



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on February 26, 2010

## Obama's "Charms" failed to Woo GOP at Summit

In an attempt to paint Senator John McCain as "bitter" over his defeat in the 2008 presidential election, President Obama was blunt during last night's Health Care summit. After McCain articulated some of the GOP's concerns with the health care bill, a cantankerous Obama tells him, "Let me just make this point, John, because we're not campaigning anymore. The election is over."



Obama's remark tarnished the personae of a diplomatic mediator that he attempted to establish during the summit. Of course, it didn't help that he also dominated the conversation and did little to hide his impatience at the statements from the GOP, even mocking them at times. Needless to say, his behavior has sparked another media frenzy and has Americans once again calling Obama both "rude" and "arrogant."

Ron Fournier of the *Washington Post* writes that throughout the debate over the health care bill, Republicans have "branded Obama as arrogant and overreaching for refusing to drop a health care plan that a majority of voters don't favor."

Aside from the level of arrogance to which Fournier points, Obama's demeanor and remarks throughout the summit betrayed his overall arrogant nature. When Senator Lamar Alexander, (R-Tenn.) commented on Obama's healthcare plan as "a car that can't be recalled and fixed, and we ought to start over," Obama's body language revealed his frustration, from his pursed lips down to his smirk and the cradling of his chin.

Likewise, when Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell remarked that the Democrats spoke for 52 minutes during the first portion of the summit while Republicans had a mere 24 minutes of talk time, Obama once again felt the need to remind him that he was president. "You're right. There was an imbalance on the opening statement because I'm the president." Fournier adds, "Call it home court advantage."

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Obama's seemingly impertinent response to McCain's statement was Obama's unwillingness to address the concerns that McCain raised. Instead, he turned to Kathleen Sebelius, his secretary of health and human services, with an inquiry.

This is not the first time Obama has been accused of being rude or arrogant. Just a month ago, during his State of the Union address, Obama received a lot of flak for publically reprimanding the Supreme Court justices, an unprecedented act. Senator Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) referred to Obama's remarks as "kind of rude."

The impression that Obama may be a bit too haughty and uncouth is not limited to Americans. In March



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of 2009, Iain Martin of the British publication *Telegraph.co.uk* addressed Obama's "demeaning" disposition during Gordon Brown's visit to the Oval Office. Martin wrote, "Why couldn't President Obama have put on more of a show for his British guests? He looked like he simply couldn't be bothered." Martin continues by remarking that Obama's treatment of the British PM was "exceptionally rude" and that Obama spoke with "little sincerity."

Despite Obama's inability to win the favor of Americans, and apparently the British, through his "charm," the fact remains that the summit proved to be unsuccessful, and not because of the President's arrogance. The Democrats have emerged from the summit as rigid and the Republicans have been labeled "obstructionists." More importantly, the Republicans have yet to make the important argument that the best health care reform would be for government to gradually withdraw from health care altogether.

After the 7-hour bipartisan summit on health care reform, Obama concludes by saying, "We cannot have another year-long debate about this. So the question that I'm going to ask myself and I ask of all of you is, is there enough serious effort that in a month's time or a few weeks' time or six week's time we could actually resolve something?" He adds, "And if we can't, then I think we've got to go ahead and make some decisions, and that's what elections are for."

*Photo of President Obama with Senate Minority Whip Jon Kyl of Arizona at the Health Care Summit: AP Images*



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