



# A Transparent Failure

## *Obama Promised The Most Transparent Presidency In History – His Administration Has Been Anything But*

**Obama: “My Administration Is Committed To Creating An Unprecedented Level Of Openness In Government.”** (President Barack Obama, “Memorandum For The Heads Of Executive Departments And Agencies: Transparency and Open Government,” [Press Release](#), 1/21/09)

**Obama: “Let Me Say It As Simply As I Can: Transparency And The Rule Of Law Will Be The Touchstones Of This Presidency.”** (President Barack Obama, [Remarks By The President In Welcoming Senior Staff And Cabinet Secretaries To The White House](#), Washington, DC, 1/21/09)

- **White House Press Secretary Jay Carney: “We Are The Most Transparent Administration In History, Without Question.”** (Jay Carney, [White House Press Briefing](#), Washington, DC, 9/28/11)
- **Obama: “I Won’t Stop Fighting To Open Up Government.”** (President Barack Obama, [Remarks At A Town Hall Meeting](#), Elyria, OH, 1/22/10)
- **Obama: “But I Can Tell You We Have Put In Place The Toughest Ethics Laws And Toughest Transparency Rules Of Any Administration In History. In History.”** (President Barack Obama, [Remarks At A Town Hall Meeting](#), Elyria, OH, 1/22/10)

## *Obama’s Justice Department Used A “Secret Subpoena” To Obtain Phone Records From Reporters*

**The Associated Press Headline: “Gov’t Secretly Obtained AP Phone Records In Probe”** (Mark Sherman, “Gov’t Secretly Obtained AP Phone Records In Probe,” [The Associated Press](#), 5/13/13)

**Obama’s Justice Department Used A “Secret Subpoena” To Obtain Phone Records For Associated Press Reporters And Editors “Without Notifying The News Organization.”** “The Justice Department used a secret subpoena to obtain two months of phone records for Associated Press reporters and editors without notifying the news organization, a senior department official tells NBC News, saying the step was necessary to avoid ‘a substantial threat to the integrity’ of an ongoing leak investigation.” (Michael Isikoff, “‘Nixonian’? The Justice Department Secretly Collected AP Reporters’ Phone Records,” [NBC News](#), 5/13/13)

- **“Anti-Secrecy Watchdogs Also Criticized The Move.”** “Anti-secrecy watchdogs also criticized the move. ‘I’ve never heard of a dragnet collection effort against a media organization like this,’ said Stephen Aftergood, who tracks secrecy issues for the Federation of American Scientists. ‘This was not a targeted monitoring of an individual reporter. It’s a sweeping collection of an entire

bureau's communications.'" (Michael Isikoff, "'Nixonian'? The Justice Department Secretly Collected AP Reporters' Phone Records," [NBC News](#), 5/13/13)

**NBC's Chuck Todd: "Its Chilling ... They Owe Us An Explanation."** NBC's CHUCK TODD: "It's chilling and I guess they owe us an explanation, but it's absolutely chilling because the broad scope of what they subpoenaed in going after phone records." (MSNBC's "[Morning Joe](#)," 5/14/13)

**National Journal's Ron Fournier: The Department Of Justice's Phone Record Seizure Is "Chilling" And "Stupid."** NATIONAL JOURNAL's RON FOURNIER: "I used to be the bureau chief of the Washington bureau. I'll say two things. One, this is chilling. This is only meant to intimidate whistleblowers who want to get out embarrassing information about the administration and to intimidate reporters. This is only to clamp down on information that might embarrass the president. That's all this is about. Secondly, not only is it chilling, it is stupid." (MSNBC's "[Morning Joe](#)," 5/14/13)

### ***Four Days Into The Scandal, Americans Are Still Waiting For All The Facts From Obama On The IRS Scandal***

**The Washington Post Editorial, On The IRS Scandal: "The Administration Should Provide Complete Answers, And Soon."** "Who else knew about the targeting? In subsequent testimony, IRS leaders assured lawmakers that no one did. Were they ignorant or deliberately untruthful? Did they even ask before reporting to Congress? ... Considering that Ms. Lerner seems to have known about the targeting by 2011, did the IRS ever plan on revealing that it had singled out conservative groups? Or was it only the impending release of the inspector general's report that compelled agency officials to 'fess up? The administration should provide complete answers, and soon." (Editorial, "The IRS's Turn To Answer Questions," [The Washington Post](#), 5/13/13)

**The Wall Street Journal Editorial: In His Comments On The IRS Scandal, Obama "Was Making Conditional What The IRS Has Already Admitted."** "Asked about the IRS news on Monday, Mr. Obama said that 'if in fact IRS personnel' targeted conservatives, that would be 'outrageous' and those responsible would be held 'accountable.' That's nice to hear, but he was making conditional what the IRS has already admitted, which is not as bad as what we are learning it really did." (Editorial, "The IRS Wants You," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 5/13/13)

**The IRS Delivered Confidential Documents From The Groups It Targeted To ProPublica Which Contradicts Earlier Statements Made By The IRS And "May Represent A Violations Of Federal Guidelines."** "ProPublica on Monday reported that the same IRS division that targeted conservative groups for special scrutiny during the 2012 election cycle provided the investigative-reporting organization with confidential applications for tax-exempt status. That revelation contradicts previous statements from the agency and may represent a violation of federal guidelines. Lois G. Lerner, who heads the IRS sector that reviews tax-exemption applications, told a congressional oversight committee in April 2012 that IRS code prohibited the agency from providing information about groups that had not yet been approved." (Josh Hicks, "IRS Released Confidential Info On Conservative Groups To ProPublica," [The Washington Post](#), 5/14/13)

**IRS Officials In Washington And At Least Two Other Offices Were Involved In Investigating Conservative Groups.** "Internal Revenue Service officials in Washington and at least two other offices were involved with investigating conservative groups seeking tax-exempt status, making clear that the effort reached well beyond the branch in Cincinnati that was initially blamed, according to documents obtained by The Washington Post." (Juliet Eilperin and Zachary A. Goldfarb, "IRS Officials In Washington Were Involved In Targeting Of Conservative Groups," [The Washington Post](#), 5/13/13)

- **IRS Officials In Washington Sent “Queries To Conservative Groups Asking About Their Donors And Other Aspects Of Their Operations.”** “IRS officials at the agency’s Washington headquarters sent queries to conservative groups asking about their donors and other aspects of their operations, while officials in the El Monte and Laguna Niguel offices in California sent similar questionnaires to tea-party-affiliated groups, the documents show.” (Juliet Eilperin and Zachary A. Goldfarb, “IRS Officials In Washington Were Involved In Targeting Of Conservative Groups,” [The Washington Post](#), 5/13/13)

### ***And Obama Is Still Under Fire For His Shifting Story And Falsehoods About The Attacks In Benghazi***

***The Washington Post Fact Checker: “The President’s Claim That He Said ‘Act Of Terrorism’ Is Taking Revisionist History Too Far, Given That He Repeatedly Refused To Commit To That Phrase When Asked Directly By Reporters In The Weeks After The Attack.”*** “During the campaign, the president could just get away with claiming he said ‘act of terror,’ since he did use those words — though not in the way he often claimed. It seemed like a bit of after-the-fact spin, but those were his actual words — to the surprise of Mitt Romney in the debate. But the president’s claim that he said ‘act of terrorism’ is taking revisionist history too far, given that he repeatedly refused to commit to that phrase when asked directly by reporters in the weeks after the attack. He appears to have gone out of his way to avoid saying it was a terrorist attack, so he has little standing to make that claim now.” (Glenn Kessler, “Obama’s Claim He Called Benghazi An ‘Act Of Terrorism’,” [The Washington Post Fact Checker](#), 5/14/13)

- ***The Washington Post Fact Checker: Obama Is “Pretending The Right Words Were Uttered.”*** “Indeed, the initial unedited talking points did not call it an act of terrorism. Instead of pretending the right words were uttered, it would be far better to acknowledge that he was echoing what the intelligence community believed at the time--and that the administration’s phrasing could have been clearer and more forthright from the start.” (Glenn Kessler, “Obama’s Claim He Called Benghazi An ‘Act Of Terrorism’,” [The Washington Post Fact Checker](#), 5/14/13)

***In His Press Conference Yesterday, “There Was Nothing Either Clinical Or Straightforward About The President’s Response” To The Attacks In Benghazi.*** “But there was nothing either clinical or straightforward about the president’s response to the ongoing Republican investigations of what happened in Benghazi last Sept. 11 or, more importantly, what happened inside the White House and the State Department in the days immediately following that attack when officials were battling with the Central Intelligence Agency over what to say. Here, without doubt, was an angry president, clearly outraged at what he sees as Republican partisan perfidy. He blasted the controversy over the talking points as ‘a sideshow.’” (George E. Condon, “Obama’s Outrage Focused On Republicans More Than IRS,” [National Journal](#), 5/13/13)

- ***Obama “Dismissed The Emails That Showed More Extensive Administration Editing” And “Doubled Down” On His Arguments.*** “He dismissed the emails that showed more extensive administration editing, saying, ‘There’s no ‘there’ there.’ And he objected to the investigation itself, saying, ‘The whole thing defies logic.’ Those who hoped he would come out, acknowledge that some mistakes had been made in White House explanations and try to move beyond an argument over emails were disappointed. At this press conference, Obama signaled he is ready for a fight. If anything, he doubled down, guaranteeing an intensification of the showdown between the two ends of Pennsylvania Avenue.” (George E. Condon, “Obama’s Outrage Focused On Republicans More Than IRS,” [National Journal](#), 5/13/13)