



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on September 17, 2014

Obama's Poll Numbers Continue to Drop

With the midterm elections less than seven weeks away, pollsters are coming out of the woodwork expressing their opinions on the outcome on November 4. The latest CBS News/*New York Times* poll, focusing on President Obama's handling of the ISIS crisis and terrorism and foreign policy in general, shows him not only setting new personal lows, but lows never before recorded by the survey:



57% of Americans don't think of Mr. Obama as being tough enough in dealing with ISIS militants, while just 31% think his approach is about right. Republicans are particularly critical of Mr. Obama on this measure: 83% of Republicans don't think he is being tough enough.

When asked about President Obama's handling of terrorism in general, just 41 percent approve, a drop of 12 points in five months. And when asked about his handling of America's foreign policy, the numbers are even worse. The president's approval rating on foreign policy is now at 34 percent, a record low for the poll.

It gets worse. When asked about his handling of immigration, only 30 percent approve, and on the economy, just 40 percent approve. Taken altogether, Obama's overall job performance rating is similar to that of President George W. Bush's in September 2006, just before the 2006 midterm elections, when Democrats captured control of both the House and the Senate.

By contrast, Presidents Bill Clinton and Ronald Reagan were at 62 and 63 percent approval, respectively, at the same point in their presidencies.

Real Clear Politics (RCP) has been tracking the president's job approval rating, which turned negative on June 1, 2013, and has continued to slip steadily ever since. The RCP average now shows the president's approval rating at 41.2 percent, close to the lowest rating since the start of his presidency.

Whether Obama's declining approval ratings flow over into the contest for the Senate remains to be seen. There are so many forecasts about that contest that Vox has decided to track each of them, and combine them into a single rating. The projected chance, according to Vox, of a GOP Senate takeover has declined from 64 percent to just 53 percent in the last 10 days. As Nate Silver, one of the most respected and accurate political forecasters, noted, "When we officially launched our forecast model two weeks ago, it had Republicans with a 64% chance of taking over the Senate after this fall's elections. Now Republican chances are about 55% instead."

Most of the change has been the sharp shift to the left in the Senate races in Colorado and North Carolina, according to Silver. There is now a 69-percent chance that Colorado will retain its hard-left Senator Mark Udall, while Democrats in North Carolina now sport a 68-percent chance of retaining Democrat Senator Kay Hagan there.

Informed readers here at *The New American* will recognize that most of this is just a mental exercise in political gum-chewing as they remember insider Carroll Quigley's statement in his revelatory book *Tragedy and Hope*, on America's two-party system:



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The argument that the two parties should represent opposed ideals and policies, one, perhaps, of the Right and the other of the Left, is a foolish idea acceptable only to the doctrinaire and academic thinkers. Instead, the two parties should be almost identical, so that the American people can “throw the rascals out” at any election without leading to any profound or extreme shifts in policy.

Those readers long involved in the freedom fight will also know that the real political heavy lifting is done at the local level, where an informed electorate has the most positive impact, and flows upward from there. This has been the basic premise and foundational principle of the educational campaign launched by The John Birch Society in 1958. As Thomas Jefferson expressed it: “Educate and inform the whole mass of the people.... They are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty.” This was reiterated by President Abraham Lincoln when he said, “If given the truth, [the American people] can be depended upon to meet any national crisis. The great point is to bring them the real facts.”

It is perhaps unfortunate that not one of the pollsters measures the degree of interest by the American voter in whether a particular candidate, Democrat or Republican, is a constitutional Americanist. The [Freedom Index](#), published by the *The New American*, is one of the best at tracking the voting records of those politicians after they have been elected. In the run-up to the midterms, these polling surveys will make for interesting dinner conversation, but not much else. The real direction of American politics will only become apparent long after November.

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