



President Obama Offers Campaign Advice to the GOP

As the presidential election of 2012 approaches, it will be of little surprise to historically minded constitutionalists that President Barack Obama has been quoted lately in several interviews complimenting the campaigns of some of his Republican rivals. In a recent *New York Times* piece, aides to President Obama gave current frontrunner Mitt Romney a little unsolicited advice. They suggested that “Mr. Romney had been wise to remain out of the fray for as long as possible — giving rivals less time to attack him....” They went on to reassure Romney, saying that his “previous experience as a candidate, they suggested, could help him deal with the problems he faces.”



As for former Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty (pictured, left), Obama’s crew praised the GOP hopeful for his decision to barnstorm important states, early, to become better known.

The fountain of Oval Office benevolence even flowed out generously to Republicans who have yet to declare their intention to run for the White House. The Obama mouthpieces declared former Utah Governor Jon Huntsman, Jr. to be a potentially formidable candidate if he did not have to modulate his policy stances to navigate the Republican primary.

The wisdom came with a warning, however. The word from Obama’s brain trust was that despite their praise, they were salivating to catch any Republican candidate waffling on any issue. As the *Times* article described it, They said they would be ready to pounce on any candidate who switches positions in the hunt for the nomination as lacking core convictions....

That is, the goodwill of the Obama team goes only so far. All the puffery is simply the iron fist of electoral combat inside the velvet glove of ecumenical magnanimity. The Obama 2012 campaign is taking the high road not through any sort of moral compulsion, but rather because it gives them the best view of competitors and will put them in the best position to cut them off at the pass should any one of them start attracting throngs of recruits from among the bloc of voters counted on to pull the lever for the incumbent.

Although flush with political capital from the killing of Osama bin Laden, President Obama knows that television ads and staff salaries are paid with harder currency. This pragmatic realization is evident in the [story](#) published by the *New York Times*:

While Mr. Obama will not fully engage in campaign activity until next year, aides said, he is embarking on weekly economic-focused trips throughout the summer. Doing so will allow him to use his bully pulpit to show that he is focused on addressing joblessness, the issue that more than any other could shape his electoral prospects and that Republicans are using to assert that his policies have failed.



Written by [Joe Wolverton, II, J.D.](#) on June 13, 2011

He will also continue to be the main draw in a fund-raising campaign that has a goal of taking in at least \$750 million by Election Day, which would match his 2008 figure even though he does not face the long primary battle that he did four years ago.

I'm confident that the things that we can control, we will do a good job on, said David Axelrod, the president's senior political strategist, who returned to Chicago to help with the re-election effort.

All the planning and all the fundraising in the world can't erase the very real problems that have plagued President Obama and have made some of his 2008 supporters ill at ease and left them feeling abandoned.

The economy remains in recession, unemployment is nearly 10 percent, and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan not only persist but they are likely to continue for decades. Add to that the fact that there is reliable evidence that the Obama administration is capitulating to the Taliban, and you've got the formula for a bumpy ride back to Pennsylvania Avenue.

Not to be discouraged, Team Obama has prepared talking points to address these obstacles. The *Times* continued,

For now, the president faces a delicate task in arguing that things have improved under his watch when they remain so grim for so many and that the programs he has put in place are working but need time to show their benefits. With their hopes dashed of substantial improvement in unemployment anytime soon, aides indicated that the theme was likely to be less morning in America and more don't change horses in midstream.

Mr. Axelrod said: We're not going to be putting up a Mission Accomplished sign. Part of the message is going to be we have to see these things through.

In an interview at his Chicago consulting offices, Mr. Axelrod repeatedly said stability for the middle class would be central.

While President Obama has deployed his most skilled troops throughout the theatre of electoral combat, given the near homogenous opinions of the current slate of GOP contenders (with the exception of Congressman Ron Paul, a committed constitutionalist), there is little doubt that no matter who occupies the Oval Office in January 2013, the trajectory of American foreign and domestic policy will continue toward a big government, interventionist, central-bank-supporting future with the Constitution destined for the scrap heap of history.



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