lying to Congress is probably more injurious to our intelligence capabilities than anything Snowden did because Clapper has damaged the credibility of the entire intelligence apparatus, and I'm not sure what to believe anymore when they come to Congress." [52738, 52774, 52775]

Congressman Peter King (R-NY) defends Clapper's lie, saying, 'For Senator Paul to compare that patriot, General Clapper, with someone like Snowden—who is a traitor, who has put American lives at risk—Senator Paul should be ashamed of himself. It's an absolute disgrace. ...He knew that General Clapper could not give the full answer because it would let our enemies know what we were doing. The question was wrong. General Clapper gave the best answer he could.' (King should explain to the public why the report by a panel empowered to review NSA surveillance processes includes the statement, "Governments should not use their offensive cyber capabilities to change the amounts held in financial accounts or otherwise manipulate the financial system." Why should such a statement even be necessary? Does its inclusion in the report suggest the NSA is, in fact, engaged in or considering such practices?) [52775, 52782, 52784]

On December 19 some Americans—but not the White House—commemorate the 240th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party.

Obama informs Congress that he sent 45 U.S. military personnel to South Sudan "for the purpose of protecting U.S. citizens and property." According to Stripes.com, "their primary mission is to guard the Embassy in Juba, the capital." (A few days later rebel gunfire hits at least two U.S. helicopters that were in the process of evacuating U.S. citizens from the town of Bor. According to Fox News, "One American service member was reported to be in critical condition.") [52843, 52844, 52868]

The *Daily Mail* reports that Obama's , "Ivy-League educated half-brother... is publishing his autobiography in which he makes the shocking claim their father dished out alcohol-fueled beatings to him and his mother and in one terrifying instance held a knife to her throat. Mark Obama Ndesandjo, 48, also uses his new book to set [Barack Obama] straight on inaccuracies he claims exist in his best-selling 1995 memoir *Dreams From My Father* and confirms they have never seen eye-to-eye because 'Barack thought I was too white and I thought he was too black.' The self-published book, *Cultures: My Odyssey of Self-Discovery*, which will be released in February, claims that Barack Obama Sr. consistently battered his wife when they lived in Kenya and details Ndesandjo's journey from the African country to America and finally to China where he now lives with his wife." [52846, 53123]

FoxNews.com reports, “Illinois officials are emailing and calling thousands of people, advising them to start over on their health insurance applications if they believe the federal government mistakenly referred them to Medicaid. The latest wrinkle in the troubled enrollment process for the nation’s new health insurance system was announced Wednesday, just days ahead of a key enrollment deadline. The federal HealthCare.gov website received more than 30,000 applications from Illinoisans who may be eligible for Medicaid, the government health program for the poor. That federal site has been plagued by glitches that now are mostly fixed. Those 30,000 applications are the ones in question. Some Illinois residents who were referred to Medicaid believe they were incorrectly denied private health coverage, said Illinois Department of Insurance spokesman Mike Claffey. ...Illinois officials said anyone who believes they were referred to Medicaid by mistake should start again at the Get Covered Illinois online screening tool. That’s a state-run website that asks simple questions and sends users either to Medicaid or the health insurance marketplace.” [52726, 52745]

Internet sleuths identify Ethan Krupp—a graduate of the leftist University of Wisconsin in Madison and a former sales clerk at a Chicago florist who lives with his “Chicago Machine Democrat” parents—as Organizing for Action’s “ObamaCare pajama boy.” DailyCaller.com reports that the “little man... was accused in college of racism and anti-Semitism. Krupp, an Organizing for Action (OFA) content writer who became the face of progressive America when he sipped cocoa and smirked while wearing a onesie pajama suit in a recent Obamacare ad, is also a failed comedy writer whose work was not appreciated in his own time. Krupp was the editor of Wisconsin’s college-town ‘Madison Misnomer’ as recently as 2010, noting that ‘Nothing is ever accomplished’ at editorial meetings and ‘It probably won’t last more than another year.’ ...The ‘Misnomer’ ran a piece joking about 9/11 and was accused of running offensive content, according to a 2010 Krupp interview with The Badger Herald. ‘We have gotten complaints about the paper being too harsh on Jewish students. It’s a comedy newspaper. Is there any doubt 95 percent of the writers are Jewish?...Actually, people have called us racist, sexist, anti-Semitic, fascist, ageist, homophobic, self-loathing, Glenn Beck supporters, Coasties and other negative words people commonly mistake with communism. To them I give a huge middle finger, and then probably agree with their concerns,’ Krupp said. ‘That person was murdered,’ Krupp said of the critic who compared him to a Glenn Beck supporter. ‘We have no morals, and we will attack you. But you really don’t have to worry because no one reads the paper anyway,’ Krupp added. With his comedy writing career on hold, Krupp is now and will forever be known for wearing a onesie and also green Christmas socks in separate Obamacare ads. OFA did not immediately provide information about Pajama Boy’s whereabouts or how to speak with him at his current snuggle spot.” (The ousted Krupp deletes his Twitter account—most likely to avoid an onslaught of ridicule.) [52732, 52751, 52778, 52785, 52913, 53030]

For the week ending December 14, first time claims for unemployment benefits numbered 379,000—up 10,000 from the previous week, and a nine-month high. [52737, 52744]

WashingtonTimes.com reports, “A federal judge in Texas late last week accused the Obama administration of aiding drug cartels, saying that instead of enforcing immigration laws, agents knowingly helped smuggle an illegal immigrant girl into the U.S. to live with her mother, also an illegal immigrant, in Virginia. In a 10-page order, Judge Andrew S. Hanen said the case was the fourth such case he’s seen over the last month, and in each instance Customs and Border Protection agents have helped to locate and deliver the children to their illegal immigrant parents. The judge said in each case, the taxpayers footed the bill for flights—including flights to multiple locations in different parts of the U.S. that it took to find one of the children’s parents. ‘The DHS is rewarding criminal conduct instead of enforcing the current laws. More troubling, the DHS is encouraging parents to seriously jeopardize the safety of their children,’ the judge said, adding that some of the children have been made to swim the Rio Grande River or traverse remote areas as part of the smuggling. In the case before the judge last week, a 10-year-old girl whose mother, Patricia Elizabeth Salmeron Santos, paid a smuggler to get the daughter from El Salvador across the border and to Virginia. The agents apprehended the smuggler and the young girl, and prosecuted the smuggler, but delivered the daughter to Ms. Salmeron Santos in Virginia, even though agents were aware she was in the country illegally.” (According to the government’s Office of Refugee Resettlement, “nearly 25,000 Unaccompanied Alien Children” made their way into the United States in 2013—more than double the 2012 number, and about five times what it was before Obama entered the White House.) [52748, 52759, 52873, 52874, 52879]

Pravda reports, “Recordings of phone conversations between former Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi and the leader of al-Qaeda, Ayman al-Zawahiri could soon be released in detail. In October 2013 Albawaba News claimed to be in possession of such recordings where ousted president Morsi committed to al-Qaeda’s leader and made several promises which included avoiding the arrest of Jihadists and personal permission to open training camps for Jihad in the Sinai. According to unspecified sources such conversations could soon become public, with dramatic consequences for Mohamed Morsi who is currently awaiting trial in a maximum security prison near Alexandria. In addition, such leak would further compromise the image of a Muslim Brotherhood which is already strongly damaged by the Egyptian events of summer 2013, weakening the Organization’s influence in the West and putting into serious doubt the theory that the Muslim Brotherhood could actually help in stopping al-Qaeda. According to Albawaba news and Egyptian state sources Morsi also kept close contacts with Muhammad al-Zawahiri, the brother of Ayman and a former member of the Egyptian Islamic Jihad.” In one of the telephone calls, “...Morsi informed Muhammad Al-Zawahiri about the Muslim Brotherhood’s support for Al-Mojahidin (Islamist fighters) and explained the necessity that Islamist fighters support the Muslim Brotherhood in order to succeed in ruling Egypt and they also discussed the necessity of Islamists putting their hands on all the joints of the Egyptian State, like the example of the Iranian regime.” [52827]

At AtlasShrugs.com Pamela Geller comments on the report: “I know it’s *Pravda*, but the American press will never cover it. Obama is a huge supporter of the terrorist group the Muslim Brotherhood, and the US press is voluntary state-run media. Hence, no coverage. The recordings of these phone conversations will tell all. Before the ‘election,’ the

Obama administration warned Egypt's military leaders to speedily hand over power to the Muslim Brotherhood or risk losing billions of dollars in U.S. military and economic aid to the country. And Obama scrambled to save Morsi when 33 million Egyptians marched to oust him (that was 22 million more than voted for the jihadist Egyptian prez). Obama's unwavering support for the terrorist Muslim Brotherhood group is so unstinting that he punished the Egyptian people for throwing off the Islamic yoke of tyranny. He suspended hundred of millions in military and other aid to punish the people of Egypt for throwing the Brotherhood out of power. Obama's support for the Muslim Brotherhood caused enormous anger in Egypt. Not only do we need to hear the recorded conversations between Morsi and Al Qaeda leader Muhammad Al-Zawahiri; *we need to hear the conversations between Morsi and Obama* [emphasis added]." [52827, 52828]

In another sign of desperation, the Obama administration changes more ObamaCare rules. Politico reports, "Millions of Americans who had their health plans cancelled will be exempt from the Obamacare individual mandate, the administration said Thursday—a surprise move that comes just before Monday's deadline to sign up for coverage starting Jan. 1. The administration also said people who had their plans cancelled could get a scaled back catastrophic plan, which has more limited benefits than those included in other Obamacare health plans. The move prompted sharp criticism from Republicans and concern from the insurance industry that another last-minute change would disrupt coverage and lead to tumult in the new marketplaces. 'This latest rule change could cause significant instability in the marketplace and lead to further confusion and disruption for consumers,' said Karen Ignagni, president of America's Health Insurance Plans, an industry trade group. Republicans who have fought the individual mandate as one of the most hated aspects of the sweeping health law said the change was one more sign of a failed policy." (Arguably, the administration is applying a "hardship rule," where the hardship is ObamaCare.) [52754, 52758, 52768, 52770, 52777, 52800, 52808, 52811]

Obama's "panic mode" rule change means that someone whose insurance has been canceled is free to go without insurance altogether or free to buy a policy that is not compliant with ObamaCare and *not* be subject to the tax penalty. Yet an individual who happened not to have insurance, and therefore did not have his policy canceled, will still be subject to the tax. In many cases, that means that Americans who can least afford to buy insurance will be punished for not having it. (Whether Obama has the legal authority to make such changes under ObamaCare is unclear—not that illegality has stopped him from implementing changes in the past.) Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL) responds, "The Administration is recognizing the grim reality that more Americans have lost health insurance than gained it under ObamaCare. Holding a fire sale of cheap insurance is not a responsible fix for a broken program. This is a slap in the face to the thousands of Americans who have already purchased expensive insurance through the Obamacare exchanges." [52754, 52758, 52768, 52770, 52777, 52800, 52808, 52811]

Some may wonder why the insurance companies are not resisting Obama's efforts to change the ObamaCare rules in the middle of the game. The answer is that the insurance company executives foolishly and eagerly bought into the Affordable Care Act, believing it was an easy way for them to gain millions of new customers. They were too naive (or

too stupid) to understand that the legislation was nothing more than a first step on the road to fully socialized health care. The insurers are now caught up in the scheme, and if any company suddenly turns against Obama, Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius has the legal authority, under the Affordable Care Act, to kick it off the exchanges—or impose other rules to make it more difficult to remain in business. The insurers essentially sold their souls to the federal devil (as did General Motors and Chrysler in 2009), and find themselves with no alternative but to comply with Obama’s edicts. As the situation gets worse, Democrats will increase their demand to “fix” the problems with “single payer”—which is what they and Obama wanted in the first place.

At AmericanThinker.com Steve McCann writes, “As the easily predicable disaster that is ObamaCare continues to evolve, two things are certain: one, Barack Obama and his minions will never admit failure and reverse course; and two, the vitriol emanating from the Left aimed at obliterating their political opposition will intensify during the upcoming year far beyond what has been experienced during the Obama term to date. ... Those who publically espouse the statist philosophy do so in age-old and threadbare platitudes. The depth of thought rarely exceeds three basic tenets: 1) capitalism and wealth accumulation is evil; 2) only an economy and society dominated by a powerful central government can guarantee fairness of outcome and 3) anyone who disagrees with 1 and 2 is dangerous, ignorant and not only greedy but tyrannical and thus must be relegated to the ash heap of society. ... Mindlessly defending American Progressivism is all that matters. This is most evident when the proponents of this errant philosophy appear on television or the radio to debate or discuss the issues of the day. Whenever conveniently among their fellow-travelers, every conversation regarding conservatives who disagree with the direction of the country and wish to return to the nation’s founding principles degenerates into a name-calling exercise punctuated by frequent references to racism and fascism.” [52832]

McCann continues, “Whenever these same advocates appear with the conservative opposition, a pre-programmed recording is switched on. This consists of: 1) the talking points of the day as issued by the White House or the Democratic National Committee; and 2) tried and true platitudes which consist of: the nation needs to spend more money to solve any and all problems while raising taxes [on] the evil rich; Republicans despise minorities, women and children; and any overt criticism of ... Obama is a expression of not so subtle racism. When called out on these points and confronted with irrefutable facts, the recording is switched on again and repeated more stridently and tactically as a filibuster in order to dominate the air time. ... The majority of the American people, asleep during the past sixty years of overwhelming peace and prosperity, are gradually waking up to the massive deception that has been perpetrated by the Left and their inability to solve the almost insolvable problems they, in large part, created. Unfortunately it has taken the election of Barack Obama and the imposition of ObamaCare, among other policies aimed at concentrating power in the hands of the American Left, to achieve this epiphany. In reaction, the tone and nature of political discourse will become more strident as the Left, in an effort to protect their gains and status, will do or say anything regardless of the damage it may inflict on the country. The Left knows that over the years these tactics have succeeded, as unfortunately far too many are more concerned with appearing politically correct and thus cower in fear of

being accused of greed, indifference, intolerance and racism. However, the Republican Party and its governing hierarchy are the most susceptible to this strategy, and as a result their primary concern appears to be to get along, remain neutral and avoid confrontation. This nation can no longer harbor an opposition party unwilling to fight for the heart and soul of a country rapidly descending into second class status. Those in the Republican Establishment and the American people should heed the words attributed to Dante when he wrote: ‘The hottest places in Hell are reserved for those who, in the time of moral crisis, maintain their neutrality.’” [52832]

Race hustler Al Sharpton holds a town hall meeting in Chicago’s Hyde Park neighborhood to discuss gun control but, BizPacReview.com reports, “the discussion quickly turned to linking the problem to the city’s unemployment. ...[M]any in the audience of about 300 said they needed jobs and a solution to the foreclosure problem plaguing the city. ...Several attendees and panelists said it was time for the black community to vote out incumbents, and one 82-year-old preacher called for tea party-type meetings, according to Breitbart News. ‘The manner in which we have been voting needs to change,’ Wendy Pearson, an activist against Chicago school closings, told the audience. ‘I’m here to say to you that we have been trained to vote in a specific manner... We need to start looking at the manner in which our elected officials have been voting... If they have not voted in a manner that is beneficial to you, yours, and your community, then you need to start voting them out.’” Paul McKinley, a black Republican, says, “Stop blaming just anybody for the violence in the city of Chicago. Blame the right people, not just white people, blame the right people. Because it ain’t [sic] just white folks [who are] a part of this, but it is on the fifth floor [of Chicago’s City Hall, which contains Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s office]. ...The fifth floor took your schools, the fifth floor just took all your jobs... and every single alderman was a part of this criminal process.” [52840, 52890]

Obama commutes the sentences of eight prison inmates, one of which is Reynolds Allen Wintersmith, Jr., a first cousin of Deval Patrick, the Democrat governor of Massachusetts. According to Politico, Wintersmith “was sentenced to life in prison after being convicted in Illinois federal court in 1994 of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute and distribute cocaine and cocaine base and possession with intent to distribute crack. He was 19 at the time of his arrest and 17 at the time he got involved running drugs for the Gangster Disciples gang. He is 39 today and has spent the past 19 years in prison. ...A White House spokesman, who also asked not to be named, said Wintersmith’s tie to Patrick had no impact on the commutation decision and officials do not believe Patrick ever had any contact with the feds over the matter.” [52755]

At ConservativeInfidel.com an anonymous author (using the pseudonym “George Washington”) claims that the Obama administration was responsible for the death of author Tom Clancy: “Tom was working on a novel very ‘Manchurian Candidate-ish.’ But it was replete with fact and exposed the Saudi Muslim plant in the White House and the direct funding that went into it. Birth Certificate? Want the real one? Tom had it. ...Clancy was killed because he was getting too close to a secret they don’t want the world to know. Dr. [Jim] Garrow, executive director of The Bethune Institute, states

Obama had Tom Clancy killed, noting that it takes 5 days for plant toxins and most poisons to break down and leave no traces in the human body. Strangely (or not), doctors did not perform an autopsy on Clancy's body for 5 days. He said the Obama administration is made up of Marxist Muslims who all take their orders from Senior Adviser to [Obama], Iranian-born Valerie Jarrett. Garrow [who claims to have been a covert CIA operative] said it is well known to intelligence agencies all over the world that Obama is a foreign plant who was placed on the path to the presidency by ultra-rich Saudi nationals. This is why all of Obama's education records have been permanently sealed." (*The Obama Timeline* is skeptical of Garrow's murder claim, but includes the information here so that readers can be kept informed of all relevant Obama-related stories and theories that may be *possible*, even if they are not likely. Readers are, of course, spared items that fall into the "Obama was born on Mars" variety.) [52756, 52757]

The Senate votes 84–15 to approve the annual National Defense Authorization Act, which the House had already passed.

WashingtonTimes.com reports, "The Obama administration deported just 1 percent of illegal immigrants living within the interior of the U.S. last year, according to statistics released Thursday, which signals that most illegal immigrants face little chance of being released Thursday, which signals that most illegal immigrants face little chance of being kicked out of the country. In fiscal year 2013, which ended Sept. 30, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement removed 133,551 immigrants, down more than 25 percent from the previous year, even as the estimated number of illegal immigrants grew to 11.7 million. The numbers underscore the lack of capacity—and of political will—to remove most illegal immigrants." [52767]

DailyCaller.com reports, "Although Obamacare's first enrollment deadline is only days away, Obama administration officials still haven't given Iowa administrators complete data for 10,000 low-income residents, potentially leaving them without coverage on Jan. 1. The communication failure includes 7,400 applications to cover 10,400 people who were directed to low-income programs Medicaid and Hawk-I, an Iowa program to insure children." [52776]

According to Reuters and the Associated Press, "Egypt's public prosecutor says that [the] ousted president's Muslim Brotherhood plotted a terror attack and divulged military secrets to a foreign state. Egypt's public prosecutor ordered former President Mohammed Morsi and 35 other Islamists to stand trial on charges including conspiring with foreign groups to commit terrorist acts in Egypt and divulging military secrets to a foreign state. The charges leveled against Morsi and other top Muslim Brotherhood members on Wednesday could result in their execution. ...Morsi is already standing trial for inciting violence during protests outside the presidential palace a year ago when he was still in office. He was deposed in July by the army following mass protests against his rule. In a statement, the prosecutor said the Brotherhood had committed acts of violence and terrorism in Egypt and prepared a 'terrorist plan' that included an alliance with the Palestinian group Hamas and Lebanon's Hezbollah." (AtlasShrugs.com's Pamela Geller asks, "Could we not try Obama for the very same thing?") [52761, 52762]

On December 20, just three days before the final deadline to obtain coverage as of January 1, 2014, Healthcare.gov users are greeted with the message, “The system is down at the moment. We’re currently performing scheduled maintenance. Please try again later.” [52771]

As he prepares to leave for his 17-day Hawaiian vacation, Obama holds a press conference. He takes credit for what he calls a recovering economy and for creating eight million jobs, brags about the “tens of thousands” of Americans he says are signing up for ObamaCare every day, and calls on Congress to extend unemployment insurance and pass “comprehensive immigration reform.” The AP’s Julie Pace asks Obama if 2013 was the worst of his five years in office. Obama responds with a checklist of things he has accomplished and blames Congress for not having done more. Pace asks about the declining levels of trust in him, and Obama claims he does not worry about the polls. (Of course, the issue is not *popularity*, it is *trust*—which he sidesteps with his answer.) Asked about NSA policies and the recent court case calling the collection of telephone data unconstitutional, Obama gives a lengthy answer in which he essentially does little more than claim he is looking at the issue. He claims, “There have not been actual instances where it’s been alleged that the NSA in some ways acted inappropriately in the use of this data.” (In other words, “You haven’t been able to pin anything on us yet.”) Asked about his greatest regrets of 2013, Obama pays lip service to the failure of the ObamaCare roll out, and then shifts to blaming Republicans for the partial government shutdown. Obama insists he will not negotiate over the coming debt ceiling increase, and accuses the GOP of brinkmanship (which he calls “brinksmanship”). On the issue of Iran, Obama insists (wrongly) that he can easily re-impose sanctions if the continuing negotiations fail, and disregards all criticism of the agreement as nothing more than politic—as if it is simply not possible to find any fault with the agreement. The softball questions asked of Obama are generally predictable, as are his long-winded responses, and few viewers learn anything new—beyond Obama’s New Years resolution: “to be nicer than the White House press corps.” [52779, 52792, 52801, 52804, 52859]

HotAir.com lists “12 questions the White House press corps should have asked Obama about ObamaCare” at his press conference, among them, “Hey, from where do you derive the legal authority to change large parts of this law passed by Congress? And, if you believe you have the legal justification for it, what’s to stop a future president from simply deciding he won’t enforce large parts of it?” “Today, just hours before we came to this press conference, the HealthCare.gov website was down. It had a note on it referring to the crash as ‘scheduled maintenance.’ Was it scheduled maintenance today or just another crash? And, if it was scheduled maintenance, why was maintenance scheduled just days before the extended deadline for enrollment?” “Thus far, not one person has been fired for the roll-out of ACA you yourself have called ‘screwed up.’ Why not? Has anyone been disciplined? If not, why not? Will anyone lose their job over this now three-month-long calamity?” [52790]

By a vote of 54–41, Senate Democrats push through the confirmation of Obama’s unqualified nominee to head the Department of Homeland Security, Alejandro Mayorkas.

(WashingtonTimes.com notes, “Mr. Mayorkas is currently the chief of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, one of the immigration branches within the Homeland Security department. As director, he has been accused of overruling career officers in his agency in order to approve visa applications sought by well-connected Democrats, including [Senate Majority Leader Harry] Reid [D-NV].” [52787]

Defying Obama, 13 Democrat Senators join 13 Republican Senators in introducing an Iran sanctions bill, sponsored by Senators Mark Kirk (R-IL) and Robert Menendez (D-NJ). According to Fox News, “Several sources” stated “that White House Chief of Staff Denis McDonough and other top officials had been calling top Democrats over the last 24 hours urging them not to move forward. After it was introduced, Obama’s chief spokesman, Jay Carney, said the bill could ‘derail’ nuclear talks and ‘divide the international community.’ The White House also threatened [a] veto. But the senators pushed the legislation arguing that it could help bring about a better deal in the end. The bill calls for ‘prospective sanctions’ that go into effect if Tehran violates the nuclear deal it reached with world powers last month or lets it expire without a long-term accord. The measures include a global boycott on Iranian oil exports within one year and the blacklisting of Iran’s mining, engineering and construction industries. The goal, according to supporters, is to strengthen the negotiating leverage of the Obama administration as it seeks to pressure Iran into a comprehensive agreement next year that would eliminate the risk of the Islamic republic developing nuclear weapons.” (Pamela Geller writes at AtlasShrugs.com, “Expect Obama to respond to these Democrats with his usual thug style of retaliation: punishment, threats and intimidation in the service of the murdering mullahs. High praise for Democrats who dare cross the vicious autocrat in the White House. *Kudos*. It’s always morbidly amusing to watch Obama get tough with principled Americans while kissing the asses of dictators, murderers and oppressors. Obama will veto this good measure, despite the fact that his capitulation deal with Iran has collapsed. It’s not a question of if it will lead to war, it’s a question of when and with what, conventional weapons or nuclear weapons. Obama’s ‘deal’ insures that it will be nuclear weapons.”) [52809, 52813, 52814]

The Senate votes 59–36 to confirm John Koskinen, a former Freddie Mac executive, as head of the Internal Revenue Service.

At CBSNews.com Sharyl Attkisson reports, “A top HealthCare.gov security officer told Congress there have been two, serious high-risk findings since the website’s launch, including one on Monday of this week, CBS News has learned. Teresa Fryer, the chief information security officer for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), revealed the findings when she was interviewed Tuesday behind closed doors by House Oversight Committee officials. The security risks were not previously disclosed to members of Congress or the public. Obama administration officials have firmly insisted there’s no reason for any concern regarding the website’s security. ...Details are not being made public for security reasons but Fryer testified that one vulnerability in the system was discovered during testing last week related to an incident reported in November. She says that as a result, the government has shut down functionality in the vulnerable part of the system. Fryer said the other high-risk finding was discovered

Monday. In another security bombshell, Fryer told congressional interviewers that she explicitly recommended denial of the website's Authority to Operate (ATO), but was overruled by her superiors. The website was rolled out amid warnings Fryer said she gave both verbally and in a briefing that disclosed 'high risks' and possible exposure to 'attacks.' Fryer also said that she refused to put her name on a letter recommending a temporary ATO be granted for six months while the issues were sorted out. 'My recommendation was a denial of ATO,' Fryer told Democrats and Republicans who sat in on the day-long interview. According to Fryer, she first recommended denying the ATO to CMS chief information officer Tony Trenkle based on the many outstanding security concerns after pre-launch testing. 'I had discussions with him on this and told him that my evaluation of this was a high risk,' Fryer told the committee. Trenkle retired from his CMS job on Nov. 13. He has not responded to CBS News interview requests." At HotAir.com Ed Morrissey writes, "The question is beginning to change from who's being dishonest to whether anyone on Barack Obama's team has ever been honest in testimony to Congress." [52788, 52789, 52923]

Obama names retiring Senator Max Baucus (D-MT) to be the next U.S. ambassador to China. (Some might argue that Baucus, one of the Senators most responsible for ObamaCare, perhaps wants to be as far away as possible from the disaster he has since called a "train wreck." But the move has "political scheme" written all over it. By giving up his Senate seat early to serve as ambassador, Montana's Democrat governor, Steve Bullock, can appoint a replacement. One possible candidate is Lieutenant Governor John Walsh who, as Senator Walsh, would then have a built-in advantage in the 2014 election.) [52791, 52820]

FoxNews.com reports that Carolyn Lawson, "A senior state manager who oversaw most of the development of Oregon's struggling health insurance exchange resigned Thursday as developers continue trying to find some way get the online enrollment system to work." [52796]

On WEBY's Freedom Friday radio host Carl Gallups interviews former Black Panther Party member Larry Pinkney. Pinkney says, "I consider [Obama] to be fraudulent, okay? Fraudulent, in the sense that he pretends to be something that he is not. And I'm not talking about where he was born, and all that nonsense, I'm talking about, this man is a war monger, all right, a war mongerer [sic]; he, he, he, he claims that he cares for the people, and that's why I guess he spies on millions and millions and billions of the people with this NSA. ...Barack Obama doesn't even know the definition of truth. Barack Obama only knows what Barack Obama means. And what that means to him is, anything in any way that he can bamboozle or hoodwink the people." [52883]

Also on December 20, at his web site, Pinkney writes, "When corporations and government become, in actuality, intertwined as one entity, the end result is fascism. This is the precise reality in the United States in this 21st century, and it has spread like a cancer throughout this nation. The foundation for corporate hegemony (i.e., domination) is the endless and single-minded push, by a relatively tiny elite, to expropriate, control, and manipulate national and global natural resources (including human beings

themselves) for their own avaricious benefit. Governments and their concomitant politicians are mere shells and pawns of and for this tiny elite. Elections are made meaningless and the ever decreasing veneer of people's democracy is a sick joke. Politicians, instead of being servants of, for, and to ordinary people, are the willing fork-tongued puppets of multinational corporations. This is the fascism of the 21st century in the U.S. and it is becoming more blatant every single day. ...The initial grooming and subsequent installation of Barack Obama [in the White House] was arranged and choreographed by the corporate power elite for whom he has been and is a very dangerous tool against struggling everyday people of all colors nationally and internationally. It should also be remembered that whether it is a Democrat or a Republican—male or female of ANY color—the game plan of the banksters and their Wall Street power elite cohorts remains the utter subversion of democracy through the expropriation, controlling, and manipulation of resources that actually belong to the everyday people of this nation and world. ...Thus far, Barack Obama has proven to be the most insidiously effective weapon against the legitimate needs, hopes, and aspirations of everyday ordinary Black, White, Brown, Red, and Yellow people in this nation and throughout Mother Earth. But this, too, might be *beginning* to change as people become increasingly aware of whose interests the corporate-owned Obama and his Democrat and Republican political cohorts actually serve. Obama's secret 'Kill List,' his indefinite detention NDAA law, his massive NSA spying apparatus, his support for corporate hegemony, his attempts to distort and destroy the U.S. Constitution, and his egregious violations of international law, etc., speak volumes as to who and what Barack Obama *really* is." [52884]

Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV) tells reporters, "Even as the economy creates jobs, too many Americans find themselves on the sidelines watching as the rich get richer, the poor get poorer and the middle class are getting squeezed and squeezed. There is no greater challenge this country has than income inequality. And we must do something about it." (In other words, "I want to increase taxes.") "There are lots of things that should be done, but the first thing is to make sure that those people who are waiting and waiting to find a job still get the important check that they deserve. Unemployment compensation is something that is good for the economy." (Unemployment compensation is certainly not "good for the economy." It is merely taking money from the pocket of a person who has a job and putting it in the pocket of someone who does not. Creating jobs for the unemployed would be good for the economy.) [52797]

Pete Rouse, a longtime Obama aide going back to his U.S. Senate days, announces he is leaving the White House. [52798]

At a traffic stop in Hatfield, Massachusetts, state troopers find 1,250 bags of heroin labeled "ObamaCare." (Politicker.com noted in 2012 that Obama's "name and face has been slapped on a wide variety of contraband products including ecstasy pills, LSD tabs, heroin baggies and a popular strain of medical marijuana.") [52802, 52803, 52816]

CNN.com writes, "Correction: We hate to admit it, but in the heat of live-blogging ...Obama's year-end news conference, we misquoted him as saying he 'screwed the

duck' with the Obamacare rollout. What he actually said was: 'We screwed it up.' And in this case, so did we. We regret the error, and we thank our audience for the feedback." (Someone at CNN apparently had ducks on his or her brain because of excessive media attention to the A&E network's suspension of *Duck Dynasty* star Phil Robertson after he told *GQ* magazine that homosexuality is a sin—and the "lavender lobby" went into full attack mode. The media's anti-Christian bias may, however, have backfired, as far more Americans appear to have sided with Robertson than with gay, atheist journalists. BizPacReview.com quotes a friend of the Robertson family: "It is our understanding that when the TV executives came up with the concept for the show, they wanted it to be a case of people laughing at a bunch of backward rednecks. But when it didn't turn out like that, and people actually started identifying with the way the family behaved and were laughing with them, not at them, they became uncomfortable. It did not sit well with the New York TV types." According to Breitbart.com, A&E discussed the situation with the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) before suspending Robertson. With *GQ* having conveniently prompted Robertson to give what everyone knew would be blunt and honest statements—with an A&E representative also conveniently in the room during the interview—A&E is using the controversy to intimidate the family into toning down the religious aspect of the program—and to warn everyone else in the entertainment industry to toe the leftist line or risk being destroyed. It is worth noting that Scott Gurney, the executive producer of *Duck Dynasty*, appeared in a gay porn movie called *The Fluffer*.) [52804, 52807, 52831, 52836, 52838, 52839, 52842, 52845, 52901, 52909, 52924, 52925]

At NationalReview.com Kevin Williamson observes that Obama "has never been a man's man, or, more precisely, a men's man. In 2008 he failed to win a majority of men's votes, and in 2012 he lost men decisively. Hostility toward [Obama] is not distributed evenly among men: He does fairly well among Hispanics and enjoys nearly unanimous support among blacks, but he lost the last election by 27 points among white men. In the most recent Quinnipiac poll, men report disapproval of [Obama] by a more than 2-to-1 margin. Men aren't buying what ...Obama is selling. [Obama's] low standing among the Y-chromosome set, dramatic though it is, is not entirely surprising. He couldn't close the deal with them the first time around, he presided over an ugly recession in which men were particularly hard hit, and then he presided over a sickly recovery in which unemployment remains elevated and is significantly higher for men than for women. And the labor-force participation rate, in many ways a better measure of employment, has plunged during the Obama years. Forgot the bicycle helmet, the mom jeans, the wife scolding us about eating our veggies, the fact that he throws a baseball like he should be relaxing with a mug of cocoa in his footie pajamas... Obama loses points for style, to be sure, but he has a substance problem too. ...The experience of joblessness is, I think, particularly despair-inducing for men. It isn't that unemployment is not stressful for women as well—it surely is, especially for women who bear the burden of economic responsibility for their households. But there is entangled in that issue something more than simple financial well-being for men. To be a provider, for oneself and one's family, to do something useful and to earn, is deeply connected to many men's sense of self-respect, to their identity as men. A second strong correlating factor in men's suicide rates is being single, which is itself linked to the question of employment. With weak

economic conditions persisting, suicide rates have been rising. ... Women experiencing economic vulnerability tend toward welfare-statism, with SNAP and Medicaid and all of the rest of it acting *in loco mariti*. Men experiencing economic vulnerability, or who have reason to think they may experience it in the future, seem to move in the opposite direction: ... Obama lost white men without college degrees by 31 points last time around.” [52810]

“The more the state steps into the role of provider, the less men have to offer in that capacity. This is especially true of men with modest earnings potential. I doubt that very many of those non-college-educated, working-class white men follow the careers of Hanna Rosin or Maureen Dowd, but the message—‘men are obsolete’—infiltrates the culture at large. ... Obama is the messenger, and an agent of the Rosin-Dowd worldview: His vision of the good life is universal kindergarten and universal graduate school, a coddling welfare state, etc., and a gimlet eye cast upon much of what used to be thought of as man’s work: drilling for gas, timbering, mining. ... Obama is first and foremost the public face of his own agenda and his own economic record, which is a poor one. But he is also the face of something else, an unbrave new world with little use for men whose Christmas plans do not involve buttonholing family members for precious and grim-mouthed homilies about Obamacare. American men have been losing ground since 1973, the year their real wages peaked. Strong economic growth from the Reagan years to the turn of the century, along with strong economic mobility and a general national sense of optimism, helped soften that blow, as did rising household incomes as more women entered the work force. But our once-dynamic economy has grown sclerotic, and economic mobility has declined—and that wasn’t supposed to happen. ... Obama represents what admirers such as Michael Grunwald have called a ‘New New Deal.’ American men don’t seem to think it is a very good deal at all.” [52810]

In Utah, Obama-appointed Judge Robert J. Shelby rules against a voter-approved ban on gay marriage, saying the right is “deeply rooted in the nation’s history and implicit in the concept of ordered liberty.” [52818, 52819, 52867]

ABC reports, “Families of the victims of the Sept. 11 attacks today celebrated a federal court’s ruling that allows relatives of people who died in the 9/11 terror attacks to sue Saudi Arabia. Most of the hijackers who attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001 were from Saudi Arabia, and the complaint states that much of the funding for the al-Qaeda terrorists came from Saudi Arabia. An attempt to [sue] Saudi Arabia in 2002 was blocked by a federal court ruling that said the kingdom had sovereign immunity. That ruling was reversed Thursday by a three-judge federal panel. ... The ruling struck down an earlier decision that found Saudi Arabia immune from lawsuits. The 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals said it’s in the ‘interests of justice’ to allow them to proceed. Families who lost loved ones in the Sept. 11 attacks and insurers who lost billions of dollars covering damaged businesses have alleged Saudi Arabia bankrolled al-Qaeda, knowing the money would be used for terrorism. The lawsuit, filed a decade ago by the Philadelphia firm Cozen O’Connor, accuses the Saudi government and members of the royal family of serving on charities that financed al-Qaeda operations.” (The Bush administration completely redacted 28 of the 838 pages of the “Joint Inquiry Into

Intelligence Community Activities Before and After the Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001” report. Many believe the censoring was done to protect the Saudi royal family. Some believe that Bush wanted an al-Qaeda attack on the United States, just as Franklin D. Roosevelt welcomed the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.) [52563, 52564, 52584, 52825, 52826, 52829, 52830]

NYTimes.com reports that documents released by NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden “reveal more than 1,000 targets of American and British surveillance in recent years, including the office of an Israeli prime minister, heads of international aid organizations, foreign energy companies and a European Union official involved in antitrust battles with American technology businesses. While the names of some political and diplomatic leaders have previously emerged as targets, the newly disclosed intelligence documents provide a much fuller portrait of the spies’ sweeping interests in more than 60 countries. Britain’s Government Communications Headquarters, working closely with the National Security Agency, monitored the communications of senior European Union officials, foreign leaders including African heads of state and sometimes their family members, directors of United Nations and other relief programs, and officials overseeing oil and finance ministries, according to the documents. In addition to Israel, some targets involved close allies like France and Germany, where tensions have already erupted over recent revelations about spying by the N.S.A.” [52863, 52864]

On December 21 BizPacReview.com reports, “Even though ...Obama and his entourage spent less than 13 hours on the ground in South Africa while attending Nelson Mandela’s funeral, documents released Friday revealed that the State Department budgeted over \$11 million for ground transportation and hotels for the trip. The ‘Justification and Approval’ documents estimated the cost of ground transportation at \$8,286,194.74 tops—not including Air Force One, the Beast [Obama’s bulletproof limousine] or air travel by other members of the delegation.” Accompanying Obama and his wife on the trip to South Africa were former President George W. Bush and his wife Laura, former President Bill Clinton and his wife, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, and daughter Chelsea Clinton, former President Jimmy Carter, National Security Advisor Susan Rice, Attorney General Eric Holder, White House press secretary Jay Carney, Deputy National Security Adviser Ben Rhodes, Obama advisor Valerie Jarrett, and Michelle Obama’s chief of staff, Tina Tchen. “Twenty-three members of Congress also attended. While they traveled on a separate plane, their expenses on the ground were reportedly covered by the State Department.” [52805]

Photos are released of the wreckage of the Cessna 208 aircraft that was retrieved from the ocean after in the incident in which Hawaii Department of Health Loretta Fuddy died. At least one experienced pilot expresses surprise at the amount of damage to the aircraft, especially because the emergency landing has been referred to as “remarkably smooth.” “Tom B.” tells attorney Orly Taitz, “I saw the Cessna 208 floating in the water, right side up as it should have been. The mangled wreckage on the recovery ship deck sure looks mashed up to me and I have mashed up a lot of airplanes. I don’t know the effect a sea and the surf have on an airplane in Hawaii but all it could be is the water moving carrying the airplane with it. It is beyond comprehension that it would end up looking like the

wreckage on that deck. So, they are saying it went from a complete, intact airplane floating in the water, to sinking and then all that happened to it after it went to the bottom. I don't believe it but will keep on looking. My brother in law ditched Piper Cheyenne... a half mile off the coast of W. Palm Beach [in] 1985. The airplane hit the water, he impacted the dashboard and broke his nose because he didn't wear his shoulder harness. ...5 years later to the day... the airplane was on the beach, completely intact. The ocean had not damaged it in 5 years, it was upright. Google search images 'airplanes recovered from ditching' and see if you see anything like what they are displaying on deck." [52833, 52834, 52841]

On December 22 Obama and his family attend an NCAA basketball game in Honolulu, Hawaii. (In one photograph taken at the game, Obama and his wife look decidedly unhappy. TheBlackSphere.net remarks, "Now either the situation here at home where [Obama's] socialist utopian dream is crumbling before his very eyes has got Barry down and Michelle livid, or the lovebirds are at each other's throats and cannot hide their hate for each other. ...They aren't even pretending to be happy. [Obama and his wife] look more like pallbearers at funeral than spectators at basketball game. In fact, Barack looked much happier at Nelson Mandela's funeral. Though, we should note, the Missus was sporting the same un-happy face.") [52848, 52880]

On *Meet the Press*, Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) says, "I think what most Americans want us to do is not repeal ObamaCare, which is what our Republican colleagues are focused on, but fix it. [Obama] is working to fix it, we are working in the Senate to fix it, we urge our Republican colleagues to join us in fixing it. The bottom line is there are a lot of good things in Obamacare that people like, and the more people see that, the more positive it's going to be. And I would just say one other thing with all the focus on ObamaCare... The number one issue in the 2014 election is not going to be ObamaCare or the deficit. It is going to be who can get the middle class going again. Who can expand middle class incomes, who can create jobs? That is far and away the issue that most Americans care about." [52862]

On *Fox News Sunday*, Charles Krauthammer comments on Obama's ObamaCare rule change, waiving the individual mandate for Americans whose insurance policies were canceled because of the Affordable Care Act: "One of the things that [Obama] did, one of the reasons that this strikes at the heart of ObamaCare, is that what he has done is to take away the financial structure underneath. The reason the insurers are apoplectic about what's just happened is because he has now told a whole class of people, 'You don't have to be in the exchanges.' And these are people who are probably the healthier and the younger ones who are going to be outside of the exchanges, which means that the cost to insurers of people left in the exchanges is going to be exorbitant. And there's also no way he's going to be able to hold the line on this, because of the unfairness. If you're exempting people who had insurance and were canceled, and you're exempting them from the fine and the requirement of getting insurance, there's no way that you can require, and fine people who didn't have insurance in the past. So you're going to have an abolition of the individual mandate—you've already postponed, abolished the employer mandate. The insurers understand it, they are going to be completely ruined. And what's

going to happen as a result of this? There's only one way out, a huge government bailout of the insurers waiting at the end of next year, and that's an issue that Republicans ought to focus on right now. It's the only way that ObamaCare will survive, and it ought to be stopped before it happens. Congress ought to say, 'No bail out'—particularly because this isn't a natural disaster, it's a man-made disaster." [52866, 52869]

At Forbes.com Ilya Shapiro lists Obama's "Top 10 Constitutional Violations of 2013." "1. Delay of Obamacare's out-of-pocket caps... 2. Delay of Obamacare's employer mandate... 3. Delay of Obamacare's insurance requirements... 4. Exemption of Congress from Obamacare... 5. Expansion of the employer mandate penalty through IRS regulation... 6. Political profiling by the IRS... 7. Outlandish Supreme Court arguments... 8. Recess appointments... 9. Assault on free speech and due process on college campuses... 10. Mini-DREAM Act." [52951]

At PJMedia.com Victor Davis Hanson writes, "Will Kane of *High Noon* Pajama Boy wasn't. Somehow we as a nation went from the iconic Marlboro Man to Pajama Boy—from the noble individual with a bad habit to the ignoble without a good habit—without a blink in between. ...One, did the Obama appendage, Organizing for Action, really believe that such a sad-sack image might galvanize anyone about anything? And two, did they really think that Pajama Boy would resonate with any young people outside of the New York-DC circus, as if to assume he would be persuasive: stay cool with retro geek glasses, pajamas, and hot chocolate like Pajama Boy, and then, presto, rush out to buy an Obamacare policy? ...How many were on board for Obamacare, more entitlements, and lectures from the apartheid elite on inequality and fairness, versus how many turn the channel at sound of His voice? ...Pajama Boy is the bookend to *vero possumus* ['In truth, it is possible;' or, more loosely, 'Yes we can'], the faux-Greek columns, the Obama rainbow logo, cooling the planet and lowering the seas, hope and change, Forward!, 'Yes, we can!', the Nate Silver infatuation, Barbara Walters' 'messiah,' David Brooks' crease, Chris Matthews' tingle, and the army of Silicon techies who can mobilize for Obama but not for Obamacare. These are the elites without identities who feed on the latest fad. They are the upper-crust versions of those who once mobbed stores to buy the last Cabbage Patch Kids doll, or had to have a pet rock on their dresser. Obama, after all, was the lava lamp and Chia Pet of the young urban progressive." [53028]

"If I were to focus on just two of the many characteristics of Pajama Boy nation in the Age of Obama, one would be that the consequences of one's ideology apply always to someone else. Obama obsesses on inequality, but cannot even go through the populist motions of avoiding Martha's Vineyard, or not dressing like a nerd for golf at the latest tony course. ...There is a growing tiredness with Pajama Boy nation. Millions are sick of being lectured, caricatured, and slandered for their supposed pathologies by the Sandra Flukes of the age and those in their pajamas who still grasp with two hands their hot chocolate. Add all their annoying Stalinist efforts up—to selectively going after Chick-fil-A or the Washington Redskins or *Duck Dynasty*—and the public is becoming tired of the shrill nerdocracy. How many are revolting against Pajama Boy nation and his bunch, no one quite knows. But I'm beginning to think for the first time since 2009 that the rage and numbers of the disengaged have not crested yet, not quite yet." [53028]

National Security Advisor Susan Rice is interviewed by Lesley Stahl on *60 Minutes*. Rice says NSA whistleblower Edward Snowden does not deserve amnesty and “should be sent back and have his day in court,” and claims the NSA is doing a “heck of a good job at [protecting the United States].” When Stahl notes lies in congressional testimony, Rice responds, “There have been cases where they have inadvertently made false representations. And they themselves have discovered it and corrected it.” (If Rice means Director of National Intelligence James Clapper, he did, in fact, lie when he told Congress the NSA was not collecting phone data of Americans.) Stahl asks Rice about placing the blame for the Benghazi attack on a YouTube video. Rice replies, “I don’t have time to think about a false controversy. In the midst of all of the swirl about things like talking points, the administration’s been working very, very hard across the globe to review our security of our embassies and our facilities. That’s what we ought to be focused on.” Stahl: “But the questions keep coming. When someone heard that I was going to be talking to you they said, ‘You have to ask her why Hillary Clinton didn’t do the interview that morning.’ Did she, did she smell trouble?” Rice: “She had just gone through an incredibly painful and stressful week. Secretary Clinton, as our chief diplomat, had to reach out to the families, had to greet the bodies upon their arrival at Andrews Air Force Base. If I were her, the last thing I would have wanted to do is five Sunday morning talk shows. So I think it’s perfectly understandable.” [52853, 52860, 52861, 52878, 52905]

Rice tells Stahl, “The fact that we have not had a successful attack on our homeland since 9/11 should not be diminished.” (AtlasShrugs.com quickly points out three attacks: “Abdulkhikim Muhammad murdered Pvt. William Long outside a military recruiting center in Little Rock, Arkansas, on June 1, 2009, in the name of Islam and jihad. Nidal Malik Hasan murdered 13 people and wounded 31 at Fort Hood on November 5, 2009, in the name of Islam and jihad. Tamerlan and Dzhokhar Tsarnaev murdered 3 people and wounded 264 at the Boston Marathon on April 15, 2013, in the name of Islam and jihad. Susan Rice knows this. She just hopes you don’t.” [52905]

On December 23, the last day for enrollment in ObamaCare to (allegedly) ensure coverage by January 1, the Healthcare.gov web site crashes. The administration responds by extending the deadline to 11:59 p.m. December 24. (The White House calls it, “leading by example.” Townhall.com’s Christie Roussele calls it, “Procrastination.”) According to the White House, Obama would enroll his own family in ObamaCare on December 23. It then changed its story, claiming Obama had “symbolically” enrolled over the weekend: RedAlertPolitics.com reports that Obama “signed up for a ‘bronze’ plan via the Washington, D.C. exchange, according to a White House statement, but the action was described as ‘symbolic’ and more a show of support from [Obama] for his signature law than a substantive decision to obtain health coverage. [Obama] will continue to receive health care through the military, the White House said. Additionally, Obama did not sign himself up through Healthcare.gov or the D.C. exchange’s website—instead, aides signed him up in-person because of the ‘complicated nature of [Obama’s] case,’ the White House said, which includes the accessibility of his personal information on government databases used by the website.” (Whether millions of Americans will now

pay their taxes only “symbolically” is not known.) The “complicated nature” of Obama’s “case” may, of course, be the fact that the Social Security number he has used most recently (he has used more than one over the years) fails the government’s E-Verify system test and the Healthcare.gov web site is unable to confirm that he exists on various databases. [52851, 52852, 52855, 52872, 52889, 52892, 52895, 52896, 52897, 52898, 52899, 52900, 52902, 52904, 52911]

Obama will allegedly be paying less than \$400 per month—if he actually bothers to pay anything—to cover himself under ObamaCare’s “bronze” plan, omitting coverage for his wife and daughters. At LewRockwell.com Gary North notes that Obama’s ObamaCare coverage is not very good—and many Americans who are not in his income bracket would certainly never call it “affordable. The \$400 per month premium buys Obama a plan with a \$4,300 annual deductible. If he were to actually use the insurance (which, of course, he won’t have to), he would have to shell out \$9,100 (\$4,800 in premiums plus the \$4,300 deductible) per year before insurance kicked in and covered an illness. [52907, 52908]

Attorney Orly Taitz files a Freedom of Information Act request and criminal complaint with Secretary of Kathleen Sebelius, “seeking any and all documentation showing how DHHS [Department of Health and Human Services] verifies Social Security numbers of applicants for ACA/Obamacare” as well as “Any and all documentation explaining to the public how Barack Obama was able to sign up for Obamacare while using a Social Security number which Filed [sic; failed] E-verify and SSNVS.” Taitz states, “By and through this letter Hon. Kathleen Sebelius is placed on notice that Barack Hussein Obama, aka Barack (Barry) Soetoro, aka Barack Soebarkah has fraudulently signed up for ACA/Obamacare, using invalid IDs and petitioner demands an expedient investigation by the DHHS and by the Inspector General for the DHHS. Per 5 USC 552 response is required within 20 days from the receipt of this request, failure to do so will be seen as a refusal to provide information and will entitle the petitioner to seek a redress in the US District Court. Further, Hon. Kathleen Sebelius is placed on notice that lack of action and resolution in this matter may be seen as complicity on her part in the cover up of Obama’s use of fabricated IDs and a stolen Social Security number and it might expose Ms. Sebelius to liability in both Civil and Criminal RICO causes of action.” [52877]

The ObamaCare exchange in Maryland extends its enrollment deadline to December 27 for coverage by January 1. [52903]

MSNBC’s Chris Hayes, apparently unaware that Healthcare.gov had crashed, Tweets, “Gotta imagine the numbers for <http://healthcare.gov> today are *enormous*.” [52876]

Support for Obama falls to a mere 35 percent in a CNN/ORC poll. CNN Polling Director Keating Holland states, “Opposition to Obamacare rose six points among women, from 54% in November to 60% now, while opinion of the new law remained virtually unchanged among men. That’s bad news for an administration that is reaching out to moms across the country in an effort to make Obamacare a success.” Sixty-three percent

of those polled believe ObamaCare will increase their own health care costs. [52856, 52858, 52865, 52907, 52963]

At USA Today.com Glenn Harlan Reynolds writes, “Obamacare has been a debacle, wrapped in a catastrophe, shrouded in a disaster... and the damage will come in 2014. What we’ve seen so far, most likely, isn’t the worst of it.” [52875]

CNN’s fast-talking, run-on sentence enthusiast John King says, “What’s especially troubling for [Obama]... when you look at the health care number [in the CNN/ORC poll], add in what we know about [Obama’s] approval rating and other numbers, it’s [that] he’s losing part of his own base here. ...sixty percent of women now oppose ObamaCare; that’s up six points in just a month, uh, that’s [Obama’s] base, those are the people who make a lot of the health care and financial decisions for American families, so, uh, look, [Obama] has a problem here. Now, you heard him the other day at his press conference, his year end press conference, as he headed off to Hawaii, he thinks there’s only one way to go, but up [sic], uh, but that is the challenge for the administration when people are so skeptical and so opposed, uh, if they make the progress they say they will make over the next two, three, six months, uh, will people change their minds or are people so frustrated by all this, uh, that they’re dug in in opposition?” King comments on the poll’s report that the vast majority of Americans—63 percent—believe their health care costs will increase because of ObamaCare: “It’s a problem both from a policy standpoint, economic standpoint for American families, who still don’t think this recovery has a full head of steam, and it’s a huge problem for the administration politically...” (TheRightScoop.com responds, “Notice John King framed this as a ‘big’ problem policy-wise but a ‘HUGE’ problem for the Obama politically. Um, don’t ya have it backwards there John? It’s a HUGE problem for the country because it’s terrible policy. Sure Obama’s going to take a hit over it, but it’s still a much bigger problem for the people who will have to pay hundreds more each month and are losing their doctors and prescriptions. That’s where your focus should be, John, not [Obama].”) [52881]

Politico reports on ObamaCare’s public relations “nightmare on Pennsylvania Avenue.” “Each time, they assure people, they’ve put whatever the latest problem was to bed. No more changes. No more surprises. And then another arrives. ...[A]t this point, the administration appears to be demonstrating that it lacks either a full sense of what implementing health care entails, or a full sense of the kind of blowback that each shift in the rules, however small, will generate. Obama’s personal credibility with the American public has tumbled since the website launch, and critics have used each new announcement to try to sink it further. ...When the administration was getting close to fixing the HealthCare.gov website in late November, a top administration official disclosed to Congress that—oops—as much as 40 percent of the website’s IT systems weren’t even built yet. And when Obama announced his administrative fix for the canceled plans—letting insurers voluntarily extend people’s old, pre-Obamacare plans for another year—about half the states said they’d go along. But nearly half the states didn’t, so that problem wasn’t really fixed.” [52914]

TruthRevolt.org notes that, for the fifth year in a row, the Obamas send a politically correct Christmas card that “makes no mention of Christmas, Jesus, or the Bible. Instead, the card depicts a pop-up of the White House, with this message: ‘As we gather around this season, may the warmth and joy of the holidays fill your home.’ The card is signed by ...Obama, Michelle Obama, Sasha [Natasha], Malia, and the family’s two dogs, Bo and Sunny.” [52882]

At NYTimes.com Tim Arango writes, “Coming together over crisis has been a hallmark of the relationship between the United States and Turkey in recent years. So it was an especially troubling sign of degraded trust that a meeting between Turkish and American diplomats was canceled last week because it seemed more like an ambush than a consultation. ...The reality, say analysts, is that the two countries’ foreign policies have been notably diverging... They are at odds over Egypt, where Turkey had been a strong supporter of the deposed president, Mohamed Morsi, and where the United States has sought a relationship with Egypt’s new military rulers.” (In fact, Obama sides with his friend, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, in his support for the Muslim Brotherhood’s Morsi. While many in the U.S. government and within the State Department were happy to see Morsi deposed and never wanted him in power in the first place, he had the backing of Obama—who threw former President and U.S. ally Hosni Mubarak under the bus to help Morsi come to power.) [52915]

At NationalReview.com John Fund writes, “Christmas shoppers were stunned to learn last Thursday that computer hackers had made off with the names and other personal info of some 40 million Target customers. ...But at least Target informed its customers of the security breach, as it is required by federal law to do. HealthCare.gov faces no such requirement; it need never notify customers that their personal information has been hacked or possibly compromised. The Department of Health and Human Services [HHS] was specifically asked to include a notification requirement in the rules it designed for the health-care exchanges, but HHS declined. ...HHS responded: ‘We do not plan to include the specific notification procedures in the final rule. Consistent with this approach, we do not include specific policies for investigation of data breaches in this final rule.’ In other words, the government doesn’t have to tell you about a security breach unless it decides it wants to—despite the fact that private companies are required to publicly disclose any incidents. State laws also require many of the 14 state-run insurance exchanges to disclose such information, but no such law exists for the federally run exchange, which 36 states rely upon. ...It’s not as if the Obama administration wasn’t notified of security concerns about its website. MITRE Corporation, an HHS contractor, alerted the agency that 19 unaddressed security vulnerabilities plagued the website before its launch on October 1.” Congresswoman Diane Black (R-TN) “is fed up with the obfuscation and evasion surrounding HealthCare.gov. She has introduced the ‘Federal Data Breach Notification Act,’ which would require that the Federal Trade Commission notify anyone whose personal information has been jeopardized.” Black states, “The federal government imposes these same rules on the private sector, yet they have gone out of their way to avoid imposing this basic diligence on their own Obamacare exchange.” [52885, 52893, 52910, 52920]

ForeignPolicy.com reports, “The Obama administration has decided to drop its initial pick for U.S. ambassador to Egypt, leaving a vitally important diplomatic post vacant during a time of unusually strong tensions between Washington and one of its most important Middle Eastern allies. Sources familiar with the matter say that Robert Ford—the highly-respected, Arabic-speaking career diplomat and current ambassador to Syria—was withdrawn from consideration for the Cairo post after some representatives of Egypt’s military regime quietly indicated that they didn’t want him in the job because of his stated willingness to negotiate with some of Syria’s Islamist militants and political groups. Secretary of State John Kerry tapped Ford for the post this summer, and the White House had hoped to formally nominate him early next year. Instead, people familiar with the situation say the administration has decided to keep Ford in his current job in Syria—and its primary intermediary to the country’s fractious opposition groups—and find a new pick for the high-profile Cairo slot. With the Senate out of session and mired in partisan deadlock, that could take months.” (The Syrian state newspaper, *Al Ahrām*, once called Ford “the engineer of destruction in Syria, Iraq and Morocco” and “the man of blood.” Egyptian protestor Raef Elwishee said, “He’s a troublemaker. It’s enough to know that he was ambassador to Syria. He is top in one of the U.S. spy agencies... and we don’t need that kind of relationship.”) [9272, 22296, 22297, 22336, 23619, 23620, 23654, 25766, 25767, 25768, 25788, 47133, 52891]

On *Special Report*, panel host Shannon Bream asks George Will, “So we have another delay in signing up for ObamaCare. Today was the drop dead deadline. It was December 15th; that got changed to today. Then quietly there’s what they’re calling a grace period, George. How do you think this is going to go over?” Will replies, “You used the word quietly and that’s exactly it. This is a—ObamaCare now is a tapestry of coercions mitigated by random acts of [Obama’s] mercy announced in the most bizarre ways. Months ago, when they announced the suspension of the employer mandate, it was an assistant secretary of the Treasury, of whom there are twelve, posted it on the Treasury [Department] website. Then, when they a few days ago suspended the individual mandate for certain preferred people, that was announced in a letter from Secretary [of Health and Human Services Kathleen] Sebelius to six Democratic senators, as though this law of the United States was their private property. This change today wasn’t even announced. It was sort of discovered by *The Washington Post* and it was made on the pretext that they’re gearing up for an expected surge of traffic. Which is kind of interesting because the one person we know who signed up today, [Obama], doesn’t even get his health care from anything associated with ObamaCare.” [52954]

On December 24 Erik Rush writes at CanadaFreePress.com, “Apparently, there are at least three American lawmakers who have determined to do their jobs, this being to uphold the Constitution of the United States of America. Unlike the craven, egocentric, self-aggrandizing majority of our congressmen and senators, at great personal risk, Michele Bachmann (R-MN), Louie Gohmert (R-TX), and Steve King (R-IA) conducted an off-the-record trip (‘mission’ might actually be a better description) to the Middle East this past week. As reported by the Washington Times, the three utilized commercial flights ‘into high-profile danger zones like Beirut, Cairo and Tripoli,’ meeting with top-level officials in the region. According to The Washington Post, Bachmann, Gohmert,

and King met with embassy officials in Tripoli ‘to receive updates on the Benghazi attack and on the general situation in Libya.’ The attack on the compound in Benghazi, Libya on September 11, 2012, has led to a myriad of questions on the part of Congress and the American people, but none of these have been answered satisfactorily by the administration. The ostensible efforts of the State Department to determine what occurred have been perfunctory at best, yet information coming out of Libya, Egypt, and certain independent parties has all but condemned Obama and his State Department, suggesting everything from a cavalier abandonment of the personnel there, to premeditation and complicity in their deaths. Additionally, the actions of Obama toward arming rebels fighting the Assad regime in Syria (done at first clandestinely, and later openly) has raised other grave concerns. Many of these rebels are al-Qaeda and other Islamist affiliates, thus effectively condemning [Obama] of treason, inasmuch as they are America’s sworn enemies.” [52886]

“...When the people of Egypt (who are majority Muslim but more cosmopolitan than some of their neighbors) realized that they had been duped by power-hungry, barbaric Islamist thugs, they rebelled and ousted the Muslim Brotherhood. Since the fall of Mohammed Morsi in Egypt, Muslim Brotherhood members have claimed to possess information which they say would lead to Obama’s criminal prosecution in the U.S. Further, the Egyptian government and Muslim Brotherhood operatives have testified to there being a conspiracy in progress calculated to return Morsi to power, and that this is being aided by elements of the American government. ...I believe that this trip lends credence to recent disturbing reports coming from the Middle East which have implicated [Obama] in illegal activities. It is likely that this was a mission to gather sensitive evidence in the face of their knowledge that the Obama administration is a dangerous criminal enterprise from which America must be rescued—and soon. I believe that details surrounding [Obama’s] actions in these areas will prove damning to him when this information becomes known to the Republican lawmakers who made the trip, and later, to the Congress at large. ...I also believe that the recent proposal of HR 3741 (The Federal Death Penalty Abolition Act) by Democrat lawmakers was initiated in anticipation of charges of treason being brought against members of the administration and its surrogates. ...My belief is that in the case of the individual representing himself as Barack Hussein Obama, an abundance of such evidence exists; it is simply a matter of the proper parties obtaining it, and being willing to act upon same. There are several other prosecutable offenses in which many (including myself) believe [Obama] has engaged, although treason obviously remains the most serious, as it still carries capital punishment according to US law.” [52886]

On *Special Report*, syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer names Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and Pope Francis, respectively, to his Christmas “naughty or nice” list. He chooses Sebelius “for playing Evita to Obama’s el presidente as they turn American health care into their personal banana republic fiefdom, issuing edicts every morning and the country has to follow along and know what the law is. So don’t cry for her, cry for us Argentina.” [52894]

In Denmark, Muslims demonstrate and shout “Allahu Akbar!” and “Takbir! [conquer]” [52918, 52919]

On December 25 TheHill.com reports, “Egypt’s military-run government has declared the [Obama-backed] Muslim Brotherhood a terrorist group. The move comes months after the military removed Mohammed Morsi from the presidency. Morsi was the Muslim Brotherhood’s candidate in the 2012 election. The new government’s minister of education read a statement announcing the decision, which will give more power to authorities to crack down on the group. ‘The Cabinet has declared the Muslim Brotherhood group and its organization as a terrorist organization,’ the statement from Minister of Higher Education Hossam Elssa read, according to a Fox News report. The organization has long been a power in Egypt, and was an illegal group in that country until after the 2011 revolution that toppled President Hosni Mubarak. But under Morsi, serious opposition developed against the group. The decision to lable [sic; label] it a terrorist organization comes a day after a bombing the government has blamed on the group, which has organized daily protests since Morsi was overthrown. Tuesday’s bombing hit a police headquarters in a Nile Delta City. Sixteen people were killed in the attack, and more than 100 were wounded.” [52912]

Reuters reports, “At least 34 people were killed [by Muslims] in three bombings in Christian areas of Baghdad on Wednesday, including a car bomb that exploded as worshippers were leaving a Christmas service, Iraqi police and medics said. ...Iraq’s fast-dwindling Christian minority has been a target of al Qaeda Sunni militants in the past, including a 2010 attack on a church that killed dozens of people.” (Obama, whose Kenyan family is Sunni Muslim, has no comment.) [52916, 52917]

NYPost.com reports that health insurer Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama is listing “Affordable Care Act Fees and Taxes” on its customer bills. “The new taxes on one customer’s bill added up to \$23.14 a month, or \$277.68 annually, according to Kaiser Health News. It boosted the monthly premium from \$322.26 to \$345.40 for that individual.” The *Post* notes, however, “Most insurers aren’t advertising the ObamaCare taxes that are added on to premiums, opting instead to discretely pass them on to customers while quietly lobbying lawmakers for a break.” [52921, 52922]

According to *The Nation*, “Michelle Obama has had enough. According to a bombshell new report, the First Lady and Barack Obama are sleeping in separate White House bedrooms. Michelle is also preparing to boot her hubby of 21 years out of their ritzy Chicago home—and seriously discussing divorce. ‘The smart money says the marriage is doomed,’ a source told the National Enquirer. ‘Barack and Michelle have had a rocky go for years and mainly stayed together for their daughters and his political career. But now Michelle is mad AS hell [sic]. She feels violated in front of the whole world, and screamed at him, ‘I’ve had enough.’ She’s met with divorce lawyers and told Barack that she wants a life apart from him. Michelle will stay in the White House for the rest of Barack’s term for appearances’ sake, but she made it clear they’ll be leading separate lives. She’s moving into one of the vacant bedrooms in the family’s private living quarters, and she’s preparing to move his clothes and personal things out of their million-

dollar house in Chicago.’ Michelle was left furious after Barack was photographed brazenly flirting with Denmark’s dishy female prime minister, Helle Thorning-Schmidt, during the service for former South African president Nelson Mandela. Obama, 52, laughed and whispered with the 46-year-old Danish beauty throughout the solemn ceremony, at one point cavalierly caressing her shoulder. ‘Barack already had enough headaches with his public approval rating plummeting after the disastrous rollout of his ‘Obamacare’ health plan. Now he’s walked smack into the worst marital crisis of his life,’ said the White House insider.” [52931, 52956, 52982, 53035, 53284]

Vacationing in Hawaii, the Obama family does not attend church services on either Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. [53134]

Terrorists release a video of U.S. citizen Warren Weinstein pleading for the Obama administration to secure his release. (Weinstein, a contractor working for USAID, was kidnapped by al-Qaeda in Pakistan in 2011.) Weinstein addresses Obama in the message: “[F]or the majority of my adult life, for over 30 years I’ve served my country... Now when I need my government it seems that I have been totally abandoned and forgotten. ...I am, therefore, appealing to you, on a humanitarian basis, if nothing else, in asking that you take the necessary actions to expedite my release and my return to my family and to my country. Our country.” [52941, 52942, 52943]

On December 26 McClatchyDC.com reports, “If you buy one of the less expensive insurance plans sold through the new health law’s marketplaces, you may be in for a surprise: Some plans won’t pay for doctor visits before you meet your annual deductible, which could be thousands of dollars. ...Experts are worrying that some new enrollees will be discouraged from seeing doctors if they have to pay the full charge, rather than simply a copayment. In Miami, for example, 40 percent of bronze plans require consumers to pay the full deductible before coverage kicks in, according to an analysis by online broker eHealthinsurance.com, a private online marketplace, for Kaiser Health News. The average deductible among the examined bronze plans in Miami is \$5,735. Patients in those plans who haven’t yet met their annual deductibles would have to pay the full cost of the visits, unless they were for preventive services mandated by the law. A typical office visit can run \$65 to \$85, while more complex visits may cost more. ...Bronze and silver [ObamaCare] plans, which have the lowest monthly premiums but typically some of the highest deductibles, are the most likely to require consumers to spend that amount themselves before the insurer pays any claims.” (At HotAir.com Ed Morrissey notes, “Put it this way: If the average deductible is \$5,735 and a doctor visit is \$85, it would take *sixty-eight* doctor visits before the insurance kicked in—more than one visit per week. And it would start all over again every year.”) [52927, 52950]

KTRK in Houston reports, “Dozens of employees at a hospital in northeast Houston have had to make it through the holidays without getting paid for weeks. The CEO of Saint Anthony’s Hospital on Little York is blaming a new Medicare payment contractor for his payroll problems. Nearly 150 employees, ranging from doctors to nurses and administrators, haven’t been paid in nearly a month, and the CEO says it’s not his fault. ... According to the CEO Jason Leday, more than 150 employees haven’t been paid in

nearly a month. ...The hospital is strapped for cash not because its not making money, but because Leday says a new Medicare payment facilitator named Novitas Solutions is taking too way long [sic; way too long] to pay out Medicare claims to the hospital. Leday says he's owed nearly \$3 million in payments from Medicare and can't make payroll." (According to HotAir.com, Novitas Solutions was also "hired by the Obama administration on a no-bid contract to build the back-end payment systems of Healthcare.gov.") [53107, 53108, 53127]

Obama signs the 2014 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), and attaches a signing statement in which he complains that Congress is tying his hands with regard to the disposition of terrorist detainees being held at Guantanamo. Michigan Governor Rick Snyder signs an anti-NDAA law that, reports ThePostEmail.com, grants "statewide authorities and agencies the ability to refuse to cooperate with federal forces wishing to detain a citizen without formal charges." The NDAA allows the federal government to detain U.S. citizens *without formal charges or a trial* if it considers them terrorists—with the definition of terrorist largely left to the discretion of Obama's Attorney General, Eric Holder. [52968, 52969, 52975]

ThePostEmail.com reports that Senators Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Mitch McConnell (R-KY) "requested Sheriff's Kits produced by Michael Volin of Where's Obamas Birth Certificate (WOBC) with the purpose of informing the public and elected officials of the forgery of the long-form birth certificate image posted since April 27, 2011 on the White House website. The kit contains a presentation given by Maricopa County, AZ Cold Case Posse lead investigator Michael Zullo, who details the findings of an investigation begun in September 2011 into claims that the birth certificate was a forgery." (Note that *The Obama Timeline* has provided information to Zullo, and copies of Part I of *The Obama Timeline* have been provided to members of the Supreme Court, some members of Congress, and various media outlets.) [52932, 52933, 52962]

CNN.com reports, "Democrats have lost their advantage and Republicans now have a slight edge in the battle for control of Congress, according to a new national poll. A CNN/ORC International survey released Thursday also indicates that ...Obama may be dragging down Democratic congressional candidates, and that the 2014 midterm elections are shaping up to be a low-turnout event, with only three in 10 registered voters extremely or very enthusiastic about voting next year. Two months ago, Democrats held a 50%-42% advantage among registered voters in a generic ballot, which asked respondents to choose between a Democrat or Republican in their congressional district without identifying the candidates. ...But the Democratic lead evaporated, and a CNN poll a month ago indicated the GOP holding a 49%-47% lead. The new survey, conducted in mid-December, indicates Republicans with a 49%-44% edge over the Democrats." At Townhall.com Conn Carroll comments, "That's right: the Republican lead over Democrats on the generic congressional ballot has actually risen by three points [since] Obama claimed the HealthCare.gov website has been fixed. To put those numbers in perspective, at this point in 2010, when Democrats lost 63 House seats and 6 Senate seats, Republicans led by just 3 points in the very same CNN poll. Democrats are not in danger of losing 63 House seats in 2014. They already lost control of the House in 2010

[and the remaining House Democrats] mostly represent only hard-core liberal areas of the country now. But [they] very well could lose another 6 Senate seats, and possibly more. Democrats are defending seven Senate seats in states that Mitt Romney won in 2012. If Republicans win just six of those seven seats, they will win control of the Senate in 2014.” [52934, 52935, 52952]

FoxNews.com reports, “Those signing up for private health care coverage on the ObamaCare exchanges may be in for an unpleasant surprise—they’ll have insurance, but they might have trouble getting the doctor to see them. As hundreds of thousands enroll for coverage beginning Jan. 1, analysts are warning that the plans are likely to give them access to fewer doctors and hospitals. So much so, they warn, that the system could begin to resemble Medicaid, the health care program for low-income Americans. ‘Indeed, I think this will eventually be like Medicaid,’ said Merrill Matthews, director of the Council for Affordable Health Insurance. Matthews said the only way many insurers are going to be able to control costs is by ‘simply clamping down on the amount they are willing to pay.’ Just as with Medicaid, analysts warn that if payments get too low, many doctors might start refusing to see patients. That will leave more and more patients jockeying to see fewer and fewer doctors. They emphasize, then, that having health insurance won’t necessarily translate into access to health care. ‘About half of the physicians in many communities refuse to take Medicaid patients because the payment system is just too low,’ said James Capretta, of the Ethics and Public Policy Center. Doug Holtz-Eakin, former director of the Congressional Budget Office, suggested some of the plans on the exchanges are going in the same direction. ‘If you look at something where you get a dollar by treating a private payer, you get about 70 cents out of Medicare for that same treatment, you get about 55 cents out of Medicaid for that,’ he said. He added: ‘You know, ObamaCare started to look like Medicaid of the future, and in the Medicaid in the present, you can have the insurance but a doctor won’t see you.’ ... ‘These networks are going to be jammed with people,’ Robert Laszewski, president of Health Policy and Strategy Associates, said. ‘Far more than they’re treating now, and I don’t doubt that we’re going to have problems with access to these doctors. There just aren’t going to be enough of them.’” [52936, 52937]

On MSNBC, journalist Glenn Greenwald, who was the first to publish NSA information obtained by whistleblower Edward Snowden, says, “[E]very journalist has an agenda. We’re on MSNBC now, where close to 24 hours a day the agenda of ... Obama and the Democratic Party are promoted, defended, glorified, [while] the agenda of the Republican Party is undermined. That doesn’t mean the people who appear on MSNBC aren’t journalists. They are. ... I do defend [Snowden], just like people on MSNBC defend ... Obama and his officials and Democratic Party leaders 24 hours a day.” [52944, 52947]

DailyCaller.com reports, “Massachusetts and Vermont officials will withhold payments from the contractor behind the states’ malfunctioning Obamacare exchanges, the Boston Globe reported Thursday. CGI Group is the main contractor in charge of both Massachusetts’ and Vermont’s state exchanges, as well as the federal site HealthCare.gov. ‘CGI has consistently underperformed, which is frustrating and a serious concern,’ said Jason Lefferts, a spokesman for the Massachusetts exchange. ‘We are

holding the vendor accountable for its underperformance and will continue to apply nonstop pressure to work to fix defects and improve performance.’ Massachusetts officials have paid \$11 million of its \$69 million contract with CGI but will not dole out any more dough until the website is functioning properly, according to Lefferts. Vermont has already paid \$18.6 million of its \$82.6 million bill to CGI, but is still in talks to decide what the bottom line will be. Exchange officials are currently withholding a \$5.1 million payment in return for CGI missing important deadlines and are disputing over \$1 million in charges due to ‘incomplete work.’” [52948]

AZCentral.com reports, “A federal agent who exposed the Justice Department’s flawed gun-trafficking investigation known as Operation Fast and Furious says the FBI played a key role in events leading to the 2010 murder near Nogales, Ariz., of U.S. Border Patrol Agent Brian Terry. John Dodson, a special agent with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, contends that the bandits who killed Terry were working for FBI operatives and were sent to the border to do a drug rip-off using intelligence from the federal Drug Enforcement Administration. ‘I don’t think the (FBI) assets were part of the rip-off crew,’ Dodson said. ‘I think they were directing the rip crew.’ ...Terry belonged to an elite Border Patrol tactical team sent to a remote area known as Peck Canyon, roughly a dozen miles northwest of Nogales, where violence had escalated because criminal gangs were stealing narcotics from drug runners known as mules. He was slain in a shootout with several bandits. Two assault-type rifles found at the scene were subsequently traced to Fast and Furious. The operation, based in Phoenix, was launched in 2009 to identify and prosecute drug lords, but instead allowed guns to be ‘walked’ into the hands of Mexican criminals. ATF agents encouraged licensed firearms dealers in Arizona to sell more than 2,000 weapons to known ‘straw buyers’ who were working for cartels. Instead of arresting suspects immediately, surveillance agents took notes and let them disappear with the guns. After the Terry slaying and an attempted cover-up within the Justice Department, Dodson provided evidence and testimony to Congress. His revelations, later verified by an Office of the Inspector General’s report, ignited a national scandal over Fast and Furious that resulted in a congressional contempt citation against Attorney General Eric Holder and the replacement of top ATF and Justice Department officials.” [52957, 52958]

Voice of the Persecuted reports, “Christian Syrian refugees have found temporary shelter in Jordan, but their immigration requests have been rejected by Western countries. Some of them have spoken to the Associated Press, but want to remain anonymous for safety reasons. One Syrian refugee said, ‘Everyone sold whatever they owned in Syria in order to get here, so that we could apply for visas at an embassy. We were all surprised to be rejected on the basis that there was no reason for us to go to Europe. Their reasons were all false—nothing correct in them.’ Another man said that western countries ‘were supposed to support us, and they were supposed to facilitate our immigration process as Christians, and I’m very sad that they haven’t.’” (Meanwhile, according to Judicial Watch, “The Obama administration is allowing a growing number of students from Saudi Arabia to enroll in colleges around the nation even though most of the 9/11 hijackers were from that Islamic country and visas were dramatically cut in the aftermath of the attacks. Nevertheless, from 2010 to 2012 the number of Saudi Arabians permitted to

study in the U.S. doubled, according to a mainstream newspaper report that cites a survey using State Department figures. Last year alone, the number of Saudi students in the U.S. grew to 44,566, an increase of nearly 30% from 2011. ...The Obama administration [which apparently welcomes Muslims but not Christians into the United States] seems to be bending over backwards to appease the Saudis. Earlier this year it quietly rewarded the Middle Eastern country with a special travel privilege that allows its nationals to bypass normal passport security controls at major U.S. airports. It marks the first time that the Saudi government has a direct role in vetting who is eligible for fast-tracked entry into the United States. It's a bizarre move considering that just three years ago the U.S. government actually placed Saudi Arabia on a list of 14 countries whose travelers would face enhanced security when entering the country.") [52965, 52966, 52981]

YnetNews.com reports, "Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood movement has signed a pact with the al-Qaeda-affiliated radical Salafi organization Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis, which claimed responsibility last week for a terror attack in the city of Mansoura, security sources told the London-based Arabic-language al-Sharq al-Awsat newspaper. According to the sources, the Muslim Brotherhood has an alliance with another al-Qaeda-affiliated organization. Meanwhile, senior Muslim Brotherhood member Ibrahim Al-Sayed said the Egyptian government's decision to declare the movement a terror organization was meaningless and would not harm the movement." (Jihad Watch comments, "This will do nothing to stop those who insist that the Muslim Brotherhood is 'moderate.' But open Brotherhood supporters in the U.S. such as DHS adviser Mohamed Elibiary should be asked about it. They won't be, however." AtlasShrugs.com's Pamela Geller adds, "More proof, yet again, that Obama is aligned with the jihad force. The number one story of the century and the voluntary state-media refuses to cover it.") [52978, 52979, 52980]

On *Special Report*, Charles Krauthammer suggests that the Benghazi scandal "won't even be an issue" for Hillary Clinton when she runs for president in 2016. ...I think the status she enjoys among Democrats is semi-divine. It's not going to be a coronation. It's going to be a worship service [as far as getting the Democrat nomination]. I think she is going to be rather weak if she decides to run, which I think she likely is. She will be a relatively weak opponent. And Republicans, I think, are going to have a really good shot at the White House." [52938]

On December 27 U.S. District Judge William Pauley (a Bill Clinton appointee) rules that the NSA's collection of telephone data—"bulk telephony metadata"—of U.S. citizens is not unconstitutional, just days after another judge, Richard Leon (a George W. Bush appointee), ruled it was. Pauley argues that the data is not owned by the telephone users; it is owned by the telephone company. There is, therefore, no "right to privacy" to the data. Further, argues Pauley, the government's "querying of the telephony metadata does not implicate the Fourth Amendment—any more [sic; any more] than a law enforcement officer's query of the FBI's fingerprint or DNA databases to identify someone." (HotAir.com comments, "Can't wait to see how the politics of that shakes out during the 2015 primaries. Does Hillary [Clinton] attack the program to pander to liberals or defend it to signal that she'll be tough on terror? Does [Senator] Ted Cruz [R-TX] use it as a

wedge against [Senator] Rand Paul [R-KY] by cautiously embracing it or does he lower the boom to try to impress more libertarian-flavored tea partiers?") [52926]

At LewRockwell.com Glenn Jacobs later writes that Pauley “decreed... that the NSA’s dragnet approach is constitutional because, well, he believes that it is necessary. As William Pitt the Younger observed, ‘necessity is the plea for every infringement of human freedom. It is the argument of tyrants; it is the creed of slaves.’ The world is an inherently dangerous place. The idea that the government can protect us is patently absurd. All the government can do is to destroy our liberties while promoting the illusion of safety. ...Pauley ...wrote, ‘there is no evidence that the government has used any of the bulk telephony metadata it collected for any purpose other than investigating and disrupting terrorist attacks.’ What matters is not whether the government *has used* this information for nefarious purposes, but whether it now *has the ability* to engage in such behavior. ...While Pauley might (dubiously) claim that government officials have not abused the NSA’s program, he cannot guarantee that future government officials will act so judiciously. In fact, history shows that governments will exercise their powers to their fullest extent. That’s why the Anti-federalists demanded a Bill of Rights in the first place! The government is claiming that it can rightfully troll through nearly everything that we do—from what websites we visit, to what our e-mails say, to what we buy with our credit cards—and a federal judge fails to see a problem?! What could be more ripe for abuse than a program such as this one? We are at a very dangerous point in our history. The traditional bulwarks against tyranny have been degraded or eliminated, and a police state infrastructure has been erected in the shadows. All it takes is the right crisis, and this infernal machine roars to life, probably to the cheers of the masses. Perhaps we will be lucky and the government will not abuse the powers that it has usurped. However, so long as perceived necessity trumps liberty, it’s only a matter of time before that luck runs out.” [53079]

NBCNews.com reports, “A white Houston-area man was arrested Thursday on federal hate crime charges for allegedly shooting video of himself sucker-punching a 79-year-old black man in a ‘knockout game’-style attack. ...According to prosecutors, the video shows [Conrad] Barrett approach the victim and ask, ‘How’s it going, man?’ A ‘loud smack’ is then heard, the victim falls to the ground, Barrett laughs and says, ‘Knockout.’ The assailant then flees in his vehicle. ...Investigators retrieved other videos from Barrett’s phone, including some in which he uses racial epithets and talks about trying to work up the courage to play the knockout game, the complaint states. In one, Barrett says: ‘That plan is to see if I were to hit a black person, would this be nationally televised?’ U.S. Attorney Kenneth Magidson said Thursday that such crimes won’t be tolerated. ‘Evidence of hate crimes will be vigorously investigated and prosecuted with the assistance of all our partners to the fullest extent of the law,’ Magidson said. ...If convicted of the hate crime charge, Barrett could be sentenced to up to 10 years in prison and fined up to \$250,000.” (Few blacks—if any—who have engaged in the “knockout game” against white victims have been charged with a hate crime. Obama has no comment.) [52929, 52930, 52949, 52970, 53037]

Obama's approval/disapproval rating dips to 39/54 in a Gallup poll. (At CommentaryMagazine.com Peter Wehner writes, "[I]t's not just that the public is increasingly displeased with the job Mr. Obama is doing; they are growing weary of the whole packaged deal. They are frustrated with [him], his style, his attitude, [and] his approach to the job. ...[Obama] is a chronic whiner, a habitual complainer and excuse-maker. He relied on blame shifting for his entire first term, and I suspect it's not merely a tactic for Obama. It is how he's been conditioned, how he views the world and his place in it. He believes deep in his bones that every setback he encounters is due to outside forces. And so he has laid the blame for his failures on his predecessor, the congressional GOP, the Tea Party, conservative talk radio hosts, millionaires and billionaires, Wall Street, Japanese tsunamis, the Arab Spring, Fox News, and more. Those excuses no longer work—and because they don't, one of the main political arrows has been removed from the Obama quiver. It'll be interesting to see if Mr. Obama is emotionally able to adjust to this new situation. My guess is he'll try the same lines of attack—including portraying himself again and again as the only adult in a room of unruly children—even as most Americans believe his act has grown old and stale. And as [Obama's] failures... continue to multiply and his record of incompetence becomes even more indisputable, will Mr. Obama become more aggrieved, more prickly, and more detached from reality? The new year will go some distance toward answering whether you can teach a hubristic president new tricks. This much we know: the old ones have become tedious and monotonous." [52945, 52946, 52971])

FoxNews.com reports, "Four U.S. military personnel are being held in Libyan government custody, the State Department said Friday night. The circumstances and location of their detention were not immediately clear. 'We are seeking to further ascertain the facts and ensure their release,' said State Department spokesman Jen Psaki. 'We are in touch with Libyan officials on this issue.'" [52955]

At CanadaFreePress.com investigator Doug Hagmann reviews his recent conversation with his unnamed Department of Homeland Security (DHS) insider: "'DHS is like a prison environment, complete with prison snitches,' he said, referring to the search for leaks and leakers. And the warden is obsessed. Ask anyone in DHS. No one trusts anyone else and whatever sources might be left are shutting up. The threats that have been made far exceed anything I've ever seen. Good people are afraid for their lives and the lives of their families. We've all been threatened. They see the writing on the wall and are leaving. It's not a joke and not hype.' The following is a narrative from my source, prefaced with the instructions to 'take it or leave it,' and 'disregard it at your own peril.' He added that it's now up to each American to act on the information themselves or suffer the consequences. 'I've resigned myself to the fact that most [Americans] will never be convinced of the reality that is taking place right in front of them. According to every internal document I've seen and read, and from the few people I've spoken with who understand what's going on, preparations have been finalized to respond to a crisis of unprecedented magnitude within the United States. The response will include the use of lethal force against U.S. citizens under the instructions of Barack Obama. ...Everybody needs to understand that this is a deliberate collapse of the U.S. economy with the oversight of the White House and the full knowledge of the Justice Department.

Everyone seems to be waiting for some big, history making event that will signal the start of the collapse. The fact is that the collapse has already started. It's incremental, like a snowball rolling down a hill. It gets bigger and rolls faster. Well, this snowball is well on its way down the hill. I don't mean to sound repetitive, but I can't stress this enough. Contrary to what you hear, we're already in an economic collapse, except that most people haven't a clue. The 'big bang' comes at the end, when people wake up one morning and can't log in to their bank accounts, can't use their ATM cards, and find out that their private pension funds and other assets have been confiscated,' he stated." [52959, 52994]

The DHS insider continues, "...[T]here are several scenarios and I don't know them all. I know one calls for a cyber-attack by an external threat, which will then be compounded by something far removed from everyone's own radar. But it's all a ruse, or a pretext. The threat is from within. Before people can regain their footing, a second event will be triggered. ...I've seen one operational plan that refers to the federal government's response to a significant terrorist attack on U.S. soil. Information at these levels is compartmentalized. I don't have specifics, just plans for the response. The response will be controls and restrictions on travel, business, and every aspect of our lives, especially gun ownership and speech that incites people against the government. I guess some people would call it Martial Law, and they would not be incorrect. But understand that this will be a process deployed in stages. How quickly of a process remains to be seen. As I said, people continue to look for something big to happen first, followed by a militaristic response by the federal government against U.S. citizens. Based on what I've seen, I don't believe it will happen this way... Please note a few final things. The relationship that exists between DHS today and the executive branch is well beyond alarming. DHS and other organizations have become the private army of the Oval Office. The NSA, and I've got contacts there, is taking orders from the Oval Office. The IRS is under the virtual control of the Oval Office in a manner that would make Nixon cower. Even though all roads appear to lead to the Oval Office, they lead through the Oval Office. It's not just Obama, but the men behind him, the people who put him there. The people who put him there are the ones who created him." [52959]

"First, ask yourself why there was such an all out effort to marginalize anyone talking about Obama's eligibility in 2008. Even so-called conservatives pundits fell for the lie that such questions were nothing more than a diversion. They were following a specific drumbeat. That should tell every rational adult that he is a creation of the globalists who have no allegiance to any political party. He is the product of decades of planning, made for this very time in our history. He was selected to oversee the events I just disclosed. Who has that ability? He's a product of our own intelligence agencies working with the globalists. He should be exhibit 'A' to illustrate the need to enforce the Logan Act. Need I say more?" Hagmann concludes, "As often said by another of my sources, the U.S. is a captured operation. The lie is bigger than most people realize or are willing to confront. That is, until there is no other option. By then, it might be too late." [52959]

FoxNews.com reports that Obama "faced mounting bipartisan pressure on Friday to drop his resistance to an Iran sanctions bill after Tehran announced a new generation of

[centrifuge] equipment to enrich uranium—a move the Israelis claimed was further proof the regime seeks nuclear weapons. One of [Obama's] top Democratic allies is leading the charge for Congress to pass sanctions legislation, despite [Obama's] pleas to stand down. Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ), chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, tells Fox the Iranians “are showing their true intentions. ...If you're talking about producing more advanced centrifuges that are only used to enrich uranium at a quicker rate... the only purposes of that and the only reason you won't give us access to [a military research facility] is because you're really not thinking about nuclear power for domestic energy—you're thinking about nuclear power for nuclear weapons.” [52960, 52976, 52977, 52984]

WashingtonTimes.com reports, “Next month, the Missouri Senate will consider a bill which would effectively cripple the implementation of the Affordable Care Act within the state. Following the lead of South Carolina, where lawmakers are fast-tracking House Bill 3101 in 2014, and Georgia, where HB707 was recently introduced by Rep. Jason Spencer, Missouri State Senator John T. Lamping (R-24) pre-filed Senate Bill 546 (SB546) to update the Health Care Freedom Act passed by Missouri voters in 2010. It passed that year with more than 70% support. SB546 would ban Missouri from taking any action that would ‘compel, directly or indirectly, any person, employer, or health care provider to participate in any health care system.’ That means the state would be banned by law from operating a health care exchange for the federal government. The bill also proposes suspending the licenses of insurers who accept federal subsidies which result in the ‘imposition of penalties contrary to the public policy’ set forth in the legislation. Since it is unlikely that any insurer would then accept a subsidy, not a single employer in the state could be hit with the employer-mandate penalties those subsidies trigger. ...Fox News Senior Judicial Analyst Judge Andrew Napolitano note[s] that such actions [are] not just legal, but effective. ‘If enough states do this, it will gut Obamacare because the federal government doesn't have the resources ...to go into each of the states if they start refusing.’ ...Based on the long-standing principle known as the anti-commandeering doctrine, the legislation is on strong legal grounds. In four major cases from 1842 to 2012, the Supreme Court has consistently held that the federal government cannot ‘commandeer’ states, requiring them to enforce or expend resources to participate in federal law or regulatory programs.” [52973, 52986]

On *Special Report*, Charles Krauthammer reacts to the news from Iran: “The only surprising thing here is that the Iranians are so confident about how supine Obama is on this that they stick a finger in his eye and announce it publicly. There is nothing in the agreement that stops the Iranians from enriching more uranium and producing the machines that enrich the uranium. That was the problem at the beginning. That's what made the agreement a farce at the start. Unless you go after the uranium enrichment, unless you curtail or destroy the machines that enrich the uranium, you have done nothing to stop the progress of Iran.” [52961]

On December 28 *The New York Times*' David Kirkpatrick makes the astounding claim that there is “no evidence that Al Qaeda or other international terrorist groups had any role in the assault [in Benghazi on September 11, 2012]. The attack was led, instead, by

fighters who had benefited directly from NATO's extensive air power and logistics support during the uprising against Colonel Qaddafi. And contrary to claims by some members of Congress, it was fueled in large part by anger at an American-made video denigrating Islam. ...Fifteen months after [Ambassador Christopher] Stevens's death, the question of responsibility remains a searing issue in Washington, framed by two contradictory story lines. One has it that the video, which was posted on YouTube, inspired spontaneous street protests that got out of hand. This version, based on early intelligence reports, was initially offered publicly by Susan E. Rice, who is now Mr. Obama's national security adviser. The other, favored by Republicans, holds that Mr. Stevens died in a carefully planned assault by Al Qaeda to mark the anniversary of its strike on the United States 11 years before. Republicans have accused the Obama administration of covering up evidence of Al Qaeda's role to avoid undermining [Obama's] claim that the group has been decimated, in part because of the raid that killed Osama bin Laden." (The *Times* is clearly going up against reality in an effort to defend Obama and eliminate Benghazi as an issue for Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential run. Former senior CIA analyst Fred Fleitz tells Fox News, "I thought it was a politicized article. ...I read this report and I was really incredulous. It seems to be an effort to revive this discredited theory that the anti-Islam video was behind it.") In defending Obama and Clinton, Kirkpatrick essentially makes the case that the Obama administration only considers al-Qaeda a threat to the United States and believes the remaining terrorists are not terrorists at all—but simply misguided Muslims who have misinterpreted Islam and can be "won over." Some might consider that belief more dangerous than the fact that Obama and Clinton lied about Benghazi. *If they really believe radical Islamists can be reasoned with or appeased, Americans should arguably be very worried.* [52972, 52989, 52990, 52992, 52993, 52996, 53022, 53023, 53025]

DailyCaller.com reports, "The Democratic National Committee (DNC) sent out a paranoid email Saturday evening urging supporters to vote for Democrats so that Republicans can't impeach ...Obama. The email, subject line 'Impeachment,' was sent to Obama for America supporters, imploring them to contribute to the DNC's 2014 efforts. ...The DNC email discussed the 'I-Word' and said that 'Republicans are actually excited about the idea.' 'Show these Republicans that they are way, way off-base, and give ...Obama a Congress that has his back,' according to the DNC email [sic], noting that Democrats need to win 17 GOP House seats to reclaim a majority." (Whether the email is a sign of desperation or just a good use of scare tactics to garner campaign cash is not known. Even if House Republicans were to vote to impeach Obama, there would not be 67 votes in the Senate to convict. The DNC email may result in some increased campaign contributions, but it may also remind people that Obama has violated the Constitution and deserves impeachment.) [52974, 52988, 52991, 53042]

At Townhall.com Sarah Jean Seman notes that ObamaCare includes a requirement that "vending machine operator[s] shall provide a sign in close proximity to each article of food or the selection button that includes a clear and conspicuous statement disclosing the number of calories contained in the article." The cost of the regulation to each of the 10,800 vending machine companies—many of which are small businesses with few employees—will be about \$2,200 per year. (ObamaCare is essentially requiring that

vending companies post “do not buy our product” labels on their machines. Every time a product is switched in a machine, the company will have to change the label.) [52985]

Reuters reports, “The serenity of ...Obama’s Hawaiian vacation was rattled a little on Saturday when demonstrators aired grievances against unmanned aircraft and other issues in a small protest zone near the first family’s upscale rented house. Returning from an early morning gym visit at nearby Marine Corps Base Hawaii, Obama’s motorcade passed a few dozen protesters holding signs with slogans including ‘Drones: Unethical and Illegal,’ ‘U.S. Bases Out’ and ‘Close Guantanamo Now.’ Others expressed their opposition to genetically modified foods. ...On Friday evening, as many as 27 protesters turned out to demonstrate against the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade pact being negotiated between the United States and several Asian and South American countries. Opponents of TPP say the agreement is being written to benefit large multinational corporations.” [52995]

On December 29 White House officials announce that only 1.1 million Americans have enrolled in ObamaCare—far short of the 3.3 million that had been anticipated by December 31. Meanwhile, approximately six million Americans have had their health insurance policies canceled because of ObamaCare. Despite—or because of—ObamaCare, the year will end with fewer Americans insured than at the start of the year. (The enrollment count was reportedly about 900,000 as of December 22. How many of the 1.1 million have actually paid for coverage is not known, nor are the demographics of those who enrolled. They may primarily be older and sicker Americans, and data from state exchanges suggests that may be the case.) Obama comments, “The basic structure of that law is working despite all the problems—despite the website problems, despite the messaging problems.” (Obama is correct only if the law’s “basic structure” involves millions of people losing their health insurance.) [52987, 53004, 53008, 53012, 53017, 53043]

NoBarack08’s web log notes that Obama’s various lies about his health care legislation place him in violation of U.S. Code Title 18, Part I, Chapter 47, Section 1035, FALSE STATEMENTS RELATING TO HEALTH CARE MATTERS, which states, “(a) Whoever, in any matter involving a health care benefit program, knowingly and willfully— (1) falsifies, conceals, or covers up by any trick, scheme, or device a material fact; or (2) makes any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or representations, or makes or uses any materially false writing or document knowing the same to contain any materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent statement or entry, in connection with the delivery of or payment for health care benefits, items, or services, shall be fined under this title or imprisoned not more than 5 years, or both...” (“If you like your doctor, you will be able to keep your doctor. Period. If you like your health care plan, you will be able to keep your health care plan. Period. No one will take it away. No matter what.”—Barack Obama) [54759]

On *Meet the Press*, Andrea Mitchell says of the Benghazi coverup, “I think you can parse the words—it’s very clear and it was clear from the review board’s report that the State Department itself had commissioned—that review board led by [Admiral] Mike Mullen

and Ambassador Pickering said there was a terrorist attack so the question is how much were they motivated by or sparked by the video, and how much was it purely terrorism, anti-U.S. and anti-western terrorism, showing again how vulnerable the consulate was. I think part of the problem with Susan Rice's approach, and in her defense, the State Department's approach as well, in those first few days everybody was trying to cover up, appropriately they thought, the fact this was a CIA outpost. This was barely a diplomatic mission, it was a cover for an outpost to try to disarm the very militias that ended up attacking." [52997]

Congressman Darrell Issa (R-CA), chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, also appears on *Meet the Press*, where he states, "Al-Qaeda is not decimated, and there was a group there that was involved that is linked to al Qaeda. ... What I have claimed, and rightfully so, is Ambassador [Christopher] Stevens and others alerted well in advance that they had a security threat... On the day that... he was killed, he said it was a question of when, not if, there would be an attack. So, we had warning beforehand, and instead of increasing security, reduced security. During the attack, eight and a half hours, we didn't launch so much as one F-16. There's [sic] a lot of questions about, not what the military capability is today, which has been improved, but what the military capability and response... And then lastly, there was this clear attempt, and Andrea [Mitchell] said it very well, there was an attempt to put a bright spot—and maybe it was to cover up CIA activities—but they went out on five [television] stations and told the story that was, at best, a coverup for CIA, and at worst, something that cast away this idea that there was a real terrorist operation in Benghazi." [53024, 53031]

IndependentFilmNewsandMedia.com reports, "CBS News has released a clip of an interview by Steve Kroft of *60 Minutes* on Sep. 12 [2012] with ...Obama that indicates Obama knew the assault on the U.S. consulate in Benghazi, Libya was a premeditated terror attack—and suggests the White House later deceived the public by blaming protests against an anti-Islam video. CBS chose not to air the clip for over a month—but did air Obama's attack on Romney that same night. Obama told Kroft that the attack in Benghazi was different from the violent protest at the U.S. embassy in Cairo: 'You're right that this is not a situation that was exactly the same as what happened in Egypt, and my suspicion is, is that there are folks involved in this who were looking to target Americans from the start.' Obama's remarks pointed towards a premeditated attack, in contrast to the ["blame it on a YouTube video"] story the White House went on to tell for weeks." [53019]

On *Face the Nation*, veteran journalist Bob Woodward says, "We look now at what's going on with all the NSA, wiretapping, and people say, 'Well, they didn't know,' or 'They did know,' uh, it clearly is much more extensive than people expected. You connect this with the drone strikes in Pakistan and Yemen, which is our government conducting regular assassinations by air. You know, what's going on here? Who is in control of it, and who can find out, and, you know, I, I, I think, uh, it's in The New York Times this morning that there is, uh, a review that Susan Rice, the National Security Advisor for Obama, has done on Mideast policy. They need to review this secret world

and its power in their government because you run into this rat's nest of concealment and lies time and time again..." [52999]

On *Fox News Sunday*, Congressman Mike Rogers (R-MI), chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, disputes the claim by *The New York Times* that al-Qaeda had nothing to do with the Benghazi attack. Rogers says, "There was some level of pre-planning. We know that. There was aspiration to conduct an attack by al-Qaeda and their affiliates in Libya. We know that. The individuals on the ground talked about a planned tactical movement on the compound even. ... That tells me they didn't talk to people on the ground who were doing the fighting, shooting and the intelligence-gathering." (The *Times* noted that the group al-Shariah was involved in the attack, but neglected to mention that al-Shariah is a part of the al-Qaeda network.) [52996, 52998, 53038]

At PJMedia.com Roger Kimball writes, "They never give up at the *New York Times*. If at first they don't succeed in twisting the truth to fit the Newspeak fit to print, it's try, try again. Their latest exercise in mendacity is 'A Deadly Mix in Benghazi,' an elaborate essay that substitutes a plethora of irrelevant details and animated graphics for historical truth. The long essay takes up an event which, in a rational world, would have led the to resignation of former Secretary of State Hilary Clinton and the impeachment of ... Obama. ... The cataract of misinformation that gushed out of the Obama administration about that event, a mephitic current of lies and half truths streaming from the cloaca maxima in Washington, D.C., was stunning even by the low standards of 'the most transparent administration in history.' ... The administration's line was that the savage ambush that left four Americans dead was part of a 'spontaneous uprising' by adherents of the Religion of Peace, goaded to murderous fury because of a hitherto obscure internet video that portrays Mohammed as a corrupt sexual predator. ... How are we to understand the *Times's* latest entry into the contest to rewrite history for ideological fun and profit? My own sense is that it has less to do with salvaging ... Obama's tattered reputation—he is well on his way to winning the prize for the least competent and most destructive [Oval Office occupant] in the history of the republic. No, Barack Obama is yesterday's news, and unless and until he is impeached and removed from office he will be pretty much forgotten by purveyors of all the Newspeak fit to print. They have their eyes on another player in the Benghazi scandal, namely Hilary Clinton. If anyone emerged from that shameful episode more discredited than Barack Obama, it was Ms. Clinton. But time is passing fast, and there is a lot of remedial work to do if Hilary Clinton is to be suitably repackaged as the Democratic candidate for president. That ambition, I believe, stands behind this elaborate, breathtaking exercise in journalistic mendacity." [53029]

Reuters reports, "The White House is coming under pressure from some of its closest allies on healthcare reform to name a chief executive to run its federal health insurance marketplace and allay the concerns of insurers after the rocky rollout of Obamacare. Advocates have been quietly pushing the idea of a CEO who would set marketplace rules, coordinate with insurers and state regulators on the health plans offered for sale, supervise enrollment campaigns and oversee technology, according to several sources familiar with discussions between advocates and the Obama administration. Supporters of the idea say it could help regain the trust of insurers and others whose confidence in

the healthcare overhaul has been shaken by the technological woes that crippled the federal HealthCare.gov insurance shopping website and the flurry of sometimes-confusing administration rule changes that followed. ...The White House is not embracing the idea of creating a CEO, administration officials said. 'This isn't happening. It's not being considered,' a senior administration official told Reuters." [53000]

NBCNews.com reports that employees of Extreme Dodge, in Lansing, Michigan, have been told "the health insurance plan that the auto dealership had provided its workers was canceled because it doesn't comply with the Affordable Care Act, better known as Obamacare. Rather than officially sponsor a new policy, the company—voted one of the 100 best car dealerships to work for in the country last year—will instead provide its employees with \$2,400 apiece to buy their own insurance, or to pocket and pay the new federal penalty if they elect to go without it. That's a little bit more than the company says it spent on health insurance this year. Dealership owner Wesley Lutz said his decision to go in a new direction was driven by the fact that health insurance is 'incredibly expensive' and getting more so. He says he needs to be able to control his future costs. 'As a business owner, we have to be viable first and then provide services,' he said. Lutz is not required to provide health insurance to workers, but has done so for 35 years. By not sponsoring a company plan, Lutz also enables workers to shop around and see if they do better buying insurance through the health insurance exchanges established by the new law, where some qualify for subsidies, or through buying a new group plan recommended by the company." (A few of the lowest paid workers at the dealer will come out ahead, as they are eligible for taxpayer-funded ObamaCare subsidies. Most employees, however, will end up paying more for insurance—and they will also face higher deductibles and out-of-pocket expense limits. Salesman Neal Campbell, who will go from paying \$77 per week to \$221 per week for coverage, says, "That's a huge part of the budget. We feel betrayed, lied to, and we're pissed off.") [53046, 53059]

The Wall Street Journal reports that thousands of Americans have been scrambling to get medical tests and procedures performed in the final days of 2013—while they still have health insurance or to avoid the higher deductibles and out-of-pocket expense limits in their 2014 ObamaCare coverage and see doctors that may no longer be in their networks after the new year begins. [53048, 53055]

The *Daily Mail* reports, "The FBI is investigating a 'military-style' attack on a California electric power facility earlier this year. The April 16 attack saw as many as two gunmen storm the PG&E Metcalf substation after severing phone service and fire several dozen rounds at transformers. Federal officials took over the investigation from local law enforcement on fears it was linked to the Boston marathon bombing only a day earlier, but those fears appear to have subsided. At least one person, maybe two, went down multiple manholes at the facility in a San Jose suburb and cut fiber cables leading to the substation, according to Foreign Policy, which detailed the well-planned attack. This knocked out 911 and landline service to the substation, as well as cell phone service to the surrounding area. PG&E employees had no means to call for help when, at 1am, as

many as two gunmen began their attack. More than 100 rounds were fired from high-powered rifles at many transformers—10 were damaged in one area and three transformer banks in another, a PG&E spokesperson told the site. Cooling oil leaking from at least one transformer bank caused transformers to overheat and shut down. This led officials to warn locals to conserve energy, but no major power outages occurred. No major damage or injuries were sustained either, but a stalled local investigation led the feds to take over the case. The FBI was initially worried that the attack was somehow linked to the April 15 Boston Marathon bombing, but further investigation showed it to likely be an isolated local event, an agency spokesperson told Foreign Policy. A PG&E official disagreed with that assertion, and told Foreign Policy the attack was ‘not amateurs taking potshots... this was a dress rehearsal.’” [53049, 53050, 53051]

At ConservativeInfidel.com William Wallace writes, “Retired Navy Seal Commander Ryan Zinke... says that the Special Operations Assault on ...Obama has just begun. Last week it seemed like your typical week in the saga of ...Obama accusing Republicans of unfairly criticizing him over the Benghazi situation and leaked classified information. Trouble is, it wasn’t the pesky Republicans he should have been blaming for the attack on his [administration]. ...Ryan Zinke is a retired Navy Seal Commander. He wasn’t the commander of just any Seal Team, he was the commander of Seal Team Six. He is now a Montana State Senator and has launched his own personal finances at starting the new Super Pac, Special Operations OPSEC Education Fund Inc. Along with the now fired Generals that say they are watching ...Obama, his new organization is doing more than saying that. ...Obama leaked National Security information and unfairly took credit for killing Osama Bin Laden, they intend to prove it. In a fired up interview with Politicker, Mr. Zinke spoke rather candidly about the feelings of many former military and Special Operations members. ‘There’s [sic] a number of groups out there. I think what it demonstrates is, there’s a lot of anger, there’s a lot of concern among the former military community.’ He stated that a lot of the anger stemmed from a lot of White House leaks of classified information that got people killed and a television add by former President William J. Clinton that questioned if Mitt Romney would have made the call to get Bin Laden. He said it has snow balled from there.” [53001, 53002]

“‘I think there is huge concern that the administration is using and continues to leak class[ified] documents for less than—well, for political gain,’ said Mr. Zinke. ‘I think when the commercial came out with President Clinton and ...Obama, and they talked about the political ramifications of failure, they didn’t talk about the families that would be left without a father. They talked about political consequences—that was a bridge too far.’ He also criticized the leaking of classified information to make the film Zero Dark 30. ‘There’s a lot of reasons you can release classified information, a lot of justifiable reasons, but making a movie for political gain isn’t one of them,’ Mr. Zinke said. According to Mr. Zinke, there are currently at least four other anti-Obama groups made up of former elite military operatives: Special Operations Speaks, Veterans for a Strong America, Special Operations OPSEC Education Fund Inc. and his group, Special Operations for America. He said he expects that number to climb. Because active-duty soldiers are barred from engaging in political activity, Mr. Zinke believes it is especially important for retired military personnel to speak up. ‘It’s really incumbent upon the

retired guys to articulate a message. ... We are making a complete argument of why the administration's actions and policies are not in the best interests of national defense and national security,' said Mr. Zinke. Special Operations for America's upcoming plans include a television commercial. Mr. Zinke said the ad would be 'edgy,' but wouldn't be 'a personal attack.' 'I don't stoop to personal attacks,' he said. 'You know, I'm not from Chicago. In Montana, we do things a little differently.' Special Operations movie about leaking classified information from this administration for personal gain has had over 53 million views. You can see it here." [53001, 53002]

Meanwhile. WND.com reports that retired Major General Paul E. Vallely has "declared it's time for millions of Americans to 'stand up' to a federal government that is 'conducting treason ... violating the Constitution, violating our laws.' He's calling for marches, a legislative vote of 'no confidence' in ... Obama and congressional leaders, even citizen arrests—drawing inspiration from the 33 million Egyptians who stood up to their government and removed Muslim Brotherhood officials from office. Now Vallely tells WND the radio interview in which he called for a new American uprising has struck a note with the millions of modern tea partiers who are looking for unifying leadership. 'It's been all over Facebook, a number of websites, radio shows calling me for interviews,' Vallely said. 'And the response I've received has been 99-percent positive. I think the biggest thing is that someone is finally standing up to lead,' he explained. 'We need someone to lead; we need a new George Washington. ... It's fallen upon senior, retired military to take stands against the overreach and tyranny of a corrupt government. I think for people, they respect what the military has gone through. Senior military guys are very well educated, they've gone to the right schools, gone to combat for the most part, have had to manage enormous budgets, were involved in major financial decisions and are heavily steeped in foreign policy and national security. No other group, no CEO that has that kind of background. Obviously our politicians don't have that background. They have legislation experience, not leadership experience. ... We like to do things by the Constitution, but our forefathers never anticipated we'd be in a place where we have so many corrupt leaders, impeachment wouldn't happen. We had a demand of resignation with Nixon, and he resigned, so the power of the people can be heard.'" [53003]

With the coming retirement of Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV), Republicans have an opportunity to gain that Senate seat—a possibility even *The New York Times* reluctantly admits. The *Times* writes, "An accelerating rightward tilt here [in West Virginia] was reflected recently in an awkward two-step by the Democratic nominee for an open seat, Natalie Tennant, as she distanced herself from the White House after a fund-raising trip to New York. In a Sheraton ballroom, Ms. Tennant, West Virginia's secretary of state, listened to Michelle Obama urge donors to write 'a big old fat check' to her and other women running for the Senate. But back home, where ... Obama is deeply unpopular, Ms. Tennant's campaign quickly sought to wriggle out of the embrace of the White House, insisting to the local news media that 'what the first lady said is not an endorsement.' Mr. Obama lost all 55 of West Virginia's counties in 2012 despite a two-to-one registration edge for Democrats, who are increasingly estranged from the national party over issues like guns, immigration and environmental regulations. 'I think there's a dam ready to break here,' said Chris Hansen, the campaign manager for Ms. Tennant's opponent,

Shelley Moore Capito, a Republican congresswoman in her seventh term. ...In an interview, Ms. Tennant even seemed to downgrade [Obama's] title. 'I don't answer to Senator Obama,' she said. 'I answer to the people of West Virginia.' (A spokeswoman later said that was an unintentional slip of the tongue.) ...Ms. Tennant denounced [Obama's] order to the Environmental Protection Agency in June to limit carbon dioxide pollution from coal-fired power plants. 'I think he has not fairly looked at what's taking place with West Virginia,' she said. 'A policy like that hurts jobs for the people of this state.' She dodged when asked whether she would have voted for [Obama's] health care law. 'If I were in office in 2010, I certainly would have brought West Virginia values to it,' Ms. Tennant said. She would not say whether she would have voted yes or no." [53005]

Obama plays golf—for the fifth time since his vacation in Hawaii started. His golf partners include Eric Whitaker, Martin Nesbitt, Marvin Nicholson, Mike Ramos, and Bobby Titcomb. (Nesbitt, chairman of the Chicago Housing Authority and pal of Valerie "slum lord" Jarrett, was treasurer of Obama's campaign. As noted earlier in this *Timeline*, Whitaker's e-mails and other records have been subpoenaed in connection with his role as former head of the Illinois Department of Health; Obama got him the job and later, as executive vice-president at the University of Chicago Hospitals, Whitaker increased Michelle Obama's salary from \$121,900 to \$316,962. Ramos and Titcomb were classmates of Obama at Punahou School in Honolulu. As noted previously in this *Timeline*, Titcomb was arrested in Hawaii on April 4, 2011 for soliciting a prostitute. Titcomb reportedly never graduated from Punahou, purportedly having been expelled. By his own admission, Obama experimented with drugs at Punahou and let his grades slip, yet he was not expelled. One Hawaii resident whose son also attended Punahou has commented, "Titcomb lives on the North Shore. On one occasion when Obama visited here, he stayed a few houses from us. The last time it was four or five blocks. However, on both occasions Obama had a 20-car motorcade that went from here to the North Shore to visit this guy Titcomb at his house. Now how much did that cost? He could have given Titcomb \$10.00 for gas to come down here. The question for me is, 'Who was your dealer?' Obama said that he used marijuana and cocaine in high school. Now, cocaine is pretty serious. If he used cocaine, who was his dealer? I know from that friend in the same grade as Titcomb that Titcomb was expelled. He was definitely expelled. I just spoke to the friend last night. The other information I got about him was from a fellow who is older. Titcomb lived on a street near Punahou School, and my friend here was like a neighbor, so he knew him when he was a little kid. He said, 'Anything to get in trouble, that was him: Titcomb. He always got in trouble.' He was the one who told me that Titcomb was expelled for selling drugs, although that is not confirmed." The unstated and unproven implication is that Titcomb was Obama's drug supplier at Punahou School.) [20, 23, 25, 26, 28, 188, 189, 191, 194, 245, 332, 353, 549, 664, 1185, 13581, 13582, 13583, 13584, 13585, 19439, 19458, 20294, 53021]

FoxNews.com reports, "A German magazine, citing internal documents, claims the NSA's hacking unit uses James Bond-style spy gear to obtain data, including intercepting computer deliveries and outfitting them with espionage software. Der Spiegel's revelations relate to a division of the NSA known as Tailored Access Operations, or

TAO, which is painted as an elite team of hackers specializing in stealing data from the toughest of targets. Citing the internal documents, the magazine said Sunday that TAO's mission was 'Getting the ungettable,' and quoted an unnamed intelligence official as saying that TAO had gathered 'some of the most significant intelligence our country has ever seen. During the middle part of the last decade, the special unit succeeded in gaining access to 258 targets in 89 countries—nearly everywhere in the world,' the report said. 'In 2010, it conducted 279 operations worldwide.'" [53006, 53084]

DailyCaller.com reports, "...Obama's nominee to head the Department of Justice's (DOJ) Civil Rights Division led the group that represents convicted cop killer Mumia Abu-Jamal. Debo Adebile, who awaits Senate confirmation to become assistant attorney general for civil rights in [Attorney General] Eric Holder's DOJ, would bring a radical record on racial issues to his new job, which is responsible for enforcing federal discrimination statutes. ...Abu-Jamal, a former member of the Black Panther Party, was convicted for the December 1981 murder of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner, stemming from a shootout that resulted after Abu-Jamal approached Faulkner, who had pulled over Abu-Jamal's younger brother at a traffic stop." (Adebile is a former *Sesame Street* actor, which the mainstream media eagerly points out in stories about his nomination—while they downplay or ignore completely his support for a cop killer.) [53015, 53268, 53291, 53297, 53308]

The Dallas Morning News reports that Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) has hired lawyers to officially renounce his Canadian citizenship and expects the process to be completed in 2014. According to Newsmax.com, "Cruz says he was not aware of his dual citizenship until it was brought to his attention by the newspaper earlier this year. Cruz's parents were living in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, when he was born on Dec. 22, 1970. Though his mother was an American citizen and his father a Cuban citizen at the time, Cruz became an automatic Canadian citizen just by being born in that country. The United States has the same policy. But Cruz was also born an American citizen since at least one of his parents, in this case his mother, was an American citizen. Cruz's father has since become a naturalized American. The Cruz family moved to the United States when Ted was 4 years old." Newsmax *incorrectly* states, "The dual citizenship doesn't disqualify Cruz for elected office, including the presidency, but many think his circumstances could recall the 'birther' movement, in which some conservative foes of ...Obama challenged his qualifications because they believe he was not born in the United States." (As readers of this *Timeline* understand, the issue is not Obama's birthplace. Even if he was born in Hawaii, he is not a natural born citizen—which requires birth on U.S. soil *and* birth to two U.S. citizen parents. Emerich de Vattel's *The Law of Nations*, which the Founding Fathers studied, defined natural born citizen as one who is "born in a country of parents who are citizens." Obama cannot legally serve as president. Nor can Cruz, Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal, or Senator Marco Rubio (R-FL). They may all be U.S. citizens, but they are *not* natural born citizens—based on the well understood understanding of the term when the U.S. Constitution was written and ratified. It is worth noting that there were more than a few unsuccessful attempts by Democrats in Congress between 2003 and 2005 to change the presidential eligibility requirements to remove the "natural born citizen" requirement.) [53018, 53054, 54086, 54143]

At PJMedia.com Victor Davis Hanson writes, “[I]n Obama’s case, two character traits made him especially aggravating this year. Both explain why *vero possumus* and hope and change have descended to ‘you can keep your plan, period.’ One, Obama blames everything bad on everyone else, and takes credit for a few good things that he had nothing to do with. He reminds me of a losing Little League coach who blamed the lights, fans, and umpire for his last-place standing, only to brag about his own genius after inserting a 12 year old who hit a freak homer to win his only game. ...The second aggravating habit of [Obama] is to calmly talk nonsense, from the trivial to the profound. In the hip cool world of the ex-*Harvard Law Review* editor, it is legal not to enforce the laws. Plead to your frustrated constituencies who want more stuff right now that you are not quite a dictator, king, or autocrat—and then you can do your best to act like one. ...On any given day, Obama says things that are not just untrue but also cannot be by any stretch possible. In other words, when he is not intentionally deceiving, he is simply clueless. If he tomorrow were to assert that Iran dare not use chemical weapons, that it is time for Assad to go, that Putin better start treating gays with respect, that in 2014 you really can keep you own doctor and health plan, that Guantanamo is to be closed, that Obamacare is going to save you money and provide better care, that there will be no lobbyists or revolving doors in his administration, would we laugh or cry? One open mic, two bows, three apologies, four red lines, five deadlines, six ‘period!’s, and he might have gotten by. But seven, eight...? Enough already.” [53027]

UTSanDiego.com reports, “Covered California projects it will lose \$78 million in the 2015-16 budget, and it is not clear how the health exchange plans to close that gap and become financially self-sustaining once federal grants run dry. While the exchange says that it will increase revenue and trim expenses to bring its operating budget into balance, its budget documents make no definitive statements about how, exactly, it will reach financial equilibrium.” [53160]

On December 30 the interest rate on 10-year Treasury Notes stands at 2.8 percent. Townhall.com’s John Ransom writes, “This is significant because it means that the bond market either thinks the economy is gaining steam or it means bonds are predicting inflation. Bond rates tend to go up as the market gains steam in order to contain inflation. In either case, the stock market looks to be moving higher short term. ...Bonds look to me like they are betting on inflation. But inflation isn’t the only thing that stands in the way of the economy and the stock market. In 2014, many of the headwind provisions of Obamacare will ramp up again. Given the type of dislocation that Obamacare has already had on the economy, there are some predicting 2014 to be worse as the more strenuous parts of Obamacare are contemplated, if not fully enacted. And despite the lame duck status of Obama, I think that any meaningful changes to Obamacare—including even repeal, are largely up to [him]. He seems however content to go down with the SS Obamacare, taking both women and children with him. ...Look for Hillary to ride in to the mid-terms on her white horse proposing some final solution for Obamacare (pun intended) that Mitch McConnell, John McCain and John Boehner will gush over publicly in order to poke the eye of Tea Party conservatives. 2014 looks to be a watershed year for

the country politically, economically and historically. The decision will be left in the hands of the voters. Ouch. And at this point, it shouldn't be that close." [53007]

Michelle Snyder, the chief operating engineer who oversaw the development of Healthcare.gov at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, announces her retirement. (Snyder will receive a generous, taxpayer-funded pension.) [53011, 53012, 53056]

NYPost.com reports, "The personal e-mail account of a State Department whistleblower was hacked, and four years worth of messages—some detailing alleged wrongdoing at the agency—were deleted, The Post has learned. The computer attack targeted the Gmail account of Diplomatic Security Service criminal investigator Richard Higbie, his lawyer, Cary Schulman, confirmed. 'They took all of his e-mails and then they deleted them all,' said Schulman. He said that he could not prove who was responsible for the hack job, but said the attack was 'sophisticated' and called the targeting of Higbie 'alarming.' 'Obviously, somebody is not happy with something he's doing and wanted to get that information and also cause him an inability in the future to have ready access to that,' Schulman said. The e-mails included evidence about misconduct by top officials at the department, communications with other potential whistleblowers there, and correspondence with members of Congress who are investigating the allegations, Schulman said. They also include correspondence between Higbie and Schulman about legal strategy, the lawyer said." (According to ExposeObama.com, "On June 29, 2013, in what is reminiscent of Nixon's plumbers, [attorney Schulman's] office was broken into" and "documents and computers were stolen" and the theft was "more than likely ordered by Hillary Clinton's minions. ...If you think Barack Obama" [is] corrupt... you ain't seen nothing yet. Hillary Clinton will make Barack Obama look like a choir boy.") [53020, 53034, 53151, 53162]

ON CNBC's *Squawk Box*, former Vermont governor Howard Dean says ObamaCare's "individual mandate was not necessary and it's probably a big political thing, and that is going to hurt the Democrats because people don't like to be told what to do by the government no matter what party they're in. But the truth is, that wasn't necessary, and the insurance companies like it because it does bring young, healthy people who aren't likely to get sick into the system. ...[T]he individual mandate is really not that necessary and the actual data does not lead to the conclusion that you're going to have huge cost overruns for the insurance companies. ...I think there are going to be some more bumps, but I do think ultimately this [ObamaCare] is going to get better, not worse. We're not out of the woods, but I think by March we will be and a lot more people will have insurance." [53026]

Thomas Joscelyn, senior fellow of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, appears on Wall Street Journal Live and comments on *The New York Times*' "defend Hillary Clinton at all costs" article on Benghazi: "I thought it was dying down as an issue and here we are talking about it again, so I think it has backfired." [53061, 53119]

Businesses brace for increases in the minimum wage planned by various city and state governments. According to FoxNews.com, “On Jan. 1, an estimated 1,600 hotel and transportation workers in SeaTac, Wash., will see their pay jump to \$15 an hour, a 60 percent increase from the state’s \$9.32 minimum wage. While many workers look forward to the higher pay, employers are looking for ways to absorb the big increase in labor costs. Some plan on eliminating jobs. ‘We’re going to be looking at making some serious cuts,’ said Cedarbrook Lodge General Manager Scott Ostrander. ‘We’re going to be looking at reducing employee hours, reducing benefits and eliminating some positions.’ ...The [increase] has also caused Han Kim—who runs Hotel Concepts, a company that owns and manages 11 hotels in Washington state—to shelve plans to build a hotel in SeaTac. The company already has three hotels in SeaTac, and Kim and a business partner were looking to build a fourth on land they own. ‘Uncertainty is bad for business, and right now we’re right in that area so we’re just putting everything on hold,’ Kim said.” [53041]

At TakiMag.com Jim Goad names “The 13 Most Annoying People of 2013.” The list includes Oprah Winfrey (“Failing to ever publicly acknowledge that she is astronomically fatter and richer in Evil Racist America than if her ample rump had been reared in Mother Africa, the wealthiest black woman in the history of black womanhood spent most of the year wheezing like a punctured accordion about how tough it is to be black. She possibly fabricated a tale of being snubbed by a Swiss clerk, falsely claimed that ‘millions’ of blacks had been lynched in America (the total was actually somewhere around 4,000), blamed criticism of Obama on white American racism, and suggested that the problem will only get better when white racists start dying en masse.”) Topping the list is Ethan “Pajama Boy” Krupp: “This defanged, deballed, hi-snark/lo-testosterone, curly-haired bespectacled beta geek snuggled up in red PJs as he blithely sips a mug of cocoa is easily the most objectionable human being to enter my field of consciousness over the past twelve months. A poster boy for the unspooling disaster known as Obamacare, Krupp is also emblematic of American culture’s systemic devaluation of all things manly. Doris Day had more male hormones than he does. I’ve seen baby guppies that could kick this kid’s ass. Ethan Krupp’s face is the most persuasive evidence I’ve ever seen that society would benefit if it were to open its mind once again to the virtues of bullying.” [53036]

Obama garners 16 percent of the votes in the annual Gallup poll “most admired man” survey—down from 30 percent in 2012. (It is worth noting that about 13 percent of the U.S. population is black.) Hillary Clinton gets 15 percent of the “most admired woman” vote. [53039, 53045]

DailyCaller.com reports, “Businesses near the White House were riddled with bullets in a two-block drive-by shooting this weekend, prompting a Secret Service investigation. Two of those bullets entered the window and hit the walls inside Brewood Engravers & Printers at 1701 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, just a block from the White House, in a shooting that occurred at approximately 2:30 AM early Saturday morning [sic]. The office building entrance, next door to the shop, also has a window boarded up. The Caribou Coffee at the corner of 17th and Pennsylvania, right across the street from the

White House—and normally, a large Secret Service presence—has a wall-length window boarded up. An employee inside Caribou confirmed that a shooting took out the store’s window. White House staffers have reportedly held meetings at that particular Caribou Coffee to avoid having to record their interactions in White House visitor logs.” [53044]

David D. Kirkpatrick, author of the *New York Times* article that absurdly claimed a YouTube video prompted the Benghazi attack and terrorists were not involved, sends a Twitter message to former diplomat Richard Grenell: “We had a reporter on the scene talking to the attackers during the attack—still invaluable.” (The attack took place on September 11, 2012 and the *Times* claims, *15 months later*, that it had a reporter on the scene. Kirkpatrick does not identify the reporter by name or provide any other information that might be helpful in explaining the discrepancies in the reporting of the attack.) [53100, 53113]

On *Special Report*, host John Roberts addresses syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer: “One final point, if I could, Charles. *New York Times* editorial editor Andrew Rosenthal defended the story [about the Benghazi being the result of the YouTube video] today in a blog saying this was about politics. He said, ‘the Republicans hope to tarnish Democratic candidates by making it seem as though Mr. Obama doesn’t take Al Qaeda seriously. They also want to throw mud at former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who they fear will run for president in 2016.’” Krauthammer responds, “I think he gave the game away by being defensive about this. He is making it quite obvious the reason that the *Times* invested all the effort and time in this and put it on the front page is precisely a way to protect the Democrats, to deflect the issue, to protect Hillary, who was exposed on this issue like almost no issue in her tenure in the administration. It is obviously a political move. But just one point on that State Department spokesperson. Saying it is not al-Qaeda because it isn’t ‘core’ al-Qaeda is absurd. It is like saying that if the Greek resistance in the Second World War launched an attack on a Nazi outpost, it wasn’t part of the Allied effort if they had not gotten a direct order from Churchill. Obviously these are elements in the struggle. They are all united in the sense, in their ideology and often in their links and that is all you have to know.” [53009, 53010]

On *On the Record*, Congressman Trey Gowdy (R-SC) excoriates *The New York Times* over its claim that the Benghazi attack was caused by a YouTube video. Gowdy tells guest host Dana Perino, “Well, first of all, Dana, I want to congratulate *The New York Times*—it only took 15 months for them to figure out how to spell Benghazi. So in another 15 months maybe their reporting will actually catch up with the truth. I’ll tell you two things they got wrong. Number one, the video was translated into Arabic in early September of 2012. ...What in the world explains the violence in Benghazi prior to the video being translated and released? Our consulate was attacked way before the video was released. The British Ambassador was almost assassinated way before the video was released. The International Red Cross was attacked twice in Benghazi, well before this video was ever released. So if the video is really the impetus for the violence, what in the world explains the violence prior to the release of the video? Secondly, with respect to al-Qaeda, whether it was al-Qaeda or a subsidiary, or a holding company, or a limited partnership, to quote Hillary Clinton, ‘What differences does it make?’ Who cares

whether or not it was al-Qaeda proper or a subsidiary? For Americans are dead, and it wasn't a spontaneous reaction to a video. It was planned." Gowdy notes that the *Times* did not mention the name Hillary Clinton even once in its article—as if she had nothing to do with it. [53047, 53061]

On December 31, with the media consistently reporting that the administration has been attempting to get 7 millions enrolled in ObamaCare by March 31, 2014 and so far has only 1.1 million to show for its efforts, White House advisor Phil Schiliro tells MSNBC the 7 millions target “came from the Congressional Budget Office and it had become an accepted number. There's no magic to the 7 million. What there is magic to is that in the month of December, a million Americans signed up for insurance. Not because they had to. They didn't face a penalty if they didn't. They signed up because they wanted insurance on Jan. 1.” (Schiliro is incorrect. According to DailtCaller.com, Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius stated in June 2013 that 7 million was a “realistic target.” Additionally, most Americans without health insurance in 2014 will be taxed for not having coverage.) Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC) finds a creative excuse for the low ObamaCare enrollment numbers: “[T]here are millions of people out there who think it was repealed.” [53016, 53057, 53058]

Politico reports, “Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor late Tuesday [December 31] blocked the implementation of portions of the Affordable Care Act that would have forced some religion-affiliated organizations to provide health insurance for employees that includes birth control... The justice acted on a request from an order of Catholic nuns in Colorado, whose request for a stay had been denied by the lower courts. She gave the government until Friday morning to respond.” (The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit also issues an injunction.) At HotAir.com Ed Morrissey comments, “It's not *much* of an injunction, but it's enough to put a stop to its enforcement for a couple of days, at least. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, a Barack Obama appointee to the high court, issued the order just hours before the mandate would have gone into effect.” [53070, 53072, 53085, 53111, 53144, 53153, 53219]

Famed attorney Alan Dershowitz later remarks on *The Steve Malzberg Show*, “The lawyers picked a brilliant, brilliant case to bring in front of Justice Sotomayor... What could be more sympathetic to anybody, whether you're Catholic or not Catholic? Justice Sotomayor grew up basically in the shadow of that kind of teaching—and these are nuns, who say they can't violate their own religious principles. ...There are two principles that are clear in American law. Number one is that you don't make people violate their religious principles unless it's [sic; there is] a very, very, very, very strong and compelling reason for it. Number two: You don't give people a free ride [if] there's room for compromise. ...This is a relatively small part, and the health bill would have done fine if it didn't cover this kind of thing and required people to insure for it themselves. But they decided to go all the way—and inevitably there's going to be religious conflict, and the Supreme Court is there to resolve these religious conflicts. There's not a single Protestant on the Supreme Court. [There are six Catholics and three Jews]. There are going to be a lot of people on that court who are sympathetic to religious views, and so it's not easy to predict how the case will come out—but it's an important case.” [53153]

Meanwhile, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit grants an injunction allowing the organization Priests for Life to ignore the ObamaCare contraception mandate while its appeal is being heard. LifeNews.com reports, “Father Frank Pavone, National Director of Priests for Life, said he is grateful his organization is free, temporarily at least, from having to comply with the unjust mandate or face steep fines by failing to comply when the ministry’s new insurance policy goes into effect on Wednesday [January 1]. ‘We would not have complied with this mandate in any case, as it promotes the very culture of death that Priests for Life works to combat. We are grateful for this temporary relief and look forward to a permanent injunction once the appeal is fully heard. Our lawsuit was among the very first ones in the country and the necessity to launch it shows that religious freedom in America is in grave danger. We have to take action.’ On Dec. 19, Priests for Life learned that the judge in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia had ruled in favor of the government. Within an hour Priests for Life filed for the emergency injunction that was granted today.” [53106, 53115]

At PJMedia.com Andrew C. McCarthy later points out, “The ruling holds that, at least for now, the government may not coerce religious believers, against the tenets of their faiths, to provide coverage for abortifacients and contraceptives. (The religious liberty position would not prevent those who want abortifacients and contraceptives—which are very affordable and easily accessible—from obtaining them; it would just prevent the government from forcing religious believers violate their beliefs by providing them.) Of course, as we’ve seen before, ...Obama often does not deem himself bound by such trifles as judicial rulings and congressional statutes, so we’ll have to see how the administration reacts.” Robert Muise, co-founder and senior counsel of the American Freedom Law Center (AFLC) states, “The circuit court’s order was nothing short of a Christmas blessing, coming literally at the 11th hour. Without this injunction, beginning on New Year’s Day the federal government would have forced Priests for Life to either violate its sincerely held religious beliefs or face crippling fines of \$100 per employee per day that it is not in compliance with Obama’s unconstitutional and unconscionable mandate.” David Yerushalmi, co-founder and Senior Counsel of AFLC, states, “We won this battle for religious freedom, but the war—and it is a fiercely fought war at every step along the way between the culture of life and the culture of death—continues. No doubt that this case will ultimately be decided by the U.S. Supreme Court.” [53115]

As usual, the year ends with the expiration of more than 50 tax breaks, leaving individuals and businesses wondering whether Congress will—also as usual—retroactively reinstate them. Rachele Bernstein, vice president and tax counsel for the National Retail Federation, tells Fox News, “It’s a totally ridiculous way to run our tax system. It’s impossible to plan when every year this happens, but yet business has gotten used to that.” Fox notes, “Some of the tax breaks are big, including billions in credits for companies that invest in research and development, generous exemptions for financial institutions doing business overseas, and several breaks that let businesses write off capital investments faster. Others are more obscure, the benefits targeted to film producers, race track owners, makers of electric motorcycles and teachers who buy classroom supplies with their own money.” [53040, 53067]

DailyCaller.com reports, “Fewer than 0.2 percent of the 11.7 million illegal aliens in the United States were deported in 2012 for violating immigration laws, according to data released by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency. ‘It is a drop in the bucket,’ Jessica Vaughan, director of policy studies at the Center for Immigration Studies, told The Daily Caller. ‘Relative to the [agency] resources and tools they have been given to do this job, it is a record low,’ said Vaughan. Government officials say they deported a total of 368,644 people. But almost two-thirds of those people, or 235,093, were caught at the border and promptly returned to their home countries. Only 133,551 resident illegals were picked up in the interior of the country and deported, the ICE report admitted. But 82 percent of those residents were deported for other offenses, ICE acknowledged. Those offenses include drunk driving, assault, robbery and drug possession. The remaining 18 percent adds up to only 20,000 illegals of the 11.7 million illegals believed to be living in the United States. That’s only one immigration-law deportation for every 585 illegals.” [53053]

NationalReview.com reports, “New York City’s Department of Investigation (DOI) has just shown how easy it is to commit voter fraud that is almost undetectable. Its undercover agents were able to obtain ballots for city elections a total of 61 times—39 times using the names of dead people, 14 times using the names of incarcerated felons, and eight times using the names of non-residents. On only two occasions, or about 3 percent of the time, were the agents stopped by polling-place officials. In one of the two cases, an investigator was stopped only because the felon he was trying to vote in the name of was the son of the election official he was dealing with. Ballot security in checking birth dates or signatures was so sloppy that young undercover agents were able to vote using the name of someone three times their age who had died. As the *New York Post* reports: ‘A 24-year female was able to access the ballot at a Manhattan poll site in November under the name of a deceased female who was born in 1923 and died in April 25, 2012—and would have been 89 on Election Day.’ All of the agents who got ballots wrote in the names of fictitious candidates so as not to actually influence election outcomes.” [53062]

After Muslim suicide bombers kill 34 people in two attacks over two days in Volgograd, Russia, President Vladimir Putin vows to fight the radical Islamists, saying in a televised address, “Dear friends, we bow our heads before the victims of cruel terrorist acts. I am certain that we will fiercely and consistently continue the fight against terrorists until their complete annihilation. . . . We’ll lead a confident, tough and consistent battle against the terrorists until their full elimination.” In the United States, State Department spokeswoman Marie Harf tells reporters, “In terms of security for [the winter Olympic games in] Sochi, U.S. citizens planning to attend should remain alert regarding their personal security at all times. I think our security experts have said that criminal activity in Sochi is similar to other cities of comparable size. Obviously, major events such as the Olympic games are an opportunity for thieves or for other folks who want to cause mischief.” (Putin recognizes the attackers as radical Islamists intent on killing non-Muslims. The Obama administration considers them nothing more than “folks who want to cause mischief.” Obama will not attend the Olympic Games in Sochi; instead, he is

sending a delegation of gay athletes.) [53064, 53065, 53066, 53068, 53069, 53071, 53097, 53137]

At NYTimes.com leftist documentary/propaganda filmmaker and Fidel Castro fan Michael Moore writes, “Obamacare is awful. That is the dirty little secret many liberals have avoided saying out loud for fear of aiding [Obama’s] enemies, at a time when the ideal of universal health care needed all the support it could get. ...I believe Obamacare’s rocky start—clueless planning, a lousy website, insurance companies raising rates, and [Obama’s] telling people they could keep their coverage when, in fact, not all could—is a result of one fatal flaw: The Affordable Care Act is a pro-insurance-industry plan implemented by a [person] who knew in his heart that a single-payer, Medicare-for-all model was the true way to go. When right-wing critics ‘expose’ the fact that ...Obama endorsed a single-payer system before 2004, they’re actually telling the truth.” (At Townhall.com Katie Pavlich comments, “At this point, we know Obamacare was designed to fail with the ultimate goal of a progressive government ‘rescuing’ the country from a healthcare crisis it created by offering a single-payer system or universal healthcare as millions lose their private insurance plans and doctors. This has been a long-time goal of big government liberals Hillary Clinton, Harry Reid, Kathleen Sebelius and Barack Obama.”) [53087, 53088, 53098, 53143, 53167]

DailyCaller.com, reports, “After a year of seeing ...Obama’s approval ratings plummet, [his] pollster is offering a strikingly candid and pessimistic New Year’s resolution. Reporters should go the next ‘year without reporting any public polling data,’ Joel Benenson, president and CEO of Benenson Strategy Group, said. His comments were made to reporter Mike Allen, who published them in his daily ‘Politico Playbook’ morning newsletter on Tuesday. Benenson explained that he thinks the polling often reported by news organizations lacks the proper context. Asked his New Year’s resolution: ‘Here’s one—with a variation, if mine is too extreme: Go one year without reporting any public polling data. Rationale: Most public polling continues to be reported on strictly from a top-line, horserace-type perspective that does nothing, or at best very little, to illuminate the news of the day.’ ...If reporters actually did forgo reporting on [Obama’s] polling data for a year, the next time the public would hear about Obama’s approval numbers would be after the 2014 midterms.” (It can be assumed that if Obama’s poll numbers were rising, rather than falling, Benenson would have a different outlook.) [53122]

Enabled by a policy change made by Attorney General Eric Holder, the Bureau of Prisons and Obama appointee Preet Bharara, the federal U.S. attorney in Manhattan, obtain an early release from prison for traitor Lynne Stewart, the left-wing attorney who represented Omar Abdel Rahman—the “blind sheikh” jihadist leader of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. Judge John G. Koeltl, a Clinton appointee, says, “The defendant’s terminal medical condition and very limited life expectancy constitute extraordinary and compelling reasons that warrant the requested reduction.” (Stewart, who allegedly has cancer, was sentenced to 10 years in prison for knowingly and illegally passing messages from Rahman to other terrorists—essentially aiding and abetting enemies of the United States. It was 2009 before Stewart was finally jailed—and leftists were angry with

Obama for not having rescued her with a pardon. DailyCaller.com notes, “Stewart has made a career of working for left-wing and progressive clients, including Rahman and members of the Black Panther and the Weather Underground terror groups.”) It is a certainty that both Holder and Obama knew of and approved of Stewart’s release. [6281, 6282, 6283, 6284, 6592, 7994, 33738, 53092, 53118, 53196, 53212, 54701]

In France, Muslims—which the media generally describe only as “youths”—“celebrate” New Years Eve by setting fire to more than one thousand automobiles. The French consider the devastation a success, because the number of cars destroyed was about 10 percent less than in 2012. (Obama has no comment about the “religion of peace,” and it is not known if the perpetrators learned vandalism techniques by the “how-to-torch-cars” guides distributed by al-Qaeda. Also unknown is whether the *New York Times*’ Keynesian columnist Paul Krugman believes the “youths” should have burned even more cars, in an effort to “stimulate” the auto industry.) [53128, 53129, 53130, 53131, 53220]

At WashingtonTimes.com Thomas Sowell writes, “Obamacare looms large and menacing on our horizon. This is not just because of computer problems, or even because some people who think that they have enrolled may discover at their next visit to a doctor that they do not have any insurance coverage. What Obamacare has done, thanks to Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.’s Supreme Court decision, is reduce us all from free citizens to cowed subjects, whom the federal government can order around in our own personal lives, in defiance of the 10th Amendment and all the other protections of our freedom in the Constitution of the United States. ...The challenges ahead are much clearer than what our responses will be. Perhaps the most hopeful sign is that increasing numbers of people seem to have finally—after nearly five long years—begun to see ...Obama for what he is, rather than for what he seemed to be, when judged by his image and rhetoric. What kind of man would blithely disrupt the medical care of millions of Americans, and then repeatedly lie to them with glib assurances that they could keep their doctors or health insurance if they wanted to? What kind of man would set up a system in which people would be forced by law to risk their life savings, because they had to divulge their financial identification numbers to strangers who could turn out to be convicted felons?” [53214]

“...Those who have still not yet seen through Mr. Obama will have many more opportunities to do so during the coming year, as the medical, financial and other painful human consequences of Obamacare keep coming out in ways so clear that not even the mainstream media can ignore them or obscure them. The question then is: What can be done about it? Nothing can be done about Mr. Obama himself. He has three more years in office and, as he pointed out to the Russians, he will no longer have to face the American voters. Obamacare, however, has no such immunity. It is always hard to repeal an elaborate program after it has gone into effect. However, Prohibition was repealed, even though it was a constitutional amendment that required supermajorities in both houses of Congress and supermajorities of state legislatures to repeal. In our two-party system, everything depends on whether the Republicans step up to the plate and act like responsible adults who understand that Obamacare represents a historic crossroads that will determine what kind of people we are going to be, for this generation and

generations yet unborn: citizens or subjects. This means that Republicans have to decide whether their top priority is internal strife among the different wings of the party—another circular firing squad—or whether either wing puts the country first.” [53214]

The year 2013 ends with a record 10,988,269 individuals receiving Social Security disability benefits. [53112]

The year also ends with a record 21,093,273 background checks for gun purchases. (Women are the fastest growing group of gun buyers.) [53231]

Obama ends the year with an approval rating of 41 percent—11 points lower than at the end of 2012. [53186, 53195]