



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on February 23, 2010

High Crimes: White House Accused of Using Bribery to Preserve Senate Majority

Has a bombshell just been dropped in the November elections? If a story that broke on Thursday gets enough ink, the answer may be yes. It's being reported that the White House has sought to entice Senate primary challengers into dropping their campaigns against incumbent Democrats with the offer of plum government appointments — a jailable offense.



Jeffrey Lord of *The American Spectator* reports on the story, [writing](#):

For the second time in five months, the Obama White House is being accused — by Democrats — of offering high ranking government jobs in return for political favors. What no one is reporting is that this is a violation of federal law that can lead to prison time, a fine or both, according to Title 18, Chapter 11, Section 211 of the United States Code.

The jobs in question? Secretary of the Navy and a position within the U.S. Agency for International Development [USAID].

The newest allegation has been made by Congressman Joe Sestak (D-Pa.), who has launched a promising primary challenge against the Pennsylvania party-switcher, Arlen Specter. While being interviewed by talk-show host Larry Kane, Sestak was asked about whether he had been offered a job to exit the race and, appearing “a little surprised,” answered “yes.” [Writes](#) Kane, “I asked him if the job was Navy Secretary [Sestak is a former Navy admiral]. He said, ‘I can’t comment on that.’ In the next few seconds, he admitted that it was a ‘high up’ job, that it came from the White House, and that he didn’t accept the offering.”

Kane says that he later inquired about the matter with the White House press office but never heard back from its staff. This may indicate that the allegation is true. After all, if the Obama administration is guilty, it has a vested interest in not fielding questions about the matter. Otherwise, it places itself in the unenviable position of having to either confess malfeasance or put another lie on the record.

As for the first case of this kind, alluded to by Lord, it dates back to August 2009 and involves Democrat Colorado Senator Michael Bennett and primary challenger Andrew Romanoff. Michael Riley at [DenverPost.com](#) reported on the story in September, [writing](#):



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Jim Messina, President Barack Obama's deputy chief of staff and a storied fixer in the White House political shop, suggested a place for Romanoff might be found in the administration and offered specific suggestions, according to several sources who described the communication to *The Denver Post*.

Romanoff turned down the overture, which included mention of a job at USAID, the foreign aid agency, sources said.

Some have pointed out that, given the strong Chicago element within the White House, stories of corruption aren't surprising. After all, as a [recent study](#) by the University of Illinois at Chicago and the Better Government Association has shown, Cook County, Illinois, is Bribery and Graft Central. (Although, commissioning such a study is much like launching one to discover if Wisconsin has cheese.)

Yet, even if a bit of the Chicago machine has been moved to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, it's possible that the jobs-for-favors bombshell will be a dud. The mainstream media will not pick up this story, and there just isn't enough ink outside the old media to paint a picture large enough for the whole nation to see. Regardless, though, these latest revelations will not help a party whose prospects are declining as fast as its handiwork, our budget deficit, is increasing.



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