



## REALITY CHECK

### BIG Meltdowns Imperiling the U.S. (and not at power plants)

"If men of wisdom and knowledge, of moderation and temperance, of patience, fortitude and perseverance, of sobriety and true republican simplicity of manners, of zeal for the honour of the Supreme Being and the welfare of the commonwealth; if men possessed of these other excellent qualities are chosen to fill the seats of government, we may expect that our affairs will rest on a solid and permanent foundation." --Samuel Adams

The surfeit of images documenting human suffering and destruction in Japan after the 11 March Tohoku Earthquake and resulting tsunami is dreadful. Though the estimated 10,000 dead in Japan pales in comparison to the more than 200,000



dead in the Haitian earthquake of January 2010, the implications of the unfolding crisis, and its consequences for the 1.5 million Japanese men, women and children now homeless is staggering. Compounding the misery, almost one-third of Japan's energy production capability was disabled when the tsunami which followed the earthquake damaged four nuclear reactor units at Fukushima, which is to say that providing basic resources and services for *all* of Japan is increasingly difficult.

This crisis has significant implications for critical U.S. national security objectives and operations in the

region, including containment of North Korea and counterbalance to the rapidly growing Chinese deepwater naval threat.

Japan is a vital national security ally in Asia and host to several major U.S. military staging and support bases. Under the post-WWII Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security, the U.S. is committed to providing Japan with maritime and ballistic missile defense and disaster response capabilities. In return, the U.S. maintains a major military presence for deployment in the region, including the Seventh Fleet based in Yokosuka, Air Force fighter squadrons at Misawa and Kadena and the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force at Okinawa. More than 35,000 uniformed military personnel and another 5,000 DoD employees compose U.S. forces in Japan.

All that notwithstanding, on the day of the disaster in Japan, Barack Hussein Obama responded with a golf outing (his 61st as president) followed by an evening hobnobbing with major donors and his media sycophants at the annual Gridiron Dinner. While horrifying images of the quake and tsunami were seen around the world, Obama kept to his schedule, unwilling to interrupt it long enough to support Japanese leadership via the basic gesture of a reassuring interview with its national news service, NHK. He did find time, however, to record a presidential address on "Women's History Month."

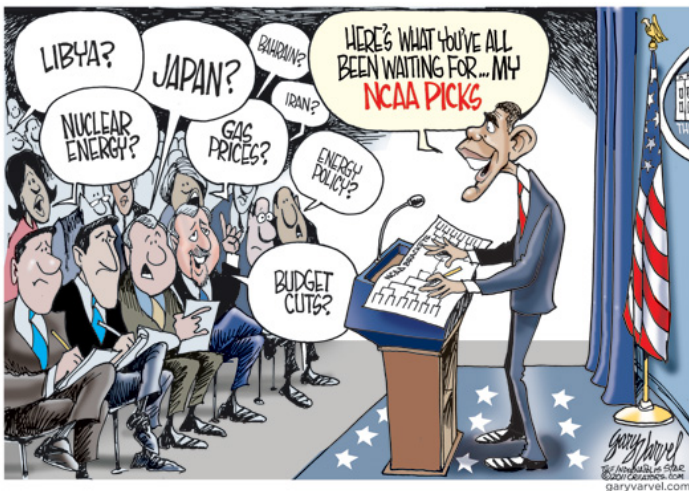
To be fair, Obama issued a brief statement through the White House communications office: "Michelle and I send our deepest condolences to the people of Japan... The friendship and alliance between our two nations is unshakeable..."

"UNSHAKEABLE"? Perhaps he meant to say, "The friendship and alliance between our two nations will never melt down..." Who could make this stuff up?

By contrast, recall, if you will, 8 January, the day Arizona Democrat Rep. Gabrielle Giffords was among those shot by a sociopath, who killed six others. As that event unfolded Obama's PR team released real-time photos of their boss looking very "presidential" in the White House Situation Room, the intelligence management center run by the National Security Council staff.

Apparently, the crisis in Japan offered no immediate opportunity to [convert tragedy into political triumph](#) as did the attack in Tucson, so his tee time took precedence.

In the days since the Tohoku Earthquake, Obama has agreed to several televised interviews, all with domestic TV stations in 2012 election battleground states. Oh, and he took time to fill out his March Madness brackets and share his NCAA tournament picks with an ESPN reporter and camera crew before he and the First Family are head off to sunny Rio de Janeiro for the weekend. (Sometimes it is hard to distinguish Obama's lifestyle from that of a lucky lotto winner, except that the lotto winner is spending his winnings, not taxpayer earnings.)



On the other hand, the Leftmedia is using the "[nuclear meltdown](#)" at the Fukushima No. 1 and No. 2 plants as political fodder derail efforts to jumpstart the U.S. nuclear power industry. However, as noted by my colleague, Cal Thomas: "The nuclear reactors at Japan's Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear plant were

damaged by the tsunami, not the earthquake, and not by faulty construction or worker error, as was the case at Chernobyl and to a lesser extent Three Mile Island." Few power plants in the United States are subject to tsunami paths, and those that are have hardened pump systems, unlike those in Japan.

However, the greatest nuclear threat to the continental United States is not a power plant meltdown, but the [detonation of a fissile nuclear device](#) in a U.S. urban center by [jihadi terrorists](#). Given the meltdown in the Middle East; power struggles in Egypt and Libya; growing unrest in Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Algeria, Djibouti, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen; and an emboldened enemy in Iran, the probability for a [nuclear attack](#) against the U.S. or against one of our key Western allies has increased significantly.

A quick reality check reveals a direct correlation between dramatically increased instability in the Middle East and Barack Obama's AWOL response to crises in the region. His weakness and timidity and the consequential perception of diminished American influence in the region and around the world are an enormous threat to U.S. national security. (As you may recall, we're also trying to manage a warfront in Afghanistan and ensure stability in Iraq.)

Closer to home, there's a war on our southern border, and it's out of control. For the record, there were more civilians murdered by warring drug factions in one Mexican border town, Ciudad Juarez, adjoining El Paso, Texas, in 2010, than were murdered by Taliban and jihadi forces in all of Afghanistan last year.

Obama is AWOL in that crisis, too, except for a few calls for additional gun control measures on this side of the border -- as if that were going to end violence in Mexico.

Despite all this, the most serious threat to U.S. national security is the [meltdown of the U.S. economy](#) orchestrated by Obama and his [Democratic Socialists](#).

Obama's [radical mentors and benefactors](#) must be proud!

In the words of the inimitable Yogi Berra, "This is like déjà vu all over again." Barack Obama's "leadership" is a redux of Jimmy Carter's ineptitude, but the consequences in terms of international threats, critical energy issues and an imploding domestic economy are far more perilous this time around.

Obama's domestic and international debacles leave one nostalgic for a real president, one with a clear vision for restoring America to her greatness, a national leader in the mold of [Ronald Reagan](#).

Fortunately, there are some contenders on the horizon, and there is still time to raise one up.

The next president must possess the leadership attributes that Obama sorely lacks. In the words of Samuel Adams, he must be a man "of wisdom and knowledge, of moderation and temperance, of patience, fortitude and perseverance, of sobriety and true republican simplicity of manners, of zeal for the honour of the Supreme Being and the welfare of the commonwealth," in order that "our affairs will rest on a solid and permanent foundation."