



Lame Duck Speech

Rather Than Knocking It Out Of The Park, Obama Chose To Play Small Ball With Rehashed Ideas

OBAMA DIDN'T GO "BOLD" AND ONLY OFFERED UP "SMALL BORE STUFF"

The Associated Press Headline: "Analysis: Obama's Agenda More Bite-Sized Than Bold." (Nancy Benac, "Analysis: Obama's Agenda More Bite-Sized Than Bold," [The Associated Press](#), 1/28/14)

- **Obama's State Of The Union Address Was Full Of "Modest Proposals."** "The president's State of the Union address Tuesday was an amalgam of modest proposals designed to chip away at some of the same problems he's been working on all along: persistent unemployment, middle-class insecurity, lagging schools and more." (Nancy Benac, "Analysis: Obama's Agenda More Bite-Sized Than Bold," [The Associated Press](#), 1/28/14)

National Journal's Ron Fournier: The "Modest Agenda" Of The State Of The Union Address Was "Delivered By A Diminished Leader." "It was a good speech about a modest agenda delivered by a diminished leader, a man who famously promised to reject the politics of "small things" and aim big—to change the culture of Washington, to restore the public's faith in government, and to tackle enduring national problems with bold solutions." (Ron Fournier, "Good Speech, Modest Agenda, Diminished Leader Americans May Have Already Tuned Out Barack Obama," [National Journal](#), 1/28/14)

- **Obama's State Of The Union Address "A Moment In Miniature."** "It was, instead, a moment in miniature: an executive order to raise the minimum wage for future federal contractors, and another to create "starter" retirement accounts; summits on long-term unemployment and working families; and scores of promises to "continue" existing administration programs." (Ron Fournier, "Good Speech, Modest Agenda, Diminished Leader Americans May Have Already Tuned Out Barack Obama," [National Journal](#), 1/28/14)
- **"Obama Has Not Executed; He Has Not Found A Way To Overcome His Era's Obstacles... It May Be Too Late To Learn How."** "That's the problem: Obama has not executed; he has not found a way to overcome his era's obstacles and fulfill his potential for greatness. It may be too late to learn how." (Ron Fournier, "Good Speech, Modest Agenda, Diminished Leader Americans May Have Already Tuned Out Barack Obama," [National Journal](#), 1/28/14)

CBS's Norah O'Donnell: Obama's Agenda Has Shrunk From Grand To Granular. CBS's NORAH O'DONNELL: "I think the rest of his speech really just proved, that Obama's proposals have gone from grand to granular. Right? From these grand sweeping proposals at the beginning of his second term to the granule, kind of more modest scaled back proposals." ([CBS News](#), 1/28/14)

CBS's John Dickerson: Obama's SOTU Proposals Filled With "Very Small Bore Stuff." CBS's JOHN DICKERSON: "If you look at the specifics of what he's going to do - he's going to raise the minimum wage for companies that work with the federal government. Well that's a very small amount. He's gonna set up

a special thing at the Treasury Department, a savings account. That's a very small thing. He's going to convene C.E.O.s., he's going to meet with college professors, he's going to cut some red tape and take care of some permitting blockages. That is very small bore stuff compared to the claims the President made tonight and his aides have been making in terms of his acting." ([CBS News](#), 1/28/14)

David M. Drucker @DavidMDrucker: "Nothing wrong w/ this #SOTU. @BarackObama delivery is solid. But it's not grand & littered w/ small ball ideas he's previously offered." ([Twitter](#), Accessed 1/28/14)

Time's Alex Altman And Zeke Miller: "The Speech Was Littered With Well-Worn Policies And Economic Themes On Which Obama Has Relied Time And Again." (Alex Altman and Zeke Miller, "Obama Outlines Modest Plans In State Of The Union Before Country Turns The Page," [Times](#), 1/28/14)

- **"Virtually All" Of Obama's Ideas "Were Ideas Obama Has Plugged Before."** "He offered 'a set of concrete, practical proposals to speed up growth, strengthen the middle class, and build new ladders of opportunity into the middle class.' But virtually all of them, from manufacturing initiatives to wider broadband access, were ideas Obama has plugged before." (Alex Altman and Zeke Miller, "Obama Outlines Modest Plans In State Of The Union Before Country Turns The Page," [Times](#), 1/28/14)
- **"Even At Its Boldest Moment, It Was A Speech Of Half-Measures."** (Alex Altman and Zeke Miller, "Obama Outlines Modest Plans In State Of The Union Before Country Turns The Page," [Times](#), 1/28/14)

The White House Showed No Sense Of Urgency In Addressing The Nation's Problems

Fox News' Kirsten Powers: White House Oversold SOTU Speech, Obama Had No Urgency. FOX NEWS' KIRSTEN POWERS: "I don't know if the White House has made any secret that he was going to mention polled well. The things he listed off, whether it's student debt or Pre-K funding are things that he brings up all the time because they poll very well. But the speech was definitely oversold by the White House in the sense that we were told to expect sort of this urgency. I really did not hear any urgency, I was expecting more of a, you know, we're in really dire straits and that's why I have to pull out my pen, and why I have to take things into my own hands. And that was really missing from the speech." ([Fox News](#), 1/28/14)

AFTER OBAMA'S SIXTH STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS, FACTS WERE FORGOTTEN

The Washington Post's Fact Checker: Obama Was "Cherry-Picking" The Number Of Jobs Added Under His Presidency. "The president is cherry-picking a number that puts the improvement in the economy in the best possible light. The low point in jobs was reached in February 2010, and there has indeed been a gain of about 8 million jobs since then, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data. But the data also show that since the start of his presidency, about 3.2 million jobs have been created — and the number of jobs in the economy still is about 1.2 million lower than when the recession began in December 2007." (Glen Kessler, "Fact Checking The 2014 State Of The Union Address," [The Washington Post's Fact Checker](#), 1/28/14)

The Washington Post's Fact Checker: "The Only Reason Obama Can Tout A Gain In Manufacturing Jobs 'For The First Time Since The 1990s' Is Because, Before The Recession, Manufacturing Had Been On A Slow Decline For Many Years." "The low point for manufacturing jobs was reached in January 2010, and there has been a gain of 570,000 jobs since then. But BLS data show that the number of manufacturing jobs is still 500,000 fewer than when Obama took office in the depths of the recession — and 1.7 million fewer than when the recession began in December 2007. The gain in manufacturing actually has begun to stall a bit in the past year. The only reason Obama can tout a gain in manufacturing jobs 'for the first time since the 1990s' is because, before the recession, manufacturing had been on a slow decline for many years." (Glen Kessler, "Fact Checking The 2014 State Of The Union Address," [The Washington Post's Fact Checker](#), 1/28/14)

The Washington Post's Fact Checker: Obama Cutting The Budget Deficit In Half "Not Much To Brag About" Since He Was Partially Responsible For 2009's \$1.3 Trillion Deficit. "The federal budget deficit has declined in half since 2009, from \$1.3 trillion to about \$600 million, but that's not much to brag about. The 2009 figure was not just a deficit Obama inherited from his predecessor, since it also reflected the impact of decisions, such as the \$800 billion stimulus bill, enacted early in the president's term." (Glen Kessler, "Fact Checking The 2014 State Of The Union Address," [The Washington Post's Fact Checker](#), 1/28/14)

- ***The Washington Post's Fact Checker: "The United States Still Has A Deficit Higher Than It Was In Nominal Terms And As A Percentage Of Gross Domestic Product Than It Was In 2008."*** (Glen Kessler, "Fact Checking The 2014 State Of The Union Address," [The Washington Post's Fact Checker](#), 1/28/14)

The Washington Post's Fact Checker: Despite Obama's Claims That Economic Mobility Was "Declining," A Recent Study Shows That Upward Mobility Had Not Changed Significantly Over Time. "Close readers of the president's speeches might have noticed an interesting shift in the president's rhetoric. Just in December the president gave a speech on economic mobility in which he three times asserted that it was "declining" in the United States. But earlier this month, renowned economists Raj Chetty, Emmanuel Saez and colleagues published a paper based on tens of millions of tax record showing that upward mobility had not changed significantly over time. The rate essentially is the same now as it was 20 years ago." (Glen Kessler, "Fact Checking The 2014 State Of The Union Address," [The Washington Post's Fact Checker](#), 1/28/14)

The Washington Post's Fact Checker: Obama Includes 6.3 Million Medicaid Enrollees In The Total ObamaCare Enrollees, And "Leaves The Impression" That It's Because Of ObamaCare. "Obama carefully does not say these numbers are the result of the Affordable Care Act, but he certainly leaves that impression. But the Medicaid part of this number—6.3 million from October through December—is very fuzzy and once earned a rating of Three Pinocchios. The ACA expanded Medicaid to those who earn less than 133 percent of the poverty line – about \$15,000 for an individual—to 26 states (and the District) that decided to embrace that element of the law. But no one really knows how many of the 6.3 million are in this expansion pool—or whether they are simply renewing or would have qualified for Medicaid before the new law. Indeed, the number also includes people joining Medicaid in states that choose not accept the expansion. The private insurance numbers—about 3 million—are also open to question. The troubled federal exchange counts people as enrolled if an individual has selected a plan, but does not know if a person enrolled and paid a premium because that part of the system has yet to be built." (Glen Kessler, "Fact Checking The 2014 State Of The Union Address," [The Washington Post's Fact Checker](#), 1/28/14)