

BIZARRE DEPLOYMENT OF MCDONOUGH TORTURE ROLE IN ARTICLE BITCHING ABOUT OBAMA NON- PANIC

The
NYT
has a
long
story
claimi
ng to
show
that
Obama



is “lurching from crisis to crisis” but ultimately providing evidence to support this observation, which appears at the very end of the story.

Yet he remains deliberative, methodical and not swayed by outside criticism of his style.

It seems DC has decided it is a Big Story that Obama doesn't show senseless panic, like the inept members of Congress do.

What the story also shows is that Obama – like all Presidents going back to Reagan – relies too much on his National Security Council and not enough on his agencies. There's a hint of an argument that that is what leads to Obama's apparent lack of strategy (which as I said earlier this week, may be an appearance or may be real, I'm not sure anyone knows).

And to support that, the story includes this incident (which is by far the most interesting part of the article aside from where it says

Chuck Hagel doesn't speak up often in larger meetings for fear it will leak to the press, as his explanation for not speaking up got leaked to the press).

Over the Columbus Day weekend, the White House chief of staff, Denis R. McDonough, traveled to the San Francisco home of Senator Dianne Feinstein, the chairwoman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, to negotiate personally over redactions in a Senate report on the C.I.A.'s detention and interrogation policies after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

That Mr. McDonough would get involved in such an arcane matter puzzles some legislative aides on Capitol Hill, given the other demands on his time.

[snip]

Some liberals have been deeply disappointed with Mr. Obama's slowness in embracing the Senate report, and have questioned Mr. McDonough's involvement in redacting it, noting his close ties to the C.I.A. director, John O. Brennan, with whom he served as a deputy national security adviser during the president's first term. Mr. McDonough said he traveled to Mrs. Feinstein's home because he views the role of Congress in foreign policy as sacrosanct.

"This is an important case study of the role of Congress in foreign policy," he said, "and I want to get it right."

Forgive me if you spat up your drink, reading about McDonough's deep respect for Congress' "sacrosanct" role in foreign policy. What a load of baloney!

But of course McDonough needed to provide an alternate explanation for the real one – the one that explains why McDonough's investment in the

torture report is no surprise.

President Obama's White House has been heavily involved in the torture declassification process for years, since when National Security Advisor James Jones intervened to keep a short phrase secret making it clear torture was authorized by a Presidential finding, not by OLC memos. This is more of the same (and probably arises out of precisely the same instincts). That's not in the least news, even if the NYT hasn't acknowledged what is going on.

The headline for this story should be, "BREAKING White House intervening to protect torture." Instead, the NYT has taken a No Drama Obama story and turned into a demand for MOAR PANIC.