

“I am not an ideologue,” President Obama told Republican lawmakers Friday afternoon. Obama engaged in some lively banter with members of the opposition party as Republicans gathered in Baltimore for a retreat.

No doubt many in the audience were reminded of the last time a sitting president felt compelled to tell the nation what he was not. Shortly after Richard Nixon uttered “I am not a crook,” he was resigning his presidency.

While Obama has no reason to resign for proclaiming what he’s not, his protest demonstrates that he is either being disingenuous or delusional. While the president doesn’t like anyone using the dictionary as a weapon against his words, Merriam Webster defines ideologue as “an often blindly partisan advocate or adherent of a particular ideology.”

Since ascending to the presidency, Obama has proffered nothing but ideologically charged legislation. Health care anyone? Executive orders he has signed have sprung up from his embraced ideology. After all, his first executive order implemented his campaign pledge to close Gitmo.

What about closing Gitmo isn’t ideological?

According to Congressman John Campbell, (R-California), the Republicans invited Obama to visit them at their retreat. Among the stipulations for the visit was the requirement that their meeting be completely open to the press.

C-Span provided full coverage.

Campbell said the visit was successful since he and his colleagues were able to challenge the president’s episodic claim that Republicans are the party of “no”.

“We made it very clear that every single thing the president has proposed we have offered alternatives,” Campbell said.

When Congressman Tom Price (R-Georgia) accused Obama of repeatedly accusing Republicans of offering “no ideas and no solutions,” the president retorted, “I don’t think I said that.”

Congressman Mike Pence (R-Indiana) told the president that Republican proposals have fallen on deaf ears and said, “Speaker Pelosi and your administration have been ignoring (them) for 12 months.”

Yet, the President is entitled to kudos for venturing to the Republican retreat. Who knows, Obama might actually learn that Republicans are not the Ebenezer Scrooges they are often portrayed as being.

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The president acknowledged that Republicans have joined Democrats in some efforts, such as sending more U.S. troops to Afghanistan. He also called on Republicans to find other ways of working together.

Obama told the legislators that members of his own party have also been part of the problem. “It’s not just your side. It’s our side as well.”

When he gave his State of the Union address, Obama claimed that he was willing to listen to anyone with better ideas. At the conference he told Republicans, “I’m ready and eager to work with anyone.”

Unfortunately, the president again demonstrated his inability to understand some basic truths

about tax cuts. While Republicans generally say tax cuts spur growth and revenues, Mr. Obama clings to the notion that tax cuts result in diminished revenues.

John Kennedy, Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush should have banished such a notion long ago.

In his opening remarks, Mr. Obama criticized a Washington culture driven by opinion polls and nonstop political campaigns.

Just out of curiosity, has there ever been a more nonstop political campaign than that which has been waged by President Obama since becoming president? Even Bill Clinton periodically acted as though he was president rather than a candidate.

Maybe this event can lead Obama to actually act a little in a bipartisan way. He did agree to work with Republicans to create a process allowing the President to veto specific parts of spending bills.

Who knows, perhaps he meant it when he told the Republican gathering in Baltimore, "I don't think the American people want us to focus on our job security, they want us to focus on their job security."