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The Hotline

NATIONAL JOURNAL'S DAILY BRIEFING ON POLITICS

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THE BLOGOMETER

The Blogometer is a daily report from The Hotline taking the temperature of the political blogosphere. The Blogometer appears in The Hotline's subscription-only tip sheet and in this space every weekday at noon.

8/25: A Good Compromise Leaves Everyone Angry

Political bloggers are taking a break from the health care debate to discuss AG **Eric Holder's** [decision](#) to appoint a special prosecutor to investigate evidence that C.I.A. interrogators abused detainees. Liberal bloggers are [complaining](#) that the investigation (as currently described) will be too narrow and will only punish low-level operatives instead of the **George W. Bush** officials who authorized the controversial interrogation techniques. Conservative bloggers, on the other hand, are [complaining](#) that the proposed investigation will do significant "damage" to the C.I.A. In short, Holder's decision appears to have made no one happy.

What else is happening in the blogosphere?

- Liberal bloggers ([Klein](#), [Drum](#), [Yglesias](#), [Morrill](#), [Cole](#)) are calling RNC Chair **Michael Steele** a hypocrite for writing a *Washington Post* [op-ed](#) accusing Dems of trying to harm Medicare, considering that Steele previously [declared](#) that Medicare cuts should be "on the table." Conservative bloggers ([Costa](#), [Henke](#), [Edwards](#)) are also criticizing Steele, who they believe is sacrificing conservative principles for short-term political gain. However, conservative blogger **Allahpundit** supports Steele's strategy of targeting seniors, calling it "cynical yet effective."
- Liberal bloggers ([Singiser](#), [Kleefeld](#), [Willis](#)) are mocking Steele after he [suggested](#) that MO SEN candidate **Roy Blunt** (R) should be cleaned out of the "crapper." Righty blogger **Erick Erickson** is frustrated by Steele's comments.
- Most liberal bloggers ([Welsh](#), [Sudbay](#), [Yglesias](#)) are unhappy that Obama [reappointed](#) **Ben Bernanke** to a second four-year term as Fed Chair. On the other side of the political spectrum, one conservative blogger [supports](#) Obama's decision.
- Conservative bloggers ([Vadum](#), [Malkin](#), [Gateway Pundit](#)) are accusing the Obama admin. of trying to "[desecrate](#)" 9/11 by turning it into "a day of leftist celebration and statist idolatry." Liberal bloggers ([Benen](#), [Black](#), [Willis](#)) are pushing back against this accusation.
- Liberal bloggers ([Marshall](#), [Singiser](#), [Willis](#)) are buzzing about a new [poll](#) showing ex-U.S. atty **Chris Christie** (R) leading NJ Gov. **Jon Corzine** (D) by only 3 pts.

DOJ INVESTIGATION: Hold On, Holder

Liberal bloggers are complaining that the DoJ investigation into the C.I.A.'s interrogation methods (as currently described) will be far too narrow:

- **dday**: "The narrowness of this investigation, focused on only the CIA personnel who colored outside the lines set down by moral lepers **John Yoo** and **Jay Bybee**, is reprehensible. If it only extends that far, we're seeing a replay of the Abu Ghraib investigation which sent **Lynndie England** to jail but let those who authorized and directed the abuse free with nary a warning. Basically, Holder is following [the Office of Professional Responsibility report](#), which recommended that they reopen about a dozen prisoner-abuse cases, some of which include murders. I hold no brief for the CIA personnel who engaged in this, but confining the mandate to the low men and women on the totem pole will do nothing to chill the potential for such abuse to happen again. If any old lackey in the Office of Legal Counsel can write up an opinion essentially validating torture, and they become *de facto* legal as long as those using the guidelines follow them generally, we don't really have a rule of law anymore. And future Presidents will easily discern the loophole in the system."

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