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The Big Question: What can Obama say to restore confidence? - The Hill'...

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The shrill political rhetoric around terrorism keeps Americans agitated and prone to overreaction. Worse, it encourages would-be terrorists by signaling that attacking the United States can knock us off our game. It's embarrassing to observe the glee with which some advocates have used the recent attempt to seek political advantage for the party out of power; to renew the call for an undefined "war" on terror; and even to argue for changing our legal regime. Stoking fear is a strategic mistake, harmful to the country, and unnecessary.

Overreaction helps terrorism do its work. "No Drama" Obama should do his.

John F. McManus, president of The John Birch Society, said:

The president could say that those responsible for the failure have been fired and that there will be no further tolerance of additional failures to act on already acquired information. He could then indicate that the politically correct nonsense that refuses to place extra attention on some persons has been abandoned. And, while he's at it, he could announce the start of significant moves to wind down military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan that are viewed by many in those and neighboring nations as unwanted occupations designed to impose America's will. Because the way to prevent terrorist attacks is to squelch them before they are carried out, it would also be most welcome if he told Americans that he will urge Congress to reinstitute the former House Committee on Un-American Activities and the Senate Subcommittee on International Subversion.

Craig Newmark, founder of Craigslist, said:

This is the responsibility of the press, to inform the public that we now have a White House that's serious about supporting anti-terrorism efforts, not just going through the motions. The people on the front lines need the real support of the White House, and now they have it.

Peter Navarro, professor of Economics and Public Policy at U.C. Irvine, said:

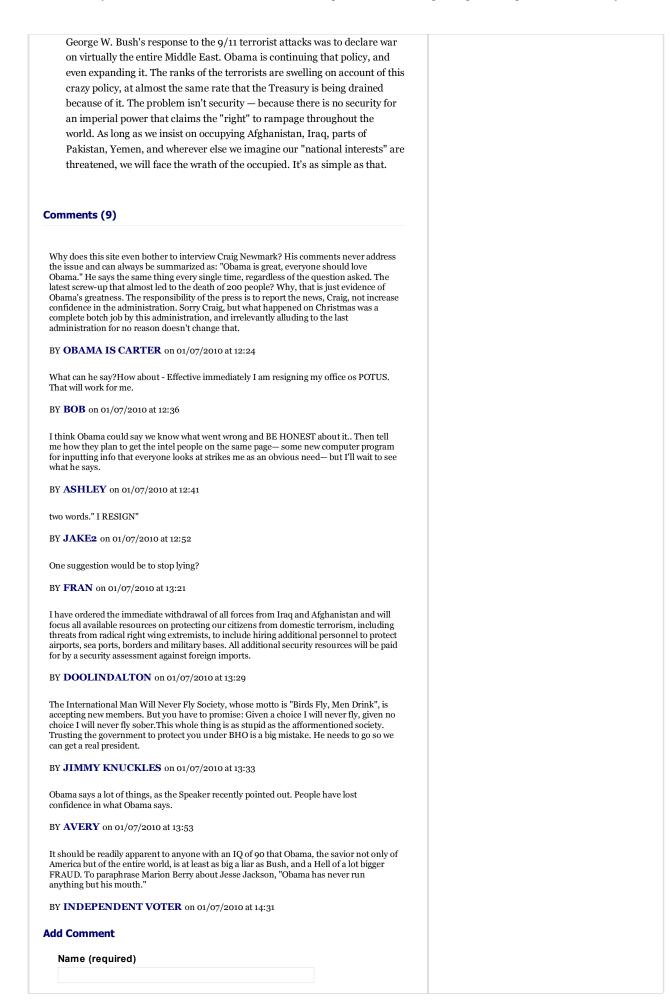
Obama has two communication problems that make this problematic: He has lost credibility on several other issues, particularly the economy, that he is no longer believable. He is way over-exposed in the media so any new appearance has less communicative value. End result: America is turned off and tuning him out.

Justin Raimondo, editorial director of Antiwar.com, said:

White House national security adviser James Jones says: "We know what happened, we know what didn't happen, and we know how to fix it." Hearing this, most Americans will roll their eyes heaven-ward, and exclaim: "Yeah, suuuuure you do!" They'll hear Dianne Feinstein proclaim that the "no fly" list ought to include anybody about whom there is a "reasonable doubt," and vow not to fly unless they absolutely positively HAVE to, thus dealing another blow to an airline industry already crippled by the recession and fear of flying.

In short, there isn't anything President Obama can say to reassure the American people, because the horse is already out of the barn. There is, in reality, nothing he can say, or do, that will restore the confidence of the American people in their government, because when push came to shove it was the passengers who saved themselves from the panty-bomber — not the CIA, not the National Security Council, not any one of the five or six "intelligence" bureaucracies that suck up our tax dollars and do little to earn their keep.





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