

GOLDEN: Christie 'throwing deep' to maintain relevance



Kenny Stabler, the free-spirited quarterback of the Oakland Raiders in the 1970's, was asked by a reporter his understanding of the following quote by author Jack London:

"I would rather be ashes than dust! I would rather that my spark should burn out in a brilliant blaze than it should be stifled by dry-rot. I would rather be a superb meteor, every atom of me in magnificent glow, than a sleepy and permanent planet. The function of man is to live, not to exist. I shall not waste my days trying to prolong them. I shall use my time."

Stabler, who once said he studied his team's playbook by the light from the jukebox, pondered the question for a moment and replied: "Throw deep."

In his ramping up his non-but-increasingly-likely candidacy for the Republican presidential nomination, Gov. Chris Christie appears to have become a student of both the erudite London and the freewheeling Stabler.

With a series of policy speeches on issues ranging from dramatic revisions in Social Security and Medicare to unyielding support



[EDITORIAL: Christie rolls the dice on Social Security](#)

With polls consistently placing him anywhere from fourth to eighth place — well out of contention — Christie understands that in a field of as many as 18, he's in danger of becoming just another face in the crowd, fighting to escape a space cluttered with governors, former governors, senators, former senators, and private citizens all of whom have decided they're fit and qualified to become the leader of the Free World.

Standing out from the crowd, rising above the others and drawing notice, interest, attention, money and support demands that he "throw deep."

To succeed, it's necessary to portray his rivals as timid, poll-driven and focus group tested souls fearful of offering a detailed vision of what they'd do to change the direction of the nation.

While his subtle digs at frontrunners — former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush and current Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker — haven't elicited a response from either one — at least not publicly — Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul who's tangled with Christie before, has shown he's willing to engage Christie over the data collection issue.

Drawing on his experience as United States Attorney, Christie has staked out an exceptionally hard line position, arguing that the government's snooping activities are an essential tool in the fight against terrorism and there've been no proven instances of individual civil liberties being violated.



[ASBURY PARK PRESS](#)

[Christie steps up Patriot Act criticisms of Republicans](#)

He's characterized opponents as misguided and their arguments as ridiculous baloney. Reaching into his well-stocked trunk of blunt and colorfully descriptive phrases, he offered the rather macabre observation that "you have no civil liberties when you're in a coffin."

Paul has adopted an equally feet-in-concrete position against renewal of the Patriot Act which authorizes the data collection operation, contending there is no evidence it has thwarted any terrorist plots and is a blatantly unconstitutional intrusion into the private lives of American citizens.

If Christie makes the cut for the initial candidate's debate in August by finishing somewhere in the top 10 as measured by average polling strength,

