

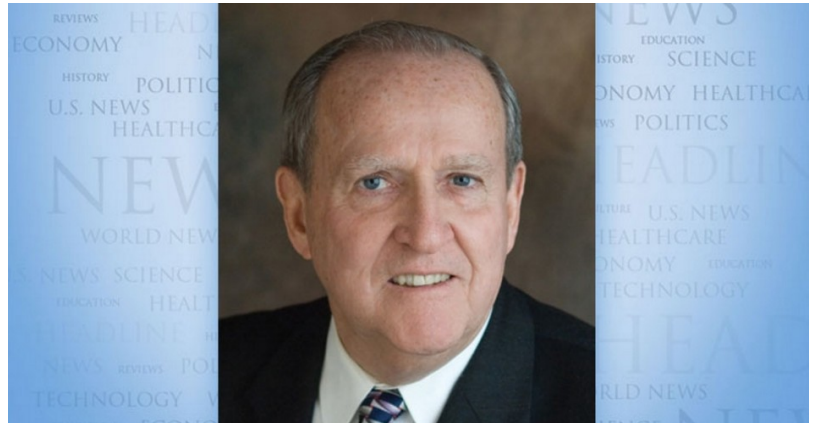


Written by [John F. McManus](#) on August 14, 2014

Hillary Clinton's Problem Now in the Open

On August 10 during an interview conducted by [Jeffrey Goldberg of *The Atlantic*](#), former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said, "Great nations need organizing principles, and 'Don't do stupid stuff' is not an organizing principle."

Hillary Clinton criticizing Barack Obama! What's going on here? The answer is simple. The public's opinion of Obama's performance continues to drop and she's running for the office of president. How to be a candidate to succeed the increasingly unpopular president with whom she has had an extremely close relationship is not going to be easy. So, the first of what will likely be salvos aimed at the occupant of the White House will likely increase.



The "Don't do stupid stuff" comment was actually stated by President Obama in his speech at West Point last May. Among other world problems, he was referring to the Syrian conflict, the continuing worry about Iran becoming a nuclear power, and the Israeli-Hamas struggle. Regarding Syria, Mrs. Clinton indicated that our nation should have sent military aid to Assad's early opponents and, because we didn't, Assad remains in power and the ISIS jihadists have risen to become a potent threat, not just to Syria but to Iraq and other portions of Asia Minor. She should have been asked if the aid she now says should have gone to Assad's foes might have ended up in the hands of jihadists, a quite likely result. But that possibility wasn't mentioned.

If the Obama approval ratings were high instead of dismally low (and getting lower), Hillary would never have sought to separate herself from the president, even slightly. She would have reminded everyone that she, as his secretary of state, was the main architect of a "successful" foreign policy. But no one is labeling the Obama administration's dealings with other nations a success. Libya is again in turmoil, Assad is still in power, Iran is still progressing toward nuclear weapon capability, Israel and Hamas are at war, the Benghazi tragedy still hangs over the president (and over Mrs. Clinton), and more.

George Washington and Thomas Jefferson urged avoiding involvement in foreign difficulties. Their advice is still the best course for our nation. But don't expect Hillary Clinton to advocate what America's Founders recommended. She knows she's in a serious bind where she can neither divorce herself from Obama nor champion his performance. In the months ahead, the American voters will discover how capably she walks an increasingly difficult tightrope.

John F. McManus is president of [The John Birch Society](#) and publisher of The New American. This column appeared originally at the [insideJBS](#) blog and is reprinted here with permission.



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