



Written by [Thomas Sowell](#) on October 30, 2012

## “Cooling Out” the Voters

Confidence men know that their victim — “the mark” as he has been called — is eventually going to realize that he has been cheated. But it makes a big difference whether he realizes it immediately, and goes to the police, or realizes it after the confidence man is long gone.

So part of the confidence racket is creating a period of uncertainty, during which the victim is not yet sure of what is happening. This delaying process has been called “cooling out the mark.”



The same principle applies in politics. When the accusations that led to the impeachment of President Bill Clinton first surfaced, he flatly denied them all. Then, as the months passed, the truth came out — but slowly, bit by bit. One of Clinton’s own White House aides later called it “telling the truth slowly.”

By the time the whole truth came out, it was called “old news,” and the clever phrase now was that we should “move on.”

It was a successful “cooling out” of the public, keeping them in uncertainty so long that, by the time the whole truth came out, there was no longer the same outrage as if the truth had suddenly come out all at once. Without the support of an outraged public, the impeachment of President Clinton fizzled out in the Senate.

We are currently seeing another “cooling out” process, growing out of the terrorist attack on the American consulate in Benghazi on September 11th this year.

The belated release of State Department e-mails shows that the Obama administration knew, while the attack on the American consulate was still underway, that it was a coordinated, armed terrorist attack. They were getting reports from those inside the consulate who were under attack, as well as surveillance pictures from a camera on an American drone overhead.

About an hour before the attack, the scene outside was calm enough for the American ambassador to accompany a Turkish official to the gates of the consulate to say goodbye. This could hardly have happened if there were protesting mobs there.

Why then did both President Obama and U.N. Ambassador Susan Rice keep repeating the story that this was a spontaneous protest riot against an anti-Islamic video in America?

The White House knew the facts — but they knew that the voting public did not. And it mattered hugely whether the facts became known to the public before or after the election. What the White House needed was a process of “cooling out” the voters, keeping them distracted or in uncertainty as long as possible.

Not only did the Obama administration keep repeating the false story about an anti-Islamic video being the cause of a riot that turned violent, the man who produced that video was tracked down and arrested, creating a media distraction.



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All this kept the video story front and center, with the actions and inactions of the Obama administration kept in the background.

The White House had to know that it was only a matter of time before the truth would come out. But time was what mattered, with an election close at hand. The longer they could stretch out the period of distraction and uncertainty — “cooling out” the voters — the better. Once the confidence man in the White House was reelected, it would be politically irrelevant what facts came out.

As the Obama administration’s video story began to slowly unravel, their earlier misstatements were blamed on “the fog of war” that initially obscures many events. But there was no such “fog of war” in this case. The Obama administration knew what was happening while it was happening.

They didn’t know all the details — and we may never know all the details — but they knew enough to know that this was no protest demonstration that got out of hand.

From the time it took office, the Obama administration has sought to suppress the very concept of a “war on terror” or the terrorists’ war on us. The painful farce of calling the Fort Hood murders “workplace violence,” instead of a terrorist attack in our midst, shows how far the Obama administration would go to downplay the dangers of Islamic extremist terrorism.

The killing of Osama bin Laden fed the pretense that the terrorism threat had been beaten. But the terrorists’ attack in Libya exposed that fraud — and required another fraud to try to “cool out” the voters until after election day.

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