

Obama and Us

The announcement this week by the Fed that the recession could be ending should have been great news for the Obama administration. After all, it is the president's economy now, and if it turns upward, he will be celebrated, right?

Uh, maybe not.

It may seem insane, but the ACORN scandal could now be diminishing any good economic news. The community activism outfit has been embarrassed by two amateur journalists who used hidden cameras to expose ACORN employees who discussed how to set up houses of prostitution, including one containing underage girls.

Soon after the exposé, the Senate voted 83-7 to deny ACORN further federal grants. And even though the committed left media pretty much ignored the story, millions of Americans are engaged.

Just like they are engaged on the health care controversy. A recent Rasmussen poll shows most Americans now oppose Obama-care, even after the president's emotional plea last week. So what exactly is going on here?

I think President Obama is experiencing some buyer's remorse. The furious opposition to his policies have made for great television, and those images are now overriding what policy success he may be having. During the campaign, Obama appeared cool and in control to the public. But now, he seems bewildered at times, taken aback by the strident and persistent attacks on his vision for the country.

Those are not going to stop. Conservative Americans deeply distrust the president on philosophy, not just policy. So the White House must come up with a strategy to blunt the emotional anti-Obama displays, or risk being marginalized in

year one. The Obama people must convince those who supported the president, with reservations, that they did not vote for the wrong guy.

From my perch in the media, it seems that the president thought the left-wing press would protect him against right-wing media scrutiny. After all, liberal media outlets heavily outnumber their conservative counterparts. But that is not happening. MSNBC and CNN are not competitive with Fox News, and newspapers like the *New York Times* and the *Boston Globe* are in serious economic trouble as readers have turned away by the thousands.

In public relations land, the biggest mistake the president is making is avoiding moderate conservatives who would give him a fair shake. This Sunday, Mr. Obama is going on all the Sunday chat shows to talk up health care—all except Fox News Sunday with Chris Wallace. Bad decision.

Mr. Wallace is no ideologue, and Fox News is dominating the national conversation right now. By avoiding Fox, the President looks weak. I mean, he is preaching to the choir on the network news shows. But the choir is obviously losing members. All the polls show that.

So if I'm Barack Obama, I take the economy, the aggressive stuff I'm doing against al-Qaeda and the Taliban, and I bring it over to the loyal opposition. That would get some attention. And it might also bury the ACORN scandal in the process.