



By **Carl Golden, July 10, 2012** in **Opinion**

Back in the day, staffs of elected and cabinet officials -- particularly those in the governor's office -- frequently passed their downtime by exchanging bits of gallows humor.

One went: "What are the seven most dreaded words in the English language?"

"Mike Wallace is waiting in your office."

If true, it was certain nothing good would come of his visit. Wallace didn't do puff pieces; he identified a target and shredded it.

That was at the time, of course, when Wallace and "60 Minutes" dominated television news, often breaking stories quickly picked up by the national news media, exponentially compounding the problem faced by his Case in point: Gov. Chris Christie's recent confrontation with a critic on the boardwalk in Seaside Heights. A visibly angry governor was recorded challenging an individual who had, according to published reports, expressed displeasure with Christie's policies on public education.

The video quickly made its way to the entertainment-themed television program TMZ and, from there, to news websites. Just as in Wallace's time, the story went national, driven by the image of the state's highest elected official daring a critic to stand his ground and back up his comments.

Christie is heard on the video calling the man a "big shot" and deriding him for "walking away."

