



## OPINION: CHRISTIE & CO. -- FANNING THE FLAMES OF THE BRIDGEGATE SCANDAL

CARL GOLDEN | APRIL 10, 2014

The administration seems more out-of-control than capable of effective spin control or damage control



Is it just me or are the people doing their best to put the Bridgegate scandal behind them instead doing and saying things to keep the story alive?

Consider:

- The team of attorneys hired by the Christie administration to conduct an internal review to determine if anyone in the governor's office was involved issued a report that, to no one's surprise, absolved the governor and his top staff from

any responsibility in the closing of access lanes to the George Washington Bridge in Fort Lee last September.

It then went a bridge too far by attacking former Deputy Chief of Staff Bridget Kelly, who set the lane closings into motion, as emotionally unstable and suggesting that Hoboken Mayor Dawn Zimmer, who accused the administration of improperly withholding Federal relief funds from her town, was delusional. The resulting uproar over what struck most as gratuitous and sexist in the extreme undermined the report even further.

Senate President Steve Sweeney, often an ally of Gov. Chris Christie, told the Star-Ledger

The goal is to help one another douse the flames of controversy. The people involved in these incidents have taken a fireplace bellows to it instead.

The strategy -- such as it is -- seems to be to endure public embarrassment in the interest of obscuring the politically pertinent.

Each revelation has led to an immediate round of news stories, complete with all the background material, ensuring that it will not fade from the public consciousness anytime soon.

The attention given to the scandal and to the governor has increased exponentially in national news outlets, mass circulation magazines, popular blogs, and websites widely read by the political cognoscenti.

While Christie's decline in the polls has slowed somewhat, they continue to demonstrate serious