

Eye on the World

Jan. 14, 2017

This compilation of material for "Eye on the World" is presented as a service to the Churches of God. The views stated in the material are those of the writers or sources quoted by the writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the members of the Church of God Big Sandy. The following articles were posted at churchofgodbigandy.com for the weekend of Jan. 14, 2017.

Compiled by Dave Havir

Luke 21:34-36—"But take heed to yourselves, lest your souls be weighed down with self-indulgence, and drunkenness, or the anxieties of this life, and that day come on you suddenly, like a falling trap; for it will come on all dwellers on the face of the whole earth. But beware of slumbering; and every moment pray that you may be fully strengthened to escape from all these coming evils, and to take your stand in the presence of the Son of Man" (Weymouth New Testament).



A video and an article by Leah Barkoukis titled "Netanyahu: We Have 'Unequivocal Evidence the Obama Administration Led Effort to Pass Anti-Israel UN Resolution'" were posted at townhall.com on Jan. 11, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

With President Obama's days in office winding down, Israeli President Benjamin Netanyahu held nothing back in his criticism of last month's UN resolution condemning Israel and the United States' role in leading the initiative.

"We have unequivocal evidence that the Security Council resolution passed in the U.N. against Israel was led by the administration," Netanyahu told a visiting AIPAC delegation. "There's no question whatsoever about that—none whatsoever."

Ben Rhodes, Obama's deputy national security adviser for strategic communications, denied that the U.S. played a role in drafting the resolution, however.

The U.S. abstained from voting rather than vetoing the resolution that condemns Israeli settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem.

The Israeli government indicated it would provide "evidence" of the Obama administration's involvement once President-elect Trump takes office.

Meanwhile, Secretary of State John Kerry has denied that the U.S.'s decision to abstain from the vote marked a shift in policy, saying last month that "previous administrations of both political parties have allowed resolutions that were critical of Israel to pass, including on settlements."

Netanyahu disputed that argument.

Resolution 2334, he said, does not "just [reformulate] the things that were said by all previous administrations."

Rather, it marked a "major break with U.S. policy," he argued.



An article by Patrick Goodenough titled "Kerry: Ongoing Conflict in Syria Has 'Nothing to Do With' the 2013 'Red Line' Episode" was posted at cnsnews.com on Jan. 5, 2017. Following is the article.

The ongoing conflict in Syria has "nothing to do with" the fact the U.S. did not carry out military strikes against the Assad regime in response to a deadly chemical weapons attack, Secretary of State John Kerry said Thursday [Jan. 5].

While addressing reporters at the State Department, Kerry was asked about the infamous "red line" episode—when President Obama laid down a "red line" on chemical weapons use in Syria, and then in 2013 allowed Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to cross it without consequences.

After the regime killed at least 1,429 people in a chemical attack near Damascus, Obama signaled his intention to carry out punitive strikes, but never went ahead.

As he has done a number of times over the past year, Kerry disputed the notion that the president had actually made a decision not to carry out airstrikes.

Obama had made a decision to bomb, but was looking to get congressional authorization before acting. Then, Kerry and his Russian counterpart negotiated an agreement for Assad to give up his declared chemical weapons.

"The president never retracted his intent to [bomb regime targets]," Kerry declared. "He just got rid of the need to do it, by embracing a different approach that got all the [chemical] weapons out."

Kerry conceded—again, as he has done before—that the episode damaged the U.S. image in the region, but said that was based on an incorrect "perception" that Obama had been looking for a way out of taking military action.

"The president never said, 'I won't drop a bomb.' What happened was, people interpreted it. The perception was that he was trying to find a different road."

"And I will acknowledge to you, absolutely, I heard it all over the place, the perception hurt, yes, the perception hurt," Kerry said. "But the perception

came about despite the fact that we actually got a far better result—of getting all of the weapons of mass destruction out of Syria, without dropping a bomb.”

“And if we had dropped a bomb, there’s no guarantee we would have gotten any of them out,” he added.

“Is Syria today a better result, sir?” asked James Rosen of Fox News.

“No,” replied Kerry. “Syria is, is—it has nothing to do with that. What is happening in Syria today has nothing to do with the dropping or not dropping [of U.S. bombs].”

“It has everything to do with whether or not Assad was ready and willing to be held accountable by Russia and Iran to actually live by the agreements that they offered, and also whether or not the opposition was able to act in a way that could create enough leverage, for Assad to have to come to the table and negotiate.”

When Russia intervened on behalf of the regime (in the fall of 2015), Kerry continued, “that whole ballgame changed, we acknowledge that.”

Many opponents of the Assad regime welcomed the prospect of the most powerful nation on earth carrying out even limited airstrikes against it. With hindsight some viewed that as a potentially pivotal moment, believing that U.S. military action could have sped up a resolution to the conflict by pushing Assad to negotiate.

At the time, the death toll in the then two-year-old civil war was about 100,000, according to U.N. estimates. Three-and-a-half years later, the world body estimates that the number of dead has risen to five times that number.

In his remarks at the State Department Thursday, Kerry said that the Obama administration was handing over “a country whose international standing is much improved from 2009, when President Obama took office eight years ago.”



A Reuters article titled “Kremlin Says U.S. Military Build-Up in Poland a National Security Threat” was posted at reuters.com on Jan. 12, 2017. Following is the article.

Poland on Thursday welcomed several thousand U.S. troops along with tanks and heavy equipment under a planned NATO operation to beef up its Eastern European allies, vexing the Kremlin, which said the troops’ presence is a threat to Russia.

The largest U.S. military reinforcement of Europe in decades of around 2,700 troops, out of 3,500 planned, arrived as part of operation Atlantic Resolve, aimed at showing Moscow Washington’s commitment to its allies.

"The main goal of our mission is deterrence and prevention of threats," U.S. Army Colonel Christopher R. Norrie, commander of the 3rd Armoured Brigade Combat Team, said at a welcome ceremony in Poland's western city of Zagan.

Poland and the Baltic former Soviet Republics requested U.S. and NATO troops after Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimea Peninsula in 2014, fearing further military operations in the region by President Vladimir Putin.

The Kremlin, which has previously criticised NATO for its reinforcement in Eastern Europe, said on Thursday the deployment was an aggressive step along its borders.

"We consider this a threat to us," Dmitry Peskov, Kremlin's spokesman, told journalists on a conference call. "We are talking here about a third country stepping up its military presence in Europe near our borders."

Modernisation of the army has been a key priority for Poland's year-old government run by the conservative Law and Justice (PiS) party, which built its popularity partly on promising greater security capabilities.

On Thursday, Polish Defence Minister Antoni Macierewicz said on the state TVP Info news channel that the NATO deployment puts an end to Russia's influence in the region.

"Even after 1989 we had to continuously wonder whether the Russians won't veto this or that action," said Macierewicz, who has been seeking better ties and contracts with the U.S. military.

"Russia's veto power in Central Europe, in Poland, has ended once and for all."

Moscow, however, has already deployed in retaliation nuclear-capable Iskander missiles in its European exclave of Kaliningrad, in a move the U.S. State Department said was "destabilising to European security."

The U.S. deployment to NATO's eastern flank includes more than 80 main battle tanks and hundreds of armoured vehicles. The military unit will rotate through several countries, including Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Romania.

"Their arrival is just one small but meaningful example of how we are quickly building combat power here," Norrie said.



A Reuters article by Lauren Hirsch and Mike Stone titled "U.S. Companies Have New Business Risk—Being Labeled 'Anti-American' by Trump" was posted at reuters.com on Jan. 11, 2017. Following is the article.

Some U.S. companies are reviewing potential mergers while others are rethinking job cuts or looking at their manufacturing operations in China for fear of being cast as "anti-American" by President-elect Donald Trump, according to Wall Street bankers, company executives and crisis management consultants.

Having seen some of America's largest companies, including General Motors Co, Lockheed Martin Corp and United Technologies Corp, bluntly and publicly rebuked by Trump on Twitter, many others are worried they may be his next target—especially if they have significant overseas manufacturing, have had U.S. job cuts or price increases for consumers.

"Any business that leaves our country for another country, fires its employees, builds a new factory or plant in the other country, and then thinks it will sell its product back into the U.S. without retribution or consequence is WRONG!" Trump, who assumes office on Jan. 20, tweeted in December.

Trump campaigned on an "America First" anti-globalization platform that promised the return of thousands of U.S. manufacturing jobs to economically depressed areas.

That nationalist rhetoric and Trump's willingness to use his Twitter account as a cudgel has so rattled some companies that they are putting on hold mergers and acquisitions that may involve significant job cuts or moving production or tax domicile abroad, out of fear that such deals could be seen as "unpatriotic," several top Wall Street bankers said.

Bermuda-based White Mountains Insurance Group Ltd had been in talks to sell itself in a transaction that would have been structured as an inversion—where a U.S.-based buyer would move its tax domicile overseas.

However, the deal fell apart after the November election partly because potential buyers worried that leaving the U.S. tax home would be seen as "anti-American," three people with knowledge of the matter said. Potential buyers also found the target less attractive because of the likelihood of lower U.S. corporate taxes under the Trump administration, the people said.

Representatives of the \$3.8 billion company declined to comment.

At least two other insurance deals have also fallen apart since the election for similar reasons, said the people, who declined to elaborate and asked not to be named because the matter is not public.

Trump's aggressive anti-China rhetoric has also given some companies pause.

James Park, chief executive of wearable fitness device maker Fitbit Inc, said he expects all companies that have significant manufacturing operations in China, including his own firm, to prepare contingency plans.

Trump has threatened to hit China and Mexico with high tariffs and named vocal China critic Peter Navarro to lead a new White House office overseeing U.S. trade policy.

"Whether it's taking higher costs into account or operationally preparing for moving manufacturing (out of China), companies are thinking about what to do," Park said in an interview.

Watching Trump's tweets

Companies are also beefing up their Twitter monitoring for any Trump tweets that could affect them and engaging public relations firms for advice on potential lines of attack and how to respond if they were to come, several U.S. chief executives as well as half a dozen corporate advisers told Reuters.

"Back in December the board was already asking questions: 'What's the plan in terms of what happens if he comes after us, are we ready? The board is asking us if we have a PR firm at the ready, if we have a person monitoring his Twitter,'" said a top executive at a large U.S. defense contractor.

"Our plan is to not get into a fight, and concede immediately. The reality is that we're trying to stay below the radar," the executive said, asking not to be named because of the sensitivity of the issue.

Since his election in November, Trump has ramped up criticism of companies from Ford Motor Co, Toyota Motor Corp and GM, to United Tech and Rexnord Corp over manufacturing in Mexico for U.S. consumers or moving U.S. jobs abroad.

Trump also slammed Lockheed Martin and Boeing Co for what he called "out of control" costs on their weapons programs.

Both Lockheed and Boeing have said they will work to drive down costs of the programs, while Ford scrapped plans to build a \$1.6 billion plant in Mexico, and United Tech's Carrier unit is keeping half of the 2,100 U.S. jobs it was to shift to Mexico.

Government relations and public relations advisers say they have received a number of calls from companies wanting help in assessing if they have any red flags that could draw Trump's ire.

Advisers say these potentially include outsourcing of manufacturing, consumer price increases and lower tax rates than peer companies.

"We have literally had about a dozen clients ask us how they should be thinking about this in the last few weeks," said George Sard, chairman and CEO of strategic communications firm Sard Verbinnen & Co, adding that he is seeing concern from companies in a wide range of industries.

"The week after the election it was non-stop meetings and conference calls and analysis," said Kent Jarrell, crisis and litigation communication expert at APCO Worldwide. "It's almost like a whole new Trump practice is developing."

Corporate leaders, say the advisers, can no longer focus only on maximizing shareholder value; they must now also weigh national interest.

"CEOs are talking to their boards saying we've got to be viewed pro-America. If something is more on the margin—like layoffs, or moving manufacturing, then they are not going to do it," said one Fortune 500 CEO, who said he had spoken with other U.S. companies.

Taking a page from Trump playbook

Sard, of Sard Verbinnen & Co, said that while companies are well advised not to get into a Twitter war with Trump, his firm is advising clients to “learn from his playbook” and be prepared to communicate directly with shareholders, employees, and customers through blogs and social media.

There is already evidence that companies are quickly adjusting to the new Trump era. Firms have been more vocal in publicizing job creation and they have sometimes let Trump claim credit.

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, the No. 3 automaker in the United States, announced plans on Sunday to create 2,000 U.S. jobs. The timing was partly influenced by CEO Sergio Marchionne’s desire to get the news out ahead of any possible criticism from Trump for the automaker’s overseas manufacturing, a person familiar with the company’s thinking said.

Trump has in the past few weeks attacked FCA’s two Detroit rivals, as well as Japan-based Toyota, for their manufacturing operations in Mexico and threatened to impose stiff border taxes on any imports.

In December, SoftBank Group Corp, majority owner of Sprint Corp, unveiled a \$50 billion U.S. investment at the Trump Tower in Manhattan. Trump and SoftBank head Masayoshi Son made the announcement together, and Trump later tweeted: “He would never do this had we (Trump) not won the election!”

“You never want to be against the president—especially not one as vocal as (Trump),” the Fortune 500 CEO said.



An editorial by John Podhoretz titled “Buzzfeed’s Trump Report Takes ‘Fake News’ to a New Level” was posted at nypost.com on Jan. 10, 2017. Following is the article.

So the website BuzzFeed decided to publish a series of memos that have been floating around for months alleging all kinds of terrible things about Donald Trump.

Some of those terrible allegations have to do with efforts to influence the American elections and Trump. Some of them have to do with Trump’s personal sexual conduct.

Readers of this newspaper know well not to include me among Trump’s supporters. But the scurrilousness of what BuzzFeed has done here is so beyond the bounds of what is even remotely acceptable it should compel even those most outraged by Trump’s political excesses to come to his defense and to the defense of a few other people mentioned in these papers whose names are also dragged through the mud.

There is literally no evidence on offer in these memos or from BuzzFeed that any single sentence in these documents is factual or true. What’s more, we

know most major news organizations in America had seen them and despite their well-known institutional antipathy toward Trump, had chosen not to publish them or even make reference to them after efforts to substantiate their charges had failed.

BuzzFeed tells us that “the document was prepared for political opponents of Trump by a person who is understood to be a former British intelligence agent.” Indeed, the memos are designed to read as though they were cables sent from the field to the home office. And they should set off the bull detector of every rational person who reads them.

I’ve been a newspaper and magazine editor for 31 years, and like many in my profession, have had occasion over the course of four decades to work with people linked to intelligence agencies both domestic and foreign when they are retailing stories injurious to one or another politician or cause.

In my experience, there is no source of whom you need to be more skeptical, and whose information you need to verify to the letter before you can even begin to think of publishing it, than an “intelligence” source.

The telling indicator is that every factoid such a source produces is given equal weight with every other one. Chances are some percentage of those factoids is actual fact, but it could be 10 percent or it could be 90 or any number in between.

Since the person retailing the factoids has an agenda, as BuzzFeed acknowledges here, he has at the very least a bias toward believing every piece of anti-Trump detail he puts down on paper—and at worst a desire to throw every single rumor he can collect (or generate out of his own fevered imaginings) at the wall to see which ones might stick.

At a moment when journalists are up in arms about “fake news,” what BuzzFeed has done here is take fake news to a new level. Its editor, Ben Smith, acknowledges “there is serious reason to doubt the allegations.” In other words, there is almost certainly fake news inside these memos, and it might all be fake, or some parts of it might be true but buried so deeply under falsity that it would be impossible to separate it out.

“Publishing this dossier reflects how we see the job of reporters in 2017,” Smith writes. This is an amazing thing to say, because if you think it through, it means publishing open libels and slanders is the job of reporters in 2017.

“Fake news will become more sophisticated, and fake, ambiguous, and spun-up stories will spread widely,” warned an important American editor at the end of December 2016. His name: Ben Smith. His publication: BuzzFeed.

I didn’t make that up.



An article by Matt Vespa titled “MSNBC’s Todd to Buzzfeed on Posting Russia Dossier: ‘You Just Published Fake News’ ” was posted at townhall.com on Jan. 12, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

Well, we've all sat on it and it's becoming quite clear that there really isn't much to the report that President-elect Donald Trump has been compromised by Russian intelligence other than virtually all of it being uncorroborated, unverified, and possibly false.

We wrote about what CNN reported this week about Russia possibly having compromising personal and financial information on Trump, which was documented and presented to the president-elect, though it's not known for sure whether it was discussed during his briefing.

Now, much of what CNN reported was known for months concerning the contents of the memos that were compiled by a former British intelligence agent, but other outlets did not publish the documents since none of it can be authenticated.

Buzzfeed decided not to take that route and published what is arguably looking like fake news.

Members of the news media have been scoffing at the term, as they see it as the Right's way to undermine or marginalize any story they disagree with—but this is a special case.

Even MSNBC's Chuck Todd, who interviewed Ben Smith, BuzzFeed's editor-in-chief, said that they published fake news, and that they had a decision to redact portions of the memos.

Smith said they did, though Todd replied that very little was redacted. Smith pretty much framed his organization's actions as a public service, noting that rumors about these documents have been floating for months.

Why should the elite and the news media have them and not have it be presented before the American people? A fair question, as is the answer: because no one can verify it.

Even left wing stalwarts, like Mother Jones' David Corn, didn't publish the documents because he couldn't verify them.

Here are excerpts from *The Hill*:

- I know this was not your intent," Todd told BuzzFeed's Ben Smith during a segment on MSNBC's "MTP Daily," adding, "I've known you a long time, but you just published fake news. You made a knowing decision to put out an untruth."
- Smith countered that BuzzFeed has a responsibility to report on Trump and his alleged ties to Russia.
- Todd pushed back on Smith's explanation, asking whether BuzzFeed's decision had hurt the media's integrity overall.
- "There was a line," the MSNBC anchor said. "When does the line become yelling 'fire' in a theater? Transparency can turn into a crutch, can turn into laziness."

Anti-Trump Republicans and Democrats enlisted the services of a former UK intelligence operative, who now runs his own firm, to conduct opposition research on Trump. Yes, these memos contained salacious information, like Trump asking prostitutes to perform aberrant sexual acts, allegations (very unconfirmed and unsubstantiated allegations) the president-elect has vociferously denied.

Moreover, the memos say that top Trump lawyer Michael Cohen was in Prague at some point. He actually was in California at the time of this supposed trip.

Of course, the question about whether Trump could have been compromised by the Russians would pose a problem, but after 24 hours it looks as if this report is pretty shoddy.

All we know now is that a former British intelligence operative has some memos, the knowledge of these memos have been known to the news media and the political class for some time; Sen. John McCain gave copies to the FBI, who also had portions of the memos, and that there could be something very, very bad in them.

So far, nothing has been confirmed—and BuzzFeed probably should have sat on them until, you know, they could have been verified.

The fact that Todd called out the media company for posting fake news is damning.



An article by Madeleine Morgenstern titled “Obama’s Farewell Address Longer Than Reagan’s, Clinton’s and George W. Bush’s Combined” was posted at washingtonexaminer.com on Jan. 10, 2017. Following are excerpts of the article.

President Obama’s farewell address to the nation was longer than the good-bye speeches of Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton and George W. Bush combined.

Clinton spoke for 7 minutes, 25 seconds; Reagan spoke for 20 minutes, 42 seconds; and George W. Bush spoke for 13 minutes, 7 seconds. Obama spoke for 51 minutes, 10 seconds, nearly 10 minutes longer than the other three put together.

Obama also broke from the tradition of delivering his final speech from the White House. Clinton and Reagan both spoke from the Oval Office, and George W. Bush spoke in front of a small audience in the White House East Room; the Obama administration distributed public tickets for his speech at the McCormick Place convention center in Chicago. Obama spoke to a crowd of 18,000.



An article by Matt Vespa titled “Wait—Obama Said We Haven’t Been Attacked by Foreign Terrorists in Eight Years?” was posted at townhall.com on Jan. 11, 2017. Following is the article.

President Obama mentioned in his farewell speech that no foreign terrorist organization has planned and executed an attack on the homeland.

He said: "Because of the extraordinary courage of our men and women in uniform, and the intelligence officers, law enforcement, and diplomats who support them, no foreign terrorist organization has successfully planned and executed an attack on our homeland these past eight years."

The president has been laying it on thick over the past week with this claim. On January 4, at Fort Myer in Arlington, President Obama addressed members of the military in a farewell ceremony, where he reiterated the claim that "no foreign terrorist organization has successfully planned and executed an attack on our homeland these past eight years."

Seriously? So, Fort Hood, Orlando, the Boston marathon bombing, San Bernardino, and Chattanooga were not terrorist attacks?

Washington Examiner's T. Becket Adams listed the attacks since the beginning of Obama's presidency:

- The first such attack took place on June 1, 2009, when Abdulhakim Mujahid Muhammad shot and killed Army Pvt. William Andrew Long and injured Pvt. Quinton Ezeagwula at a military recruiting station in Little Rock, Ark. The shooter claimed later that he acted as a member of al-Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula, which operates out of Yemen.
- Later that same year, on Nov. 5, 2009, Major Nidal Malik Hasan went on a shooting spree at Fort Hood in Texas, murdering 14 people. Prior to the attack, Hasan was in contact with al-Qaeda's Anwar al-Awlaki.
- On April 15, 2013, the radicalized Tamerlan and Dhozkar Tsarnaev, both of whom frequented a mosque with connections to al-Qaeda, detonated two bombs at the Boston Marathon, killing three and injuring more than 200.
- One year later, on Oct. 23, 2014, Zale Thompson assaulted and injured two police officers in Queens, N.Y., with a hatchet. Though he was a so-called lone wolf, Thompson acted after he became self-radicalized through ISIS, al-Qaeda and al-Shabab literature.
- On July 16, 2015, Muhammad Youssef Abdulazeez shot and killed four U.S. Marines and one sailor at a Navy reserve facility center in Chattanooga, Tenn. FBI Director James B. Comey said later that there was no doubt that Abdulazeez was, "motivated by foreign terrorist organization propaganda."
- Later, on Dec. 14, 2015, Tashfeen Malik and her husband, Syed Farook, shot and killed 14 people at a Christmas party in San Bernardino, Calif. The shooting spree left an additional 22 people with injuries. The FBI reported the two shooters had been radicalized by Islamic terrorist organizations, though the bureau has not yet determined which group most inspired the attack. ISIS has described the two terrorists as "supporters."

The *Washington Post's* fact checkers gave no rating for this claim. Why? Well, they say that the president chose his words carefully. By focusing on foreign terrorist organization, the White House can duck and cover, declaring the attacks above is the work of homegrown terror, not part of a planned effort, and fueled by self-radicalization by Islamic extremists.

I think the American voter isn't going to see the difference. With the Internet, pouring the toxic ideology of Islamic extremism to influence lone wolf attacks seems to be an outreach strategy that has yielded dividends for groups like the Islamic State.

And it's not just in the United States; ISIS has struck terror into the hearts of the France, Belgium, and Germany. Yes, it's great that a 9/11-style attack hasn't occurred again, but to say that foreign terrorists haven't hit us since 9/11 is a bit of a stretch.



An article by Susan Jones titled "Obama: 'I Am Absolutely Convinced That Race Relations . . . Are Actually Better Now' " was posted at cnsnews.com on Jan. 9, 2017. Following is the article.

Asked about the perception that race relations have deteriorated during his two terms, President Obama said things are better now than they have been.

"I am absolutely convinced that race relations on the whole are actually better now than they were 20 years (ago)," Obama said, as ABC's George Stephanopoulos interrupted him:

"Better now?" Stephanopoulos asked Obama in an interview taped on Friday for ABC's "This Week."

"Yes," Obama responded. "But we have greater awareness of where we're falling short than we used to. Let's just take the example of—community police relations. I mean, the truth of the matter is that—that the problem of police shootings and reactions in the community—George, you and I are about the same age. I—I think you remember what happened in Los Angeles after Rodney King, I think you remember what—the divisions that happened after the O.J. trial. I think you—the—the notion that somehow any of that is new isn't the case.

"What is true, though, is now we've got a bunch of videos that whatever side of the issue you're on, raises the temperature on these issues and makes people really focused and—and—and—and trying to figure out, 'What exactly is this?' And I think that is a healthy thing. But I also—I'm not so out of touch that I don't see how young people interact today."

Stephanopoulos pointed to the "horrific" video posted on Facebook last week that showed a mentally disabled white man being beaten, taunted and threatened by four black people in Chicago. The suspects, now in custody, are heard using profanities against white people and President-elect Donald Trump.

"And, well, it was horrific," Obama agreed. "And that's an example of something that—it's not as if that's the first time that a hate crime has taken place in this country. Hate crimes have been taking place for hundreds of years in this country, but it's there on video. And the—the—the sort of seeing cruelty and callousness of that sort from young people is heartbreaking. And so naturally if you see a video like that you're going to say to yourself, 'My God, this is horrible,' and—and rightfully so.

"But that allows us then to talk about how—how—how do we break free from those kinds of attitudes? And I think that we are in a position to continue to make progress, but it's gonna require us to both recognize what the problems are, also recognize the—the—the progress we've made."

Obama made the point that crime has dropped during his presidency:

"But you wouldn't know it if you were watching TV or looking at the Internet, and you certainly wouldn't know it, listening to this past campaign," he said. "There are some exceptions: Chicago, my hometown, in particular. But overall in the country, this is a much safer place than it used to be.

"But if you ask the average person they'd tell you, 'Naw, it's much more dangerous,' despite the fact that violent crime has dropped precipitously. And so we have to recognize we've got some big problems on race, just like we got still big problems on crime, just like we got big problems on just about everything.

"But we also have to make sure that we've—draw confidence from the progress that we have made, 'cause otherwise, you get into this cycle of cynicism."

Obama said it was "never a realistic expectation" to think racism would be eliminated after Obama became the nation's first black president.



An editorial by Walter Williams titled "The Black Community and Crime" was posted at jewishworldreview.com on Jan. 11, 2017. Following is the article.

The FBI reported that the total number of homicides in 2015 was 15,696. Blacks were about 52 percent of homicide victims. That means about 8,100 black lives were ended violently, and over 90 percent of the time, the perpetrator was another black.

Listening to the news media and the Black Lives Matter movement, one would think that black deaths at the hands of police are the major problem.

It turns out that in 2015, police across the nation shot and killed 986 people. Of that number, 495 were white (50 percent), 258 were black (26 percent) and 172 Hispanic (17 percent).

A study of 2,699 fatal police killings between 2013 and 2015, conducted by John R. Lott Jr. and Carlisle E. Moody of the Crime Prevention Research Center,

demonstrates that the odds of a black suspect's being killed by a black police officer were consistently greater than a black suspect's getting killed by a white officer. Politicians, race hustlers and the news media keep such studies under wraps because these studies don't help their narrative about racist cops.

The homicide victim is not the only victim, whether he is a criminal or not, for there are mourning loved ones. No one ever fully recovers from having a son, daughter, husband, mother or father murdered. Murder is not the only crime that takes a heavy toll on the black community. Blacks are disproportionately represented as victims in every category of violent crime—e.g., forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault.

Today's level of lawlessness and insecurity in many black communities is a relatively new phenomenon. In the 1930s, '40s and '50s, people didn't bar their windows. Doors were often left unlocked. People didn't go to bed with the sounds of gunshots.

What changed everything was the liberal vision that blamed crime on poverty and racial discrimination.

Academic liberals and hustling politicians told us that to deal with crime, we had to deal with those "root causes."

Plus, courts began granting criminals new rights that caused murder and other violent crime rates to skyrocket.

The liberals' argument ignores the fact that there was far greater civility in black neighborhoods at a time when there was far greater poverty and discrimination.

The presence of criminals, having driven many businesses out, forces residents to bear the costs of shopping outside their neighborhoods. Fearing robberies, taxi drivers—including black drivers—often refuse to do home pickups in black neighborhoods and frequently pass up black customers hailing them.

Plus, there's the insult associated with not being able to receive pizza or other deliveries on the same terms as people in other neighborhoods.

In low-crime neighborhoods, FedEx, UPS and other delivery companies routinely leave packages that contain valuable merchandise on a doorstep if no one is at home. That saves the expense of redelivery or recipients from having to go pick up the packages.

In low-crime communities, supermarket managers may leave plants, fertilizer and other home and garden items outdoors, often unattended and overnight. They display merchandise at entryways and exits.

Where there is less honesty, supermarkets cannot use all the space that they lease, and hence they are less profitable. In high-crime neighborhoods, delivery companies leaving packages at the door and supermarkets leaving goods outside unattended would be equivalent to economic suicide.

Politicians who call for law and order are often viewed negatively, but poor people are the most dependent on law and order. In the face of high crime or social disorder, wealthier people can afford to purchase alarm systems, buy guard dogs, hire guards and, if things get too bad, move to a gated community. These options are not available to poor people. The only protection they have is an orderly society.

Ultimately, the solution to high crime rests with black people. Given the current political environment, it doesn't pay a black or white politician to take those steps necessary to crack down on lawlessness in black communities.



An article by Rich Noyes titled "Farewell to a Decade of Media Drooling Over Barack Obama" was posted at newsbusters.org on Jan. 9, 2017. Following is the article.

From the moment then-state senator Barack Obama showed up on the national stage to address the Democratic convention in 2004, the news media were in love. "Obama is a rock star," NBC's Andrea Mitchell exclaimed during MSNBC's live convention coverage back on July 27, 2004. The next morning, ABC's George Stephanopoulos echoed Mitchell's enthusiasm: "He's the Tiger Woods of the Democratic Party right now."

When Obama ran for President four years later, news reporters led the cheers. "It's almost hard to remain objective because it's infectious, the energy, I think," then-NBC reporter Lee Cowan confessed in an MSNBC.com video posted January 7, 2008. On CNN a few days later, Politico editor John Harris admitted: "A couple years ago, you would send a reporter out with Obama, and it was like they needed to go through detox when they came back—'Oh, he's so impressive, he's so charismatic,' and we're kind of like, 'Down, boy.'"

As a candidate, the Associated Press celebrated Obama as "something special," while as President-elect, the *Washington Post* drooled over his "chiseled pectorals," on display during a vacation in Hawaii. As President, reporters touted his "prodigious talents," his "amazing legislative agenda," and his "huge achievements." And as an individual, journalists fawned over Obama, calling him "one of our brightest presidents," a "huge visionary," "the perfect American," "our national poet," and "the most noble man who has ever lived in the White House."

With the Democratic Party defeated, ObamaCare set for repeal, and incoming President Donald Trump poised to revoke a host of his executive orders, Obama's actual legacy will likely fall far short of what his media fan club once imagined. But one aspect of his place in history seems secure: Barack Obama has been the lucky recipient of more biased, positive "news" media coverage than any other President in history.

Here are some examples from the past decade, starting with a video montage of the audio and video quotes detailed below:

■ “Obama seemed the political equivalent of a rainbow—a sudden preternatural event inspiring awe and ecstasy . . . He transcends the racial divide so effortlessly that it seems reasonable to expect that he can bridge all the other divisions—and answer all the impossible questions—plaguing American public life.”

—*Time’s* Joe Klein, October 23, 2006 cover story, “Why Barack Obama Could Be the Next President.”

■ “Many people, afterwards [after Obama’s 2004 convention speech], they weren’t sure how to pronounce your name but they were moved by you. People were crying. You tapped into something. You touched people . . . If your party says to you, ‘We need you,’ and, and there’s already a drumbeat out there, will you respond?”

—Co-host Meredith Vieira to Obama on NBC’s *Today*, October 19, 2006.

■ “You can see it in the crowds. The thrill, the hope. How they surge toward him. You’re looking at an American political phenomenon . . . He inspires the party faithful and many others, like no one else on the scene today . . . And the question you can sense on everyone’s mind, as they listen so intently to him, is he the one? Is Barack Obama the man, the black man, who could lead the Democrats back to the White House and maybe even unite the country? . . . Everywhere he goes, people want him to run for President, especially in Iowa, cradle of presidential contenders. Around here, they’re even naming babies after him.”—Co-anchor Terry Moran on ABC’s *Nightline*, November 6, 2006.

■ Co-anchor Chris Matthews: “I have to tell you, you know, it’s part of reporting this case, this election, the feeling most people get when they hear Barack Obama’s speech. My—I felt this thrill going up my leg. I mean, I don’t have that too often.”

Co-anchor Keith Olbermann: “Steady.”

Matthews: “No, seriously. It’s a dramatic event. He speaks about America in a way that has nothing to do with politics. It has to do with the feeling we have about our country. And that is an objective assessment.”—Exchange during MSNBC’s coverage of the Virginia, Maryland, and Washington D.C. primaries, February 12, 2008.

■ “On the bus ride along the snowy road to Lebanon, New Hampshire, I showed him this week’s *Newsweek*, hot off the presses. [to Obama] How does this feel, of all the honors that have come your way, all the publicity? . . . Who does it make you think of? Is there, is there a loved one?”—NBC’s Brian Williams on the January 7, 2008 *Nightly News*.

■ “Presidential campaigns have destroyed many bright and capable politicians. But there’s ample evidence that Obama is something special, a man who makes difficult tasks look easy, who seems to touch millions of diverse people with a message of hope that somehow doesn’t sound Pollyannaish.”—AP writer Charles Babington in a May 10, 2008 dispatch.

■ “Some princes are born in palaces. Some are born in mangers. But a few are born in the imagination, out of scraps of history and hope . . . Barack Hussein Obama did not win because of the color of his skin. Nor did he win in spite of it. He won because at a very dangerous moment in the life of a still young country, more people than have ever spoken before came together to try to save it. And that was a victory all its own.”—*Time’s* Nancy Gibbs in the November 17, 2008 post-election cover story.

■ “Between workouts during his Hawaii vacation this week, he was photographed looking like the paradigm of a new kind of presidential fitness, one geared less toward preventing heart attacks than winning swimsuit competitions. The sun glinted off chiseled pectorals sculpted during four weightlifting sessions each week, and a body toned by regular treadmill runs and basketball games.”—*Washington Post* reporter Eli Saslow in a December 25, 2008 front-page story about Obama’s vacation fitness regimen.

■ “By now we are all accustomed to that Obi-Wan Kenobi calm . . . [But] what now seems most salient about Obama is the opposite of flashy, the antithesis of rhetoric: he gets things done. He is a man about his business—a Mr. Fix It going to Washington . . . Spare us the dead-or-alive bravado, the gates-of-hell bluster, the melodrama of the 3 a.m. phone call. A door swung open for a candidate who would merely stand and deliver . . . In the land of the hapless, the competent man is king.”—Editor-at-large David von Drehle in his cover story announcing Obama as *Time’s* “Man of the Year,” December 29, 2008, issue.

■ “I like to say that, in some ways, Barack Obama is the first President since George Washington to be taking a step down into the Oval Office. I mean, from visionary leader of a giant movement, now he’s got an executive position that he has to perform in, in a way.”—ABC News correspondent Terry Moran to Media Bistro’s Steve Krakauer in a February 20, 2009, *Morning Media Menu* podcast.

■ “The legislative achievements have been stupendous—the \$789 billion stimulus bill, the budget plan that is still being hammered out (and may, ultimately, include the next landmark safety-net program, universal health insurance). There has also been a cascade of new policies to address the financial crisis—massive interventions in the housing and credit markets, a market-based plan to buy the toxic assets that many banks have on their books, a plan to bail out the auto industry and a strict new regulatory regime proposed for Wall Street. Obama has also completely overhauled foreign policy, from Cuba to Afghanistan. ‘In a way, Obama’s 100 days is even more dramatic than Roosevelt’s,’ says Elaine Kamarck of Harvard’s Kennedy School of Government. ‘Roosevelt only had to deal with a domestic crisis. Obama has had to overhaul foreign policy as well, including two wars. And that’s really the secret of why this has seemed so spectacular.’ ”—*Time’s* Joe Klein in the magazine’s May 4, 2009 cover story on Barack Obama’s first 100 days as President.

■ “People who brief him say he is able to game out scenarios before the experts in the room, even on foreign policy, national security and other issues

in which he had relatively little expertise before running for president. Obama is approaching the issues as a game of 'three-dimensional chess,' said John O. Brennan, an assistant to the President for homeland security and counterterrorism. 'It's not kinetic checkers . . . There are moves that are made on the chess board that really have implications, so the President is always looking at those dimensions of it.' —Carrie Johnson and Anne E. Kornblut in a front-page *Washington Post* story, August 28, 2009.

■ "It is impossible to write about Nelson Mandela these days and not compare him to another potentially transformational black leader, Barack Obama. The parallels are many . . . And while it took twenty-seven years in prison to mold the Nelson Mandela we know, the forty-eight-year-old American president seems to have achieved a Mandela-like temperament without the long years of sacrifice . . . Whatever Mandela may or may not think of the new American President, Obama is in many ways his true successor on the world stage."—From Time managing editor Richard Stengel's introduction to his new self-help book, *Mandela's Way: Fifteen Lessons on Life, Love, and Courage*, quoted by *Politico's* Mike Allen in a March 30, 2010 Web posting.

■ "People from all over the world, frankly, say to me, here comes a President with a huge mandate, a huge reservoir of goodwill, huge promises to change, and, with all of that, his popularity is down. People don't appreciate some of the amazing legislative agenda that he's accomplished."—Host Christiane Amanpour to Obama adviser David Axelrod on ABC's *This Week*, September 26, 2010.

■ "Can we just enjoy Obama for a moment? Before the policy choices have to be weighed and the hard decisions have to be made, can we just take a month or two to contemplate him the way we might contemplate a painting by Vermeer or a guitar lick by the early-seventies Rolling Stones or a Peyton Manning pass or any other astounding, ecstatic human achievement? Because twenty years from now, we're going to look back on this time as a glorious idyll in American politics, with a confident, intelligent, fascinating president riding the surge of his prodigious talents from triumph to triumph . . . Barack Obama is developing into what Hegel called a 'world-historical soul,' an embodiment of the spirit of the times. He is what we hope we can be."—Esquire's Stephen Marche in a column for the magazine's August 2011 issue: "How Can We Not Love Obama? Because Like It or Not, He Is All of Us."

■ "When you watch the President like that, I always feel he's got so many pluses, doesn't he? In a sense, he's personable, he's handsome, he can be funny. You know, abroad he has this great image for America. A lot of things are just perfect about Barack Obama."—Host Piers Morgan to Obama strategist David Axelrod on CNN's *Piers Morgan Tonight*, December 5, 2011.

■ "This guy's done everything right. He's raised his family right. He's fought his way all the way to the top of the *Harvard Law Review*, in a blind test becomes head of the Review, the top editor there. Everything he's done is clean as a whistle. He's never not only broken any law, he's never done anything wrong. He's the perfect father, the perfect husband, the perfect Amer-

ican. And all they do is trash the guy.”—MSNBC’s Chris Matthews talking about President Obama on *Hardball*, July 17, 2012.

■ *The New Yorker’s* David Remnick: “The fact that this country didn’t fall into a depression, an economic depression, which it could easily have done; the fact that we are out of Iraq, for all the problems in Iraq, getting there in Afghanistan; the auto industry saved; gay rights more and more ensured, not without help from the President of the United States; the fact that there’s been no scandal, major scandal, in this administration, which is a rare thing in an administration; the fact that science is now discussed as science; the fact that climate change, however woefully inadequate the measures for it, is now—”

Host Charlie Rose: “Does this measure up to greatness for you?”

Remnick: “Well, let’s wait ‘til the end . . . [But] I think those achievements are huge.”—PBS’s Charlie Rose, January 20, 2014, talking about Remnick’s cover story on Obama’s presidency.

■ We don’t know if the Iran deal is going to work. If it does, it will be the major foreign policy achievement, not only of this presidency, but of this American generation. At which point, people in the not-too-distant future will look back at this presidency, they’ll look back at this President and they’ll say, ‘Oh, of course they gave him the Nobel Peace Prize. Of course they did.’ ”—Host Rachel Maddow on her eponymous MSNBC show, July 14, 2015.

■ “Americans are lucky to have Barack Obama as President and we should wake up and appreciate it while we can. President Obama will go down in history as an extraordinary president, probably a great one . . . Many Presidents fared better in history than in office. But it would be a morale booster and a sign of civic maturity if more Americans appreciated what an exceptional President they have right now. It could be a long wait for the next one.”—Washington Bureau Chief for Scripps News and former CBS News producer Dick Meyer, in a July 16, 2015 Decode DC op-ed titled: “Mr. President, on behalf of an ungrateful nation, thank you.”

■ PBS’s Charlie Rose: “I want to raise two big issues about him that are fascinating to me and, Jon, all of you. How smart is he? What’s the sense of—he is one of our brightest presidents?”

Longtime Newsweek editor Jon Meacham: “I think so, absolutely. I think so, and I think it has all of the pluses and minuses of that.

Rose: “I’m asking from a real standpoint.”

Meacham: “It’s a keen analytical intelligence.”—Exchange on Charlie Rose, January 12, 2016.

■ “Wait. One of the Greatest? . . . Like 20-Dollar Bill great? Like Mount Rushmore great? Yep. (We just won’t build Mount Rushmores anymore.) In so many ways, Obama was better than we imagined, better than the body politic deserved, and far, far better than his enemies will ever concede . . . We’ll look back at history, hopefully when we’re zooming down the Barack Obama Hyperloop Transport System, and think: That man was rare. And we were

damn lucky to have him.”—GQ editor-in-chief Jim Nelson in an April 14, 2016 online article “Why Obama Will Go Down as One of the Greatest Presidents of All Time: Already missing our soon-to-be-former POTUS.”

■ “Really, has there been any President cooler than Obama?”—May 10, 2016 tweet from *Newsweek’s* official Twitter account, plugging an online piece on whether Barack Obama is “the first pop culture President.”

■ “[Barack Obama] invoked the audacity of hope, all of the spirit, all of the creativity of his own brilliant speech writing . . . I don’t think we’ve ever had a President, save Lincoln, who is as great a speechwriter as this man.”—Correspondent Andrea Mitchell following Barack Obama’s speech as aired on MSNBC’s live Democratic convention coverage, July 27, 2016.

■ “It’s hard, frankly, to stop quoting from his [Barack Obama’s] remarks because they amounted to one of the most moving, inspiring valentines to this country that I’ve ever heard, brimming with regard for it and gratitude to it. We’re going to miss this man, America. Whatever his flaws, he’s been more than our president. Time and again, he’s been our national poet.”—*New York Times* columnist Frank Bruni in July 28, 2016 piece, “Freedom from Fear.”

■ “President Obama is the most noble man who has ever lived in the White House and he proved that again today . . . ”—Host Lawrence O’Donnell on MSNBC’s *The Last Word*, November 9, 2016.



Isaiah 55:6-11—“Seek you the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon. ‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways,’ says the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, and do not return there, but water the earth, and make it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.”