



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on May 21, 2013

Obama's Henchmen

The big questions now surrounding Barack Obama's triumvirate of scandals is "How much did he know?" and "When did he know it?" Former presidential advisor David Axelrod made the point that the government is "so vast" that the president can't possibly know all that transpires. Of course, this is one of the best arguments against big government a leftist ever put forth, yet the truth is that Axelrod is right. But this brings us to an important, and usually ignored, point.



Obama knew what his underlings were (or should have known) when he picked them up.

My phraseology references an old American Indian tale about a little boy who, after doing a rattlesnake a series of good turns, was nonetheless bitten by the serpent when the charitable endeavors were complete. When the lad registered shock and asked why the snake would do such a thing, the rattler replied, "You knew what I was when you picked me up."

Barack Obama picks up radical-leftist associates like a rotting carcass attracts flies. His appointees list reads like a who's who of dark juju. It's not just Axelrod and Eric Holder, but Cass Sunstein, John Holdren, Mark Lloyd, Anita Dunn, Todd Stern, David Ogden, Valerie Jarrett, Kevin Jennings, and Harold Koh, just to name a few. Such radicals then populate their departments with other radicals and the virus spreads; the bad roots lead to a bad tree which then grows bad fruit. And it all began with one bad seed.

So of course Obama can't know everything (this doesn't mean he didn't know some damning things). Of course he delegates responsibility — all leaders do. But I think here about when General Cornwallis became desperate to quell the American Revolution in the film *The Patriot* (which I hear the IRS closely scrutinized) and, with obvious misgivings, decided to give the brutal Colonel Tavington free rein. Cornwallis didn't know all the details of Tavington's intended war crimes — he clearly didn't want to know. He just knew that the savage soldier would "get the job done."

Where this analogy fails is that Cornwallis was instinctively a gentleman who compromised his principles on military ambition's altar. But Obama unabashedly chooses underlings who accurately reflect himself; they share his ideology, his goals, his disdain for the rule of law, his ends-justify-the-means philosophy, and his methods. And he certainly doesn't know all the details of their devilishness; he doesn't have to. He just knows that they'll get the job — *his* job — done.

So while evidence of Obama's direct complicity in his scandals will be necessary for legal action, the responsibility is all his. And what did anyone expect? Would you suppose that a mafia don would appoint underlings who aren't also mobsters? And you may not be able to charge the capo if he didn't know where certain bodies were buried, but would this vindicate him in your eyes?

Of course, some will say that Obama is just incompetent, which brings us to the argument over whether that or ill intent explains his behavior. But it's not an either-or scenario: One not only can be both evil



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and incompetent, but the two qualities are, in fact, almost always intertwined. Why? Because to justify their behavior, evil people have to continually rationalize away Truth. This means they have to habitually lie to themselves about what reality is — and when you do this long enough you fall out of touch with reality. And acquaintance with reality is the most basic prerequisite for competence. This phenomenon is why the Soviet Union collapsed; it is why Adolf Hitler insisted on personally devising military strategy and made so many boneheaded decisions that he snatched defeat from victory's jaws on the eastern front. Worldly evil always destroys itself. Unfortunately, it also can devastate a lot of good in the process.

And here is an example of how leftist ignorance of reality can affect hiring decisions. It was [revealed](#) last year that the Department of Justice sought to hire attorneys and staff with “psychiatric disabilities” or “severe intellectual disabilities” or who are dwarves (you can't make this stuff up). Now, some may have advanced these criteria to undermine our nation, or maybe it was just Obama's way of ensuring that he [really will be](#) the “smartest person in the room.” The fact is, however, that a great many leftists genuinely believe such outreach is enlightened and positive. But while I have nothing against dwarves (in fact, that hiring parameter is appealing given that I believe in smaller government), even the best of intentions wouldn't change the fact that limiting yourself to a thimble-size applicant pool makes finding qualified staff highly unlikely.

The point here is simple. Niccolò Machiavelli wrote in *The Prince* that a leader without wisdom wouldn't be helped by the presence of wise advisors because he wouldn't see the wisdom in their counsel and would thus ignore it. Yet the truth is that this defect causes such a person to mistake fools for sages and the corrupt for the noble and, for this reason, gloms onto the wrong people in the first place. This explains the woman who embraces one bad beau after another, the people who continually choose the wrong “friends,” and the voter who admits that he made a grave mistake last election — only to go on and make another grave mistake the next one.

And it explains Barack Obama. While it's clear that he doesn't have traditional America's best interests at heart, the reality is that his corrupted judgment ensures he couldn't choose good appointees even if he wanted to. But the real problem is a people that, clearly, couldn't choose a good president even if they wanted to. Worse than the little boy in the American Indian story, they can get bitten and still not know what they've picked up. This intellectual and moral decay is the real scandal in America — and it ensures political scandal till the end of the republic.



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