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WH comms group smarter than Obama, Chu on Solyndra?

posted at 10:35 am on March 17, 2012 by Ed Morrissey

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Politico has [a big scoop](#) on the Solyndra story today, but Darren Samuelsohn doesn't *quite* connect the dots. The report focuses on a lighter moment — pardon the pun — in the embarrassment of the Obama administration over the solar-power firm's collapse. While Barack Obama highlighted the \$535 million loan to Solyndra in his January 2010 State of the Union speech, by the time January 2011 rolled around, the White House didn't want Solyndra anywhere near the next SOTU [[see update](#)]:

[White House](#) staff knew enough about Solyndra's troubles in January 2011 to dismiss talk of inviting the company's executives into President Barack Obama's special State of the Union box, internal emails released Friday show.

The idea of seating [Solyndra](#) officials with Michelle Obama in the Capitol during the president's nationally televised speech came up around the same time that DOE was preparing a controversial change to the company's \$535 million federal loan guarantee, which wound up increasing the risk to taxpayers.

But Daniella Gibbs Léger, director of White House message events, batted down the idea of a [State of the Union](#) invite before it could be raised among her superiors. "Can't do Solyndra...they've run into some issues recently. :(," she wrote on Jan. 5, 2011.

The e-mail comes from a batch finally released to the House Energy and Commerce Committee, which has been looking into the Solyndra debacle and trying to overcome Obama administration stonewalling for months. That's not the only nugget in this new trove of material in the latest Friday night document dump from Obama's scandals, either. A month prior to that e-mail exchange, Obama's climate czar Carol Browner and her deputy exchanged e-mails that showed both despairing over Solyndra's financial condition:

On Dec. 8, 2010, for example, White House energy and climate adviser [Carol Browner](#) and her top deputy agonized over Solyndra's pending collapse.

“You hear Solyndra is in a severe liquidity crisis and we aren't likely given next dollar loan? Banner week,” Heather Zichal wrote. Browner's reply was quick: “Yep. Ugh”

Those familiar with the timeline of Solyndra's collapse and the loss of more than a half-billion taxpayer dollars will understand the significance of these e-mails. Just a few weeks later, [the Department of Energy “restructured” Solyndra's loans](#) so that taxpayer money was subordinated to later investors, allowing Solyndra to get \$75 million in new financing. That financing came from Obama campaign bundler George Kaiser, who gets his money out of Solyndra's assets before taxpayers see one thin dime, which means that we won't see that thin dime any time soon, if at all. The restructuring also either gave Solyndra sweetheart interest rates or perpetuated them despite the subordination, a move that the DoE and the White House have *never* explained.

So the question raised is this: If the White House comms group and its climate czar both knew that Solyndra was an embarrassment, and so much so that the comms group nixed having Solyndra execs attend the 2011 SOTU in person, then why did Obama and Energy Secretary Steven Chu agree to restructure the loan less than a month later on such unfavorable terms? Solyndra's woes must have been common knowledge in the West Wing for the “director of White House message events” to have that kind of wherewithal in advance of the January 25th speech. If so, then the decision to forge ahead with the restructuring that protected an Obama bundler's late investment while illegally subordinating taxpayer investment becomes much more curious.

“Ugh,” indeed.

Update: I didn't really intend this as a criticism of Darren, who does a good job of running down the details of the Friday night document dump, and the opening paragraph comes across as a little more critical than I wanted. I just saw a missed opportunity to link this to a decision that had more consequences than Darren brings up. I also spelled his name wrong initially.

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Tags: [corruption](#), [crony capitalism](#), [obama](#), [Solyndra](#), [Steven Chu](#)



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Heck, almost anyone is smarter than Obama, Chu, or Solyndra who has even an ounce of common sense and is not driven by sheer ideology.

lukjuj on March 17, 2012 at [10:40 AM](#)

Will bundlers get better health care under ObamaCare as well..?

d1carter on March 17, 2012 at [10:40 AM](#)

So the question raised is this: If the White House comms group and its climate czar both knew that Solyndra was an embarrassment, and so much so that the comms group nixed having Solyndra execs attend the 2011 SOTU in person, then why did Obama and Energy Secretary Steven Chu agree to restructure the loan less than a month later on such unfavorable terms?

FEC donation records, if they don't already have that answer, will before the end of this election cycle.

[Steve Eggleston](#) on March 17, 2012 at [10:40 AM](#)

And the main stream press ignores these facts once again, keeping taxpayers and reporters in the dark.

karenhasfreedom on March 17, 2012 at [10:41 AM](#)

This just in "The Smartest man on the planet" Not so much !!

stormridercx4 on March 17, 2012 at [10:42 AM](#)

So the question raised is this: If the White House comms group and its climate czar both knew that Solyndra was an embarrassment, and so much so that the comms group nixed having Solyndra execs attend the 2011 SOTU in person, then why did Obama and Energy Secretary Steven Chu agree to restructure the loan less than a month later on such unfavorable terms? Solyndra's woes must have been common knowledge in the West Wing for the "director of White House message events" to have that kind of wherewithal in advance of the January 25th speech. If so, then the decision to forge ahead with the restructuring that protected an Obama bundler's late investment while illegally subordinating taxpayer investment becomes much more curious.

And our ever-curious Fourth Estate will jump right on that to get those answers..... er, not so much.

Bitter Clinger on March 17, 2012 at [10:44 AM](#)

Will bundlers get better health care under ObamaCare as well..?

d1carter on March 17, 2012 at 10:40 AM

Hey, the bundlers will get to be appointed to staff the DEATH panels!!!

karenhasfreedom on March 17, 2012 at [10:47 AM](#)

But Daniella Gibbs Léger, director of White House message events, batted down the idea of a

State of the Union invite before it could be raised among her superiors. “Can’t do Solyndra...they’ve run into some issues recently. :(,” she wrote on Jan. 5, 2011.

Sounds like Daniella Gibbs Léger should be the President.

Bitter Clinger on March 17, 2012 at [10:47 AM](#)

I was smarter than Obama at thirteen when I constructed a working volcano from chicken wire, paper mache, baking soda and vinegar.

DHChron on March 17, 2012 at [10:50 AM](#)

Heck, almost anyone is smarter than Obama, Chu, or Solyndra who has even an ounce of common sense and is not driven by sheer ideology.

lukjuj on March 17, 2012 at 10:40 AM

When you consider that global oil demand will grow by 50% in just over a decade, there’s no lack of common sense in the government funding R&D for alternative sources of energy. By the time the price shock hits US consumers, there will be far too little time for the market to compensate (unless you actually believe the fairly tale that solar can scale quickly) without more energy sources for transportation.

However, the White House should never be involved in deciding which companies receive R&D funds. Even the Chinese know this.

bayam on March 17, 2012 at [10:51 AM](#)

The republican candidate should go for the throat on this one. They burned half a billion dollars of our money, gas is sky high and the administration just sits on his hands while the country suffers. This hits home home with everyone.

newportmike on March 17, 2012 at [10:51 AM](#)

“Can’t do Solyndra...they’ve run into some issues recently. :(,” she wrote on Jan. 5, 2011.

Its easy to be cute when you piss away other peoples money.

[rob verdi](#) on March 17, 2012 at [10:52 AM](#)

Just a few weeks later, the Department of Energy “restructured” Solyndra’s loans so that taxpayer money was subordinated to later investors, allowing Solyndra to get \$75 million in new financing. That financing came from **Obama campaign bundler George Kaiser, who gets his money** out of Solyndra’s assets before taxpayers see one thin dime, which means that we won’t see that thin dime any time soon, if at all.

why did Obama and Energy Secretary Steven Chu agree to restructure the loan less than a month later on such unfavorable terms?

We will never know...

the_nile on March 17, 2012 at [10:52 AM](#)

Obama forgot to pay his brain bill.

DHChron on March 17, 2012 at [10:52 AM](#)

Playola...on a very very large scale?

Maybe the world's largest pyramid scheme?

In either case, Carlo Pietro Giovanni Guglielmo Tebaldo Ponzi would be proud.

Give Constant Campaign Obama a few hundred thousand and you get a few million or half a billion later on down the road...until the cash runs out.

coldwarrior on March 17, 2012 at [10:53 AM](#)

Obama's so dumb he got this joke.

DHChron on March 17, 2012 at [10:55 AM](#)

Please, PLEASE, get the so called 'dumb' people back in charge.

The country can't take much more of the super geniuses that are running her into the ground.

jukin3 on March 17, 2012 at [10:56 AM](#)

What Obama and his tribe are doing makes Watergate look minor. Is there NOTHING this administration can do that will upset the public at large or get the MSM to really expose? Unbelievable display of lawlessness.

Elections have consequences.

steved95 on March 17, 2012 at [10:57 AM](#)

steved95 on March 17, 2012 at 10:57 AM

x2

screwauger on March 17, 2012 at [10:59 AM](#)

When you consider that global oil demand will grow by 50% in just over a decade, there's no lack of common sense in the government funding R&D for alternative sources of energy. By the time the price shock hits US consumers, there will be far too little time for the market to compensate (unless you actually believe the fairly tale that solar can scale quickly) without more energy sources for transportation.

However, the White House should never be involved in deciding which companies receive R&D funds. Even the Chinese know this.

bayam on March 17, 2012 at 10:51 AM

If you were correct, buggy whips would still be all the rage.

Fortunately for the rest of us who do not reside in your myopic fantasy where only government provides innovation (it demonstrably subsidizes yesterday's technologies over today's) it does not. Innovation is driven by the very market forces you deride.

Difficultas_Est_Imperium on March 17, 2012 at [11:02 AM](#)

Reading these email exchanges between Obummer's minions, I get the feeling that our country is being run by 16 year old spoiled brats. Can you picture a professional correspondence using the word "ugh"?

These lunatics are in charge! That's scary

[Wine N Dine](#) on March 17, 2012 at [11:03 AM](#)

“Solyndra was not as ‘shovel ready’ as we expected it to be. Ha ha ha....” ~ President Barack Obama during debate with 2012 GOP Presidential candidate.

[Roy Rogers](#) on March 17, 2012 at [11:06 AM](#)

I think this is call “crony embezzlement”

J_Crater on March 17, 2012 at [11:06 AM](#)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ecQAZoYhpJ8&t=66m57s>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkX3xF-m-1Q>

islandman78 on March 17, 2012 at [11:07 AM](#)

“I won”

Meaning: “Everyone else is a loser”

[BobMbx](#) on March 17, 2012 at [11:11 AM](#)

When you consider that global oil demand will grow by 50% in just over a decade

Drill baby drill! There is no excuse not to be energy independent.

HotAirian on March 17, 2012 at [11:11 AM](#)

So here we have Obama and company pandering to the 1%.

The Republicans need to bring this message to front and squash the Occupiers meme.

The hypocrisy and lying this administration gets away with is astounding.

plutorocks on March 17, 2012 at [11:14 AM](#)

DHChron

your back! Hows Texas buddy?

angrymike on March 17, 2012 at [11:21 AM](#)

H A R V A R D !

KOOLAIID2 on March 17, 2012 at [11:22 AM](#)

So when is the indictment going to be served January 15 2012

angrymike on March 17, 2012 at [11:24 AM](#)

angrymike on March 17, 2012 at 11:21 AM

...mikey...*you missed another meltdown from the Dr. in the early morning hours!*

KOOLAIID2 on March 17, 2012 at [11:25 AM](#)

KOOLAIDS

I read some of it, the good DR has got to be related to Obama “smartest man in the room”

angrymike on March 17, 2012 at [11:28 AM](#)

I don't think he ever considers that he could be wrong. He just thinks if he believes it and wants it to be it will be. He doesn't care about the real facts he has his own reality. He lives by a flawed philosophy not rooted in reality. My sister has an advanced degree, graduated magna cum laude but she has absolutely zero idea how to run her life. She thinks she's intellectual and the degree makes her somehow superior. Love her to death and no doubt she's smart but in the real world not so much.

ldbgcoleman on March 17, 2012 at [11:35 AM](#)

Oh, and BTW, Ed...

Top 'O the mornin' to ya, on this fine and lovely St. Paddy's Day...

d1carter on March 17, 2012 at [11:37 AM](#)

So who in Congress is investigating this “Eco-Watergate”?

albill on March 17, 2012 at [11:38 AM](#)

d1carter on March 17, 2012 at 11:37 AM

And, to all HA'ers as well...

d1carter on March 17, 2012 at [11:39 AM](#)

Timely: [Oil Sands are a Triumph for the Human 'Environment'](#)

slickwillie2001 on March 17, 2012 at [11:40 AM](#)

Response from GOP candidates: *crickets*

KS Rex on March 17, 2012 at [11:45 AM](#)

So who in Congress is investigating this “Eco-Watergate”?

albill on March 17, 2012 at 11:38 AM

Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA) is running the House investigation. These emails coming to light are part of his investigation efforts.

Bitter Clinger on March 17, 2012 at [11:46 AM](#)

Bitter Clinger

But what will come of these investigations, F@F, Solyndra ect. Lets hope we have a October dump of indictments. That would stir the pot a bit.

angrymike on March 17, 2012 at [11:55 AM](#)

The only explanation I can think of is that the highest levels of this White House have been hermetically sealed off against outside information, and decisions are made only on the basis of information from the “right people”, i.e. friends of Obama or the Democrat Party.

Socratease on March 17, 2012 at [11:58 AM](#)

I thought obama and chu were comms...

bernverdnardo1 on March 17, 2012 at [11:59 AM](#)

The media is a disgrace for ignoring this.

aquaviva on March 17, 2012 at [12:00 PM](#)

Heard someone on the EIB Network say that "Obama was the least smartest guy in the room. No matter what room he is in." Guess he knew what he was talking about. Wonder who he was?

RickinNH on March 17, 2012 at [12:03 PM](#)

The message to defeat Obowma?

He is out of touch with the American people. He doesn't care that Americans suffer under his policies no matter how hard he tries to blame GW Bush, all this misery and suffering is under his control.

A simple bumper sticker: Obowma doesn't care.

dthorny on March 17, 2012 at [12:25 PM](#)

These people are clueless about how society works. If one of their top priorities for civilization is that it becomes powered by solar energy then they should all be working in and investing in a solar energy company. There is no reason for these people to be in **government** and from there they fret about a solar energy company.

Resolute on March 17, 2012 at [12:34 PM](#)

Corruption at the highest levels of American govt. It's depressing but gives us more resolve to get this Chicago thug liar out of the White House.

Christian Conservative on March 17, 2012 at [12:35 PM](#)

...then why did Obama and Energy Secretary Steven Chu agree to restructure the loan less than a month later on such unfavorable terms?

Some people need to go to jail for this.

[petefrt](#) on March 17, 2012 at [12:37 PM](#)

Curious??

Not me. It was done for raw political advantage.

Much, much better to rob and scr*w the citizens of this country than to have Solyndra fail just one month after the State of the Union. It matters not that money was flushed down the drain; it was flushed in the service of optics: early default would have been a crippling message. And so Obama's calculation has proven wise, because the failure of Solyndra has gotten much less press than it would have otherwise.

The crony capitalism Kaiser involvement was there not to help Kaiser, but Obama. The sweetheart subordination terms were a pay-off to keep Solyndra afloat.

G. Charles on March 17, 2012 at [1:08 PM](#)

Politico can't or won't connect the dots??? My guess is 'won't'. As for the rest of the media, excluding FOX, they'll stay mumm on this since they're all interested in seeing Obama re-elected. To the media 'investigative journalism' is an oxymoron.

Bob in VA on March 17, 2012 at [1:12 PM](#)

Please, PLEASE, get the so called 'dumb' people back in charge.

The country can't take much more of the super geniuses that are running her into the ground.

jukin3 on March 17, 2012 at 10:56 AM

I couldn't agree more.

Mini-14 on March 17, 2012 at [1:23 PM](#)

The restructuring also either gave Solyndra sweetheart interest rates or perpetuated them despite the subordination, a move that the DoE and the White House have never explained.

The obvious never has to be explained.

THEY WERE PAYING OFF CAMPAIGN DONORS!

GarandFan on March 17, 2012 at [1:34 PM](#)

The media is a disgrace for ignoring this.

aquaviva on March 17, 2012 at 12:00 PM

...what's sad...is now we expect them to do that.

KOOLAI2 on March 17, 2012 at [1:46 PM](#)

Aren't you glad to know that people like libtard4life and other progressive dullards will gladly toil laboriously, to recompense us taxpayers, for this administration's willful wasting of our hard-earned money?

rightside on March 17, 2012 at [1:46 PM](#)

GarandFan on March 17, 2012 at 1:34 PM

Worse. A donor can be small time, as you know.

These were bundlers and gave mucho dinero.

Just 1%ers getting what they wanted.

Hypocrites.

IlikedAUH2O on March 17, 2012 at [1:52 PM](#)

then why did Obama and Energy Secretary Steven Chu agree to restructure the loan less than a month later on such unfavorable terms?

Because this admin., with Obama the Pimp in Chief, are the most thuggish liars, ever.

Next week Obama will go to OK and NM, to 'laud' himself on how much drilling he's been for. He will be in

very conservative enclave, in which he s/b booed non-stop. He has taken credit for explorations in N. Dakota, from the private lands, the swine.

[Look how he is against the common people](#), the 1%ers who lies impertinently, every time he opens his mouth, while the media let him.

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama is calling anew on Congress to end tax subsidies for the oil and gas industry, saying the nation needs to develop alternative sources of energy in the face of rising gasoline prices.

Schadenfreude on March 17, 2012 at [2:08 PM](#)

S/b “from the private lands”.

Schadenfreude on March 17, 2012 at [2:09 PM](#)

This one situation alone ,forgetting the other major ones in existence , should be enough reason to toss this administration out on it's ear in the coming election which is exactly why the MSM has been so silent on it.

Fast and Furious anyone.

CommentGuy on March 17, 2012 at [2:12 PM](#)

Innovation is driven by the very market forces you deride.

Difficultas_Est_Imperium on March 17, 2012 at 11:02 AM

You don't seem to understand much about the government's role in funding R&D, especially at the university level and the military's involvement in funding any R&D that might provide a tactical advantage to some aspect of military operations. DARPA wasn't a free enterprise project- and even Marc Andreessen's initial browser development project was largely funded by government R&D funds.

That's not to say that venture capital isn't the driving force behind innovation. But it's active in a different part of the product and services development funnel.

bayam on March 17, 2012 at [4:00 PM](#)

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