

### Obama, Clintons Forge Genuine Partnership

WASHINGTON (AP) — Once a tense rivalry, the relationship between President Barack Obama and Bill and Hillary Rodham Clinton has evolved into a genuine political and policy partnership. Both sides have a strong incentive in making the alliance work, especially in an election year.

For Obama, Bill Clinton is a fundraising juggernaut, a powerful reminder to voters that a Democrat ran the White House the last time the economy was thriving. For the spotlight-loving former president, stronger ties with the White House and campaign headquarters mean he gets a hand in shaping the future of the party he led for nearly a decade.

Obama's re-election campaign has put Bill Clinton on notice that he will be used as a top surrogate, further evidence of how far the two camps have come since the bitter days of the 2008 Democratic primary between Obama and Hillary Clinton, now his secretary of state.

On Sunday evening in northern Virginia, the current and former president planned to make the first of three joint appearances at fundraisers for Obama's campaign.

The host? Terry McAuliffe, a close adviser to both Clintons and one of the most ardent protectors of their political brand.

### Sailboat Collision Kills Three, One Missing

ENSENADA, Mexico (AP) — A sailor who pulled two dead bodies from coastal waters off California and Mexico during a sailboat race said Sunday that he found debris smashed in so many pieces that it looked like the vessel had gone through a blender.

Eric Lamb said both bodies were covered with scrapes and bruises and one had severe head trauma.

Lamb was working safety patrol Saturday morning when he came across the debris roughly nine hours after the crash occurred. He called the Coast Guard for help.

Two race participants who were in the area at the time of the crash also told The Associated Press on Sunday that they saw a tanker or heard warnings on their radios.

The boat apparently collided at night with a much larger vessel, leaving three crew members dead and one missing, a sailing organization said early Sunday. It was the state's second ocean racing tragedy this month.

### Van Plunges Off NYC Road Into Bronx Zoo

NEW YORK (AP) — An out-of-control van careened across several lanes of traffic on a highway overpass Sunday, then plunged more than 50 feet off the side of the road and landed in a ravine on the grounds of the nation's largest city zoo, killing all seven people aboard, authorities said.

Three of the victims in the crash near the Bronx Zoo were children, including girls ages 12 and 10 and a younger girl whose age wasn't known, the Fire Department of New York said. The others were an 84-year-old man and three women, ages 80, 45 and 30. Their names weren't immediately released.

The van was headed south on the highway that cuts through a working-class neighborhood when it bounced off the median, crossed all southbound lanes and hit the guardrail, police said. Next to the guardrail is a pedestrian path, and the 4-foot-high iron fence between that walkway and the ground below was intact after the accident, meaning the van likely flipped over it.

The van landed nearly upside down on zoo property that's closed to the public and far from any animal exhibits, zoo spokeswoman Mary Dixon said. The vehicle lay mangled hours later, its right doors ripped off and strewn amid the trees along with items from the car. Next to the heavily wooded area are subway tracks and a train yard.

It's not clear what caused the van to go out of control. The southbound side of the highway was closed briefly Sunday afternoon while police investigated.

# The Secret Service's Black Eye

## Exposed Secrets Put Agency Under Fire

BY CALVIN WOODWARD  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Secret Service does not often get a black eye behind those oh-so-cool sunglasses. It's got a shiner now.

The public face of the service is one of steely professionals in impeccable suits, wearing discreet earpieces and packing even more discreet weapons. Agents are expressionless except for their ever-searching gaze, lethal automatons ready to die for a president.

By reputation, stoked by Hollywood myth and the public's fleeting glances at dark-windowed motorcades, they are anything but party animals. But what happened in Colombia didn't stay in Colombia.

The exposed Secret Service secrets have put the storied agency under a different line of fire, as lawmakers and internal investigators try to get to the bottom of officers' behavior and any implications for the safety of those they protect, starting with President Barack Obama.

Eight Secret Service officers have been fired and three disciplined, and a dozen military personnel have had their security clearances suspended, in the unfolding investigation of sexual misbehavior by agents who traveled to Cartagena, Colombia, this month to set up security for Obama's visit.

The agency says it is also looking into whether agents hired prostitutes and strippers in El Salvador in advance of the president's trip last year. More reports are emerging of allegedly ribald conduct, off duty on official trips.

John Brennan, Obama's top counterterrorism adviser, said Sunday investigators want to know whether there was any time "these activities put at risk either classified information or security." He said officials are satisfied the Colombian episode did not pose a threat to the president.

Obama joked about agents being on a shorter leash in his remarks to the White House Correspondents' Association dinner Saturday night. "I really do enjoy attending these dinners," he said. "In fact, I had a lot more material prepared, but I have to get the Secret Service home in time for their new curfew."

Altogether, the perception is forming of frat boys being frat boys, except these ones have top security clearance, access to the president and constant knowledge of his whereabouts.

"They're on the receiving end of this incredibly powerful fire hose" of allegations and rumors, says Eric Dezenhall, a scandal-management consultant and author who counsels corporations and institutions. "They're going to be under it for a while. You cannot control this torrent."

As a young aide in Ronald Reagan's White House, Dezenhall looked upon Secret Service agents as "superhuman" and their professional culture "as the coolest thing in the world."

The code words — "Rawhide" for Reagan, "Stagecoach" for the helicopter (and now "Renegade" for Obama) — feed into the cool factor. So does the one thing that most people have known about the trusted band of bodyguards, their willingness to take a bullet for those they protect. Talk about commitment.

"I just don't think their reputation could be much higher," Dezenhall says. "But, as with happens with everybody now, we're going to see the humanity in it, which takes some of the mythology away from it."

The Secret Service was formed to chase counterfeiters at the end of the Civil War, a mission it still carries out as part of its portfolio of financial crime investigation. Its protective work began informally, as part-time security for President Grover Cleveland in 1894.

After President William McKinley's 1901 assassination by an anarchist who hid his gun in a

handkerchief, Congress put the agency in charge of protecting presidents, then an expanding list of family members, U.S. and visiting foreign officials, and political candidates.

Presidents and their families often beef about the confines of a life shadowed by the protective detail. But it's a gentle complaint because they know the risks of being exposed without them.

In the nation's history, 10 presidents have been victims of direct assaults by assassins, says a Congressional Research Service study of the agency. Four died: Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield, McKinley and John Kennedy, whose slaying in 1963 was the only assassination on the Secret Service's watch.

"The work you do here is pretty scary," first lady Michelle Obama said after seeing Secret Service headquarters last year. "All I can say is, after my little tour, ignorance is bliss — I just don't want to know."

"Just tell me when — where — to run."

The book, "In the President's Secret Service," tells stories of men behaving badly, but those men were president or vice president, not agents. For all the bawdy tales of Lyndon Johnson and Kennedy, their protectors are portrayed as loyal if overworked and, with some leaders, underappreciated.

The author, Ronald Kessler, said in an interview that the Colombian episode "is the biggest scandal in the history of the Secret Service" yet, from his knowledge of how agents conduct themselves, "an aberration."

Consorting with prostitutes opened agents to the risk of blackmail or other avenues to eavesdrop on or harm the president, had the women been tied to terrorists or spies, Kessler said. To his mind, that makes the breach worse than the 2009 infiltration into Obama's state dinner by Michael and Tareq Salahi, a security lapse that could have had grave consequences if pulled off by people other than two social climbers from Virginia.

# Obama Aide Mum On Whether U.S. Is Protecting Activist

BY ANNE FLAHERTY  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A top White House aide on Sunday said President Barack Obama wants to strike an "appropriate balance" between advancing human rights and maintaining U.S. relations with China, the first public comments by the administration on its potential involvement in harboring a Chinese activist on the eve of diplomatic talks between the two world powers.

John Brennan, Obama's counterterrorism adviser, declined to provide details on the incident or say whether the activist, Chen Guangcheng, might be hiding in the U.S. embassy in Beijing as reported.

Chen, who has exposed forced abortions and sterilizations in villages as a result of China's one-child policy, escaped house arrest a week ago in Shandong province in eastern China. Chinese-based activists say he was driven away by supporters and then handed over to others who brought him to Beijing.

"I think in all instances the president tries to balance our commitment to human rights, making sure that the people throughout the world have the ability to express themselves freely and openly, but also that we can continue to carry out our relationships with key countries overseas," Brennan told "Fox News Sunday."

The U.S. relationship with China is "very important," he

added, "so we're going to make sure that we do this in the appropriate way and the appropriate balance is struck."

Chen's escape comes at a politically sensitive time for the U.S. This week, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner head to Beijing for long-planned strategic and economic talks. Assistant Secretary of State Kurt Campbell began a hurried mission to Beijing on Sunday to smooth the way for annual talks involving Clinton and Geithner.

The U.S. has been looking to China for help on trying to curb suspected nuclear ambitions of North Korea and Iran, and to push Syria toward a cease-fire with anti-government protestors. Bilateral

disputes over trade, China's currency and U.S. relations with Taiwan also were expected to surface during the talks.

While the White House has remained mostly mum on the incident — and how much it might factor into next week's discussions — Brennan suggested that the diplomatic dance with China isn't new.

"I think it would be fair to say the president has faced similar situations in the past in terms of this balancing requirement and so I'm confident that the president and others within the U.S. government will be able to find the right way forward," Brennan said.

# Plot

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gone down in history as the man who put the Navy SEALs and the relationship with Pakistan in jeopardy, while failing to catch the al-Qaida leader.

"Al-Qaida was and is our No. 1 enemy," White House spokesman Jay Carney said last week. "So it's a part of his foreign policy record, obviously, but it's also part of a very serious endeavor to keep our country safe."

How safe remains in question. U.S. officials say al-Qaida is less able to carry out a complex attack like Sept. 11 and they rule out al-Qaida's ability to attack with weapons of mass destruction in the coming year. These officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they say publicly identifying themselves could make them a target of the terrorist group.

U.S. counterterrorist forces have killed roughly half of al-Qaida's top 20 leaders since the raid. That includes U.S.-born cleric Anwar al-Awlaki, killed by a drone in Yemen last September, less than six months after bin Laden's death.

Only a few of the original al-Qaida team remain, and most of the new names on the U.S. target lists are relative unknowns, officials say.

"The last terror attack was seven years ago in London and they haven't had any major attacks in the U.S.," says Peter Bergen, an al-Qaida expert who once met bin Laden. "They are recruiting no-hopers and dead-enders."

Yet Zawhri is still out there. Though constantly hunted, he has

managed to release 13 audio and video messages to followers since bin Laden's death, a near record-rate of release according to the IntelCenter, a private intelligence firm. He has urged followers to seize on the unrest left by the Arab Spring to build organizations and influence in Egypt, Libya and elsewhere, and back rebels in Syria — a call that U.S. intelligence officials say is being heeded.

U.S. attempts to deliver a "knockout punch" to Zawhri and his followers in Pakistan have been hamstrung by a breakdown in relations with Pakistan's government over the bin Laden raid.

Pakistani officials saw the raid as a violation of their sovereignty, made worse by a U.S. friendly fire attack that killed almost two dozen Pakistani troops on the border with Afghanistan last fall. Pakistan's parliament called for a redrafting of what the U.S. is allowed to do, and where.

CIA drone strikes in Pakistan's border area continue, but are limited to a relatively small area of the tribal region.

"Our efforts are focused on one small kill box and, we've hit them hard, but they still maintain a vital network throughout Pakistan" says Bill Roggio, editor of the Long War Journal, which tracks U.S. counterterrorism efforts worldwide.

Al-Qaida also takes shelter in Pakistan's urban areas, as shown by the bin Laden raid, and the CIA's efforts to search those areas is often blocked by the Pakistani intelligence service.

U.S. officials say they believe factions within the agency shelter and even fund al-Qaida's senior leaders and related militant groups such as the Haqqani network, which attacks U.S. troops in Afghanistan, from their Pakistani safe haven. Pakistan denies the charge.

Afghanistan is the temporary home to up to 100 al-Qaida fighters at any single time, U.S. officials say, adding that a steady series of U.S. special operations raids is essential to keeping them out. With the withdrawal of U.S. forces, U.S. counterterrorism officials fear al-Qaida could return.

By the numbers, al-Qaida's greatest presence is still greatest in Iraq, where intelligence officials estimate up to a 1,000 fighters have refocused their campaign from striking now-absent U.S. troops to hitting the country's Shiite-dominated government.

Yemen's al-Qaida of the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) is becoming a major draw for foreign fighters as it carves out a stronghold in the south of the country, easily defeating Yemeni forces

preoccupied battling tribal and political unrest. The White House recently agreed to expanded drone strikes to give the CIA and the military greater leeway to target militant leaders.

This al-Qaida group has been a major threat since 2009, when one of its adherents tried to bring down a jetliner over Detroit.

Al-Qaida affiliates such as al-Shabab in Somalia are struggling to carry out attacks in the face of a stepped up CIA-U.S. military campaign, and a loss of popular support after blocking U.N. food aid to some 4 million starving Somalis, officials say.

But the group is kept afloat by a stream of cash, partly from piracy and kidnapping of the Somali coast. White House counterterrorism chief John Brennan told

an audience of CIA officers that total ransom payments paid to Somali pirates increased from approximately \$80 million in 2010 to \$140 million in 2011, according to remarks obtained by The Associated Press.

Cutting off those finances by persuading companies and U.S. to stop paying up is now central to the terrorism-fighting effort.

So, too, is the strategy of fighting small, smartly and covertly, avoiding land invasions such as those in Iraq and Afghanistan that caused Muslim outrage and helped draw fresh recruits, says Rand's Jones.

Many U.S. officials cite the Yemen model as the way ahead: a

small network of U.S. intelligence and military forces working with local forces to selectively target militants.

"The key challenge will be balancing aggressive counterterrorism operations with the risk of exacerbating the anti-Western global agenda" of al-Qaida and its affiliates, says Robert Cardillo, a senior official in the Office of the Director of National Intelligence.

In other words, adds Jones, "it is a war in which the side that kills the most civilians loses."

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