



Mile High Rhetoric Meets Reality

Obama's Record Is A Stark Contrast To The Soaring Hope And Change He Promised Four Years Ago

HOPE AND CHANGE: "BIG ELECTION ABOUT SMALL THINGS"

HOPE: Obama Complained About Politics As Usual, Saying If "You Don't Have A Record To Run On, Then You Paint Your Opponent As Someone People Should Run From." OBAMA: "If you don't have a record to run on, then you paint your opponent as someone people should run from. You make a big election about small things. And you know what? It's worked before, because it feeds into the cynicism we all have about government. When Washington doesn't work, all its promises seem empty." (Sen. Barack Obama, [Remarks At DNC Acceptance Speech](#), Denver, CO, 8/28/08)

CHANGE: *The Associated Press:* "The President Can't Tell Voters About A Grand Economic Comeback Story Because There Isn't One To Tell." (Ken Thomas, "Obama Doesn't Emphasize Issues He Fought Hard For," [The Associated Press](#), 6/12/12)

CBS's Bob Schieffer: "Whatever Happened To Hope And Change?" CBS's BOB SCHIEFFER: "Well, you know, one of the refreshing changes when the President was elected -- he talked about hope and change. Whatever happened to hope and change? Now, it seems he's coming right out of the box with these old fashioned negative ads. All campaigns seem to think are the basis of all campaigns now." (CBS's ["Face The Nation"](#), 5/27/12)

- **Obama Will "Run A Much More Negative Campaign" To Combat A Jobless Rate That Has Not Allowed For A President's Reelection "Since The Great Depression."** "The jobless rate will stand at levels that have not led to a president's re-election since the Great Depression. Largely because of that, Obama will run a much more negative campaign, his aides acknowledge, even if it threatens to demoralize some supporters who were inspired by his 2008 message of hope." (Charles Babington, "2012 Race Likely To Be Close, Tough, Maybe Brutal," [The Associated Press](#), 11/5/11)
- **Democrat Strategist: "Unless Things Change And Obama Can Run On Accomplishments, He Will Have To Kill Romney."** "'Unless things change and Obama can run on accomplishments, he will have to kill Romney,' said a prominent Democratic strategist aligned with the White House. The strategy came down to proving Romney was unfit to govern, a phony, and 'weird.'" (Glenn Thrush, *Obama's Last Stand*, 2012)
- **Obama Did Not Have Reservations About The "Kill Romney" Strategy And "Personally Signed Off On All Of His Campaign's Paid Advertising."** "If the outside world found that

approach jarring, Obama didn't. In interviews with two dozen current and former Obama advisers, not one said he expressed reservations— at least in the beginning— about the 'kill Romney' strategy, and he personally signed off on all of his campaign's paid advertising, although he often toned down the very harshest attacks." (Glenn Thrush, *Obama's Last Stand*, 2012)

- ***The Washington Post's* Ruth Marcus: "Forget Hope And Change," Obama's Campaign Is Based On "Fear And Loathing."** "Forget hope and change. President Obama's reelection campaign is going to be based on fear and loathing: fear of what a Republican takeover would mean, and loathing of whomever the Republican nominee turns out to be. Of course the Obama campaign will attempt to present the affirmative case for his reelection, citing legislative achievements, foreign policy successes and the current flurry of executive actions. But his strategists have clearly concluded that selling the president will not be enough, and the contours of the ugly months ahead are becoming increasingly apparent." (Ruth Marcus, "Campaign 2012: Welcome To The Slugfest," [The Washington Post](#), 11/2/11)
- **"Today, Obama's Campaign Is Very Much Playing The Usual Political Game Of Divide And Conquer."** "With Obama, though, we have more of a special case. This is the guy, after all, who eight years ago created his political brand with a stemwinder of a Democratic National Convention speech decrying the divisiveness of politics, and who four years ago ran a campaign defined by a positive vision of 'hope' and 'change.' Today, Obama's campaign is very much playing the usual political game of divide and conquer." (Aaron Blake, "Can The Campaign Of 'Hope' Go Negative?" [The Washington Post](#), 4/9/12)
- **In 2012, Obama Will Be A "Brass-Knuckled, Pipe-Hitting, Red-In-Tooth-And-Claw Brawler Determined To Do What Is Necessary To Stay In Power In Other Words, A Politician."** "Whichever side is right, one thing is undeniable. For anyone still starry-eyed about Obama, the months ahead will provide a bracing revelation about what he truly is: not a savior, not a saint, not a man above the fray, but a brass-knuckled, pipe-hitting, red-in-tooth-and-claw brawler determined to do what is necessary to stay in power - in other words, a politician." (John Heilemann, "Hope: The Sequel," [New York Magazine](#), 5/27/12)
- **"Thus, To A Very Real Degree, 2008's Candidate Of Hope Stands Poised To Become 2012's Candidate Of Fear."** (John Heilemann, "Hope: The Sequel," [New York Magazine](#), 5/27/12)

"Though The Obamans Certainly Hit John McCain Hard Four Years Ago—Running More Negative Ads Than Any Campaign In History—What They Intend To Do To Romney Is More Savage." (John Heilemann, "Hope: The Sequel," [New York Magazine](#), 5/27/12)

- **Obama Relies On "Going Negative," Which Is "Very Different From The Formula" He Used In 2008.** "Obama and his advisers fell back on the timeless method that has essentially become the default option for presidential reelection campaigns, despite his promises to change the process. They prefer to talk euphemistically about 'drawing the contrast,' but everyone else calls it going negative. This was something very different from the formula that elected the country's first African-American president, but it would have to do." (Glenn Thrush, *Obama's Last Stand*, 2012)

Obama's 2012 Re-Election Campaign Is "A Depressing Experience Compared With The Heady Days Of 2008." "That reluctance to fully commit to the grungier realities of 2012, said people around him, hinted at a deeper sentiment that he shared with his dispirited 2008 voters despite his surface bravado. The reelection campaign was, simply, a depressing experience compared with the heady days of 2008. 'We have got to stop buying our old bullshit,' one of Obama's state directors told me, summing up the opinion of a handful of top Obama advisers. 'We're our own worst enemy with this crap. This isn't 2008.'

We've got to accept that. So does he.'" (Glenn Thrush, *Obama's Last Stand*, 2012)

HOPE AND CHANGE: JOBS AND INCOME

HOPE: Obama Said He Measured Progress By Whether Americans Could Find A Job And Where Incomes Increased Instead Of Going Down. OBAMA: "We measure progress by how many people can find a job that pays the mortgage, whether you can put a little extra money away at the end of each month so you can someday watch your child receive her college diploma. We measure progress in the 23 million new jobs that were created when Bill Clinton was president... when the average American family saw its income go up \$7,500 instead of go down \$2,000, like it has under George Bush." (Sen. Barack Obama, [Remarks At DNC Acceptance Speech](#), Denver, CO, 8/28/08)

CHANGE: Since Obama Took Office, The Nation Has Lost 316,000 Jobs And The Unemployment Rate Has Increased From 7.8 Percent To 8.3 Percent. ([Bureau Of Labor Statistics](#), Accessed 8/4/12)

The Unemployment Rate Has Remained Above Eight Percent For A Record 42 Straight Months. ([Bureau Of Labor Statistics](#), Accessed 8/4/12)

CHANGE: Median Household Income: "Real Median Household Income In March Was Down \$4,300 Since Obama Took Office In January 2009 ..." (Mike Dorning, "Obama Fails To Stem Middle-Class Slide He Blamed On Bush," [Bloomberg](#), 4/30/12)

The New York Times Headline: "A Closer Look At Middle-Class Decline." (David Leonhardt, "A Closer Look At Middle-Class Decline," *The New York Times*' ["Econmix"](#), 7/23/12)

The Middle Class Is Shrinking And Millions Of Families Are Hurting. "The latest census data depict a middle class that's shrinking as unemployment stays high and the government's safety net frays. The new numbers follow years of stagnating wages for the middle class that have hurt millions of workers and families." (Hope Yen, "Census Shows 1 In 2 People Are Poor Or Low-Income," [The Associated Press](#), 12/15/11)

"Many Of The 'New Poor' Are The Former Middle Class." "'Many of the 'new poor' are the former middle class,' broadcaster Tavis Smiley, who requested the study, said in a statement." (Mary Wisniewski, "Poverty To Keep Rising Due To Slow Recovery: Study," [Reuters](#), 1/11/12)

The Recovery Has Failed To Produce The Middle Class Jobs Obama Campaigned On. "Barack Obama campaigned four years ago assailing President George W. Bush for wage losses suffered by the middle class. More than three years into Obama's own presidency, those declines have only deepened. The rebound from the worst recession since the 1930s has generated relatively few of the moderately skilled jobs that once supported the middle class, tightening the financial squeeze on many Americans, even those who are employed." (Mike Dorning, "Obama Fails To Stem Middle-Class Slide He Blamed On Bush," [Bloomberg](#), 4/30/12)

Poverty: 97.3 Million Americans Now Qualify As Low-Income And Another 49.1 Million Are In Poverty; Together, 146.4 Million Americans Or 48 Percent Of The Population. (Hope Yen, "Census Shows 1 In 2 People Are Poor Or Low-Income," [The Associated Press](#), 12/15/11)

HOPE AND CHANGE: RAISING TAXES

HOPE: Obama Said That "The Last Thing We Should Do Is Raise Taxes On The Middle Class." OBAMA: "I will -- listen now -- I will cut taxes -- cut taxes -- for 95 percent of all working families, because, in an economy like this, the last thing we should do is raise taxes on the middle class." (Sen. Barack Obama, [Remarks At DNC Acceptance Speech](#), Denver, CO, 8/28/08)

CHANGE: Obama Admits He Wants To Raise Taxes In 2013 If He Is Reelected. OBAMA: "That is a

reasonable proposition. So, when you hear folks saying ‘Well, the president shouldn’t want massive job killing tax increases when the economy is this weak.’ Nobody’s looking to raise taxes right now. We’re talking about potentially 2013 and the out-years.” (President Barack Obama, [Press Conference](#), Washington, DC, 7/11/11)

A New Ernst & Young Report On The Looming Fiscal Cliff Found That The Expiration Of Tax Cuts Would “Result In A Smaller Economy, Fewer Jobs, Less Investment And Lower Wages.” “The confluence of fiscal policy changes scheduled to occur at the end of 2012 – sometimes referred to as the ‘fiscal cliff’ – poses serious challenges for policy makers. One area of disagreement is the increase in tax rates for high-income taxpayers resulting in part due to the sunset of elements of the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts. ...This report finds that these higher marginal tax rates result in a smaller economy, fewer jobs, less investment, and lower wages. Specifically, this report finds that the higher tax rates will have significant adverse economic effects in the long-run: lowering output, employment, investment, the capital stock, and real after-tax wages when the resulting revenue is used to finance additional government spending.” (Drs. Robert Carroll and Gerald Prante, “Long-Run Macroeconomic Impact Of Increasing Tax Rates On High-Income Taxpayers In 2013,” [Ernst & Young LLP](#), 7/12)

Obama’s Budget Will Result In “Monumental” Tax Increases. “The only thing that you can be certain will become law in this budget if Mr. Obama is re-elected is the monumental tax increase. His plan would raise tax rates across the board on anyone or any business owners making more than \$200,000 for individuals and \$250,000 for couples. These are the 3% of taxpayers that Mr. Obama says aren’t paying their fair share, though that 3% pays more in income tax than the rest of the other 97%.” (Editorial, “The Amazing Obama Budget,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 2/14/12)

Obama’s FY2013 Budget Calls For \$1.9 Trillion In Higher Taxes. (Fiscal Year 2013 Budget Of The U.S. Government,” [OMB](#), 2/13/12)

HOPE AND CHANGE: 5 MILLION NEW JOBS

HOPE: Obama Promised To Spend \$150 Billion On Green Energy To Create 5 Million New Jobs That “Pay Well And Can’t Be Outsourced.” OBAMA: “And I’ll invest \$150 billion over the next decade in affordable, renewable sources of energy -- wind power, and solar power, and the next generation of biofuels -- an investment that will lead to new industries and 5 million new jobs that pay well and can’t be outsourced.” (Sen. Barack Obama, [Remarks At DNC Acceptance Speech](#), Denver, CO, 8/28/08)

CHANGE: “The Green Economy Is Not Proving To Be The Job-Creation Engine That Many Politicians Envisioned.” “In the Bay Area as in much of the country, the green economy is not proving to be the job-creation engine that many politicians envisioned. President Obama once pledged to create five million green jobs over 10 years. Gov. Jerry Brown promised 500,000 clean-technology jobs statewide by the end of the decade. But the results so far suggest such numbers are a pipe dream.” (Aaron Glantz, “Number Of Green Jobs Fails To Live Up To Promises,” [The New York Times](#), 8/18/11)

“The Millions Of ‘Green Jobs’ Obama Promised Have Been Slow To Sprout...” “But the millions of ‘green jobs’ Obama promised have been slow to sprout, disappointing many who had hoped that the \$90 billion earmarked for clean-energy efforts in the recession-fighting federal stimulus package would ease unemployment - still above 8 percent in March.” (Andy Sullivan, “Analysis: Obama’s ‘Green Jobs’ Have Been Slow To Sprout,” [Reuters](#), 4/13/12)

Green Technology Jobs Account For Just Two Percent Of Employment Nationwide. “A study released in July by the non-partisan Brookings Institution found clean-technology jobs accounted for just 2 percent of employment nationwide and only slightly more — 2.2 percent — in Silicon Valley. Rather than adding jobs, the study found, the sector actually lost 492 positions from 2003 to 2010 in the South Bay,

where the unemployment rate in June was 10.5 percent.” (Aaron Glantz, “Number Of Green Jobs Fails To Live Up To Promises,” [The New York Times](#), 8/18/11)

The Failure Of Obama’s Green Jobs Programs “Gets More Embarrassing By The Day.” “The green jobs subsidy story gets more embarrassing by the day. Three years ago President Obama promised that by the end of the decade America would have five million green jobs, but so far some \$90 billion in government spending has delivered very few.” (Editorial, “Green Jobs Brown Out,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/11/11)

Despite Soaring Promises From Obama And His Allies, Green Energy Has Barely Taken Flight And Has Failed To Create Jobs. “New clean-energy sources could address environmental, economic and national security problems all at once. In his 2008 convention speech, Barack Obama promised to create five million green economy jobs. The U.S. Conference of Mayors estimated in April 2009 that green jobs could account for 10 percent of new job growth over the next 30 years. Alas, it was not to be.” (David Brooks, Op-Ed, “Where The Jobs Aren’t,” [The New York Times](#), 9/5/11)

- **“There’s A Wealth Of Other Evidence To Suggest That The Green Economy Will Not Be A Short-Term Jobs Machine. According To Investor’s Business Daily, Executives At Johnson Controls Turned \$300 Million In Green Technology Grants Into 150 Jobs — That’s \$2 Million Per Job.”** (David Brooks, “Where The Jobs Aren’t,” [The New York Times](#), 9/5/11)

“Federal And State Efforts To Stimulate Creation Of Green Jobs Have Largely Failed.” “Federal and state efforts to stimulate creation of green jobs have largely failed, government records show. Two years after it was awarded \$186 million in federal stimulus money to weatherize drafty homes, California has spent only a little over half that sum and has so far created the equivalent of just 538 full-time jobs in the last quarter, according to the State Department of Community Services and Development.” (Aaron Glantz, “Number Of Green Jobs Fails To Live Up To Promises,” [The New York Times](#), 8/18/11)

The Energy Department Has Handed Out \$35.2 Billion From The Stimulus, But The Clean Energy Industry Has “Yet To Provide The Boost Many Had Hoped For.” “The Energy Department handed out \$35.2 billion from the Recovery Act for energy efficiency and other initiatives. At the time, clean energy was seen as a potentially powerful industry for job creation. But the industry has yet to provide the boost many had hoped for.” (Vauhini Vara, “Red Flags For Green Energy,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 10/12/11)

Stimulus Funds To Support Renewable Energy Industry Has Flowed Overseas, Despite Congressional Criticism And Calls For Change. “Money from the 2009 stimulus bill to help support the renewable energy industry continues to flow overseas, despite Congressional criticism and calls for change, according to a new analysis of the program by the Investigative Reporting Workshop.” (Russ Choma, “Renewable Energy Money Still Going Abroad, Despite Criticism From Congress,” [Investigative Reporting Workshop/ABC’s World News Tonight/Watchdog Institute](#), 2/8/10)

During The First Two Rounds Of 1603 Awards, 695 Of The 982 Installed Wind Turbines Were Manufactured By Foreign Companies. “In the case of these 11 wind farms, according to data provided by the companies themselves in regulatory filings and collected by the American Wind Energy Association, 982 turbines were installed – 695 of them were manufactured by a foreign company.” (Russ Choma, “Overseas Firms Collecting Most Green Energy Money,” [Investigative Reporting Workshop](#), 10/29/09)

- **Data From The Renewable Energy Policy Project Shows That The Foreign Sourcing May Have Created As Many As 4,500 Manufacturing Jobs Overseas.** “A study by the Renewable Energy Policy Project, a think-tank that advocates renewable energy technology research, estimates that for every 1,000 megawatts of wind energy that is developed, 4,300 jobs are created: 600 for operation and maintenance of the wind farms; 700 for the installation of new turbines;

and 3,000 for manufacturing. The cash grants were given for the installation of 1,763 megawatts of capacity – 1,566 installed by foreign companies. Using the Renewable Energy Policy Project's own numbers, as many as 4,500 manufacturing jobs may have been created overseas." (Russ Choma, "Overseas Firms Collecting Most Green Energy Money," [Investigative Reporting Workshop](#), 10/29/09)

HOPE AND CHANGE: LOWER HEALTH CARE PREMIUMS

HOPE: Obama Promised That ObamaCare Would Lower Health Insurance Premiums. OBAMA: "If you have health care -- if you have health care, my plan will lower your premiums." (Sen. Barack Obama, [Remarks At DNC Acceptance Speech](#), Denver, CO, 8/28/08)

CHANGE: Under Obama, The Average Cost Of Family Health Care Premiums Have Increased From \$12,680 To \$15,073. ("Employer Health Benefits, 2011 Annual Survey, Exhibit 1.11" [Kaiser Family Foundation](#), 2011)

- **Under ObamaCare, Family Health Care Premiums Will Increase \$2,404 Annually.** (Douglas W. Elmendorf, CBO Director, [Letter To Senator Evan Bayh](#), 11/30/09; "Updated Estimates For The Insurance Coverage Provisions Of The Affordable Care Act Updated For The Recent Supreme Court Decision," [Congressional Budget Office](#), 7/24/12)

FactCheck.org: ObamaCare "Falls Short Of Making Health Care 'Affordable And Available To Every Single American,' As Promised." "Furthermore, the law falls short of making health care 'affordable and available to every single American,' as promised. The law provides subsidies to help some Americans buy insurance, expands Medicaid and doesn't allow insurance companies to exclude persons with preexisting conditions. But still, the director of the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office projected 23 million persons will remain uninsured — some because they can't afford coverage." (D'Angelo Gore, "Promises, Promises," [FactCheck.org](#), 1/4/12)

- **FactCheck.org: ObamaCare Is Actually Making Health Care "Less Affordable."** "At the moment, the new law is making health care slightly less affordable. Independent health care experts say the law has caused some insurance premiums to rise. As we wrote in October, the new law has caused about a 1 percent to 3 percent increase in health insurance premiums for employer-sponsored family plans because of requirements for increased benefits. Last year's premium increases cast even more doubt on another promise the president has made — that the health care law would 'lower premiums by up to \$2,500 for a typical family per year.'" (D'Angelo Gore, "Promises, Promises," [FactCheck.org](#), 1/4/12)
- **The Washington Post's The Fact Checker:** "Insurance premiums have gone up, in part because of new benefits mandated by the law." (Glenn Kessler, "The Fine Print In Obama's 'Promises Kept' Ad," *The Washington Post's "The Fact Checker,"* 1/6/12)

Despite President Obama's Promises, Health Care Premiums Aren't "Going To Go Down." "Giving families and businesses relief was a big part of Obama's sales pitch for health care reform. ... But no matter what happens with the law, the line on that graph isn't going to go down." (David Nather, "Health Care Reform: 4 Inconvenient Truths," [Politico](#), 3/16/12)

HOPE AND CHANGE: CUTTING SPENDING

HOPE: Obama Promised To Go Through The Budget Line By Line To Cut Spending. OBAMA: "But I will also go through the federal budget line by line, eliminating programs that no longer work and making the ones we do need work better and cost less, because we cannot meet 21st-century challenges with a 20th-century bureaucracy." (Sen. Barack Obama, [Remarks At DNC Acceptance Speech](#), Denver, CO, 8/28/08)

CHANGE: Federal Outlays Have Increased By 20.4 Percent Since Obama Took Office. The federal government spent \$3.1 trillion in FY2008 in inflation adjusted dollars. Under Obama, in FY2012 the

federal government spent \$3.8 trillion dollars. ("Table 1.3 – Summary Of Receipts, Outlays And Surpluses Or Deficits In Current Dollars, Constant (FY2005) Dollars, And As Percentages Of GDP: 1940-2016," [Office Of Management And Budget](#), Accessed 5/16/12; "Budget Of The United States Government, Fiscal Year 2013," [Office Of Management And Budget](#), 2/13/12)

- **Obama Proposed FY2013 Budget Calls For Increasing Government Spending Well Above Historical Norms.** From 1969 To 2008 The Federal Government Spent An Average Of 20.6 Percent Of GDP, Obama's Proposed FY2013 Budget Calls For Spending 22.8 Percent Of GDP By FY2022. ("Table 1.2 – Summary Of Receipts, Outlays And Surpluses Or Deficits As Percentages Of GDP: 1930-2016," [Office Of Management And Budget](#), Accessed 5/16/12; "Budget Of The United States Government, Fiscal Year 2013," [Office Of Management And Budget](#), 2/13/12)

"Government Spending As A Share Of The Economy Has Hovered Around 24% During The Obama Administration...Elevated From The Historical Average Of 20.7% Over The Past 40 Years."

"Government spending as a share of the economy has hovered around 24% during the Obama administration, several percentage points higher than under President Bush, according to Congressional Budget Office data. It's also elevated from the historical average of 20.7% over the past 40 years." (Tami Luhby, "Did Obama Really Make Government Bigger?" [CNN Money](#), 1/25/12)

HOPE AND CHANGE: IRAN AND RUSSIA

HOPE: Obama Promised "Tough, Direct Diplomacy" Against Iran And To Confront Russian Aggression. OBAMA: "I will rebuild our military to meet future conflicts, but I will also renew the tough, direct diplomacy that can prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons and curb Russian aggression." (Sen. Barack Obama, [Remarks At DNC Acceptance Speech](#), Denver, CO, 8/28/08)

CHANGE: Obama's Policy Of Engagement Has Failed To Stop Iran's Continuing Quest For Nuclear Weapons. "The regime scoffed at Mr. Obama after he delivered a conciliating message for the Persian New Year in March, scoffed again after he mildly criticized its post-election crackdown and killing spree in June (following days of silence), and scoffed a third time by rejecting the West's offer last month to enrich Iran's uranium for it. Yet the Administration insists the enrichment deal is still Iran's for the taking." (Editorial, "500,000 Iranian Centrifuges," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 11/29/09)

- **"Iran's Nuclear Ambitions Have Far Exceeded Previous Assessments By The United States And Its Allies."** "Senior diplomats from the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Israel have reportedly agreed the new-found information proves Iran's nuclear ambitions have far exceeded previous assessments by the United States and its allies, according to the report. Citing sources with knowledge of western efforts to gain access to Tehran's nuclear facilities, signs of the advanced state of Iran's nuclear program began to emerge in February." (Carlo Munoz, "Report: Iran's Nuke Work Moving Ahead Of Schedule," [The Hill's "DEFCON Hill"](#), 8/7/12)
- **Iran Has Enough Enriched Uranium For Almost Five Nuclear Bombs.** "Iran now has amassed roughly 225 pounds of 20% uranium and 11,000 pounds of 3.5%, sufficient for almost five nuclear bombs. Rather than stand by its initial demands, however, the P5+1 is now seeking merely the cessation of Iran's 20% enrichment, the removal of its 20% stockpile, and the closure of the facility at Qom. Arguably, this would be the first stage in the phasing out of Iran's nuclear program. But Iran has rejected even this preliminary gesture." (Michael Oren, Op-Ed, "Time Is Short For Iran Diplomacy," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 8/6/12)

Fearing Higher Oil Prices And "Political Trouble In An Election Year," The Administration Has Resisted Taking Strong Action Against Iran's Nuclear Program. "Officials fear that too powerful a blow to the world's third-largest oil exporter could cause an oil price increase, damaging the global economic recovery, undermining international support for the sanctions campaign and creating political

trouble in an election year.” (Paul Richter, “Obama Administration Takes Back Seat On Iran Sanctions,” [Los Angeles Times](#), 2/17/12)

- **The Washington Post: “The Result Is That President Obama Is Not Even Leading From Behind On Iran; He Is Simply Behind.”** “The result is that President Obama is not even leading from behind on Iran; he is simply behind. At the forefront of the Western effort to pressure Tehran is French President Nicolas Sarkozy, who issued a statement Monday calling on the European Union, the United States, Japan, Canada and ‘other willing countries’ to ‘immediately freeze the assets of Iran’s central bank’ and suspend purchases of Iranian oil.” (Editorial, “More Half-Measures From Obama Administration On Iran,” [The Washington Post](#), 11/22/11)

CHANGE: Despite The “Reset,” Russia Continues To Support Regimes In Syria And Iran. “Then there’s Russia’s veto of a Security Council resolution to sanction Syria and its continuing arms sales to the regime of Bashar Assad. Moscow also resists putting any new pressure on Iran’s nuclear bomb makers.” (Editorial, “Our Friends The Russians,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 12/5/11)

- **Russia Is “One Of The Biggest Obstacles For The Obama Administration” In The Effort To Unify The International Community Against Assad.** “One of the biggest obstacles for the Obama administration is Russia, which has supported the ceasefire but has also backed Assad and allegedly provided arms to the Syrian army. While Obama administration officials have frequently accused Russia of being complicit in the deaths of Syrians, they’ve also said they won’t take stronger action without the international community’s backing, something Russia remains opposed to allowing. Russia and China, who has joined the Russians vetoing more UN action, were invited to this week’s Friends of Syria meeting, but the countries did not attend.” (Jeremy Herb, “Obama faces tough choices in Syria,” [The Hill’s “DEFCON Hill”](#), 4/21/12)

HOPE AND CHANGE: TAKING CARE OF VETERANS

HOPE: Obama Promised To Give Veterans “The Care And Benefits They Deserve When They Come Home.” OBAMA: “As commander-in-chief, I will never hesitate to defend this nation, but I will only send our troops into harm’s way with a clear mission and a sacred commitment to give them the equipment they need in battle and the care and benefits they deserve when they come home.” (Sen. Barack Obama, [Remarks At DNC Acceptance Speech](#), Denver, CO, 8/28/08)

CHANGE: With Fewer Jobs For Returning Veterans And Longer Lines For Disability Payments, “Life For Many Veterans Has Grown More Challenging Under Obama’s Watch.” “Yet, based on interviews with veterans, their advocates, and VA and other administration officials, as well as a review of available data, life for many veterans has grown more challenging under Obama’s watch. Veterans returning home today join lines for disability payments much longer than those Obama called intolerable in 2008. Their chances of finding jobs in a bleak economy are worse than those of most other Americans. Veterans’ complaints of employment discrimination by the federal government have actually risen. Veterans remain more likely to be homeless than the general population. The VA estimates more than 67,000 sleep in shelters and on the streets or are otherwise considered homeless, a figure that is only slightly better than in 2009. And improved data collection reveals just how bad the problem of suicide is among veterans. According to new data Reuters obtained from the VA, a veteran within the VA healthcare system tries to commit suicide about once every half-hour, on average.” (Phil Stewart, “Special Report: Obama’s Struggle To Mend Veterans’ Safety Net,” [Reuters](#), 7/26/12)

- **The Unemployment Rate For Male Veterans Between 18 And 24 Years Old Is 21.8 Percent Versus 16.4 Percent For Non-Veteran Males Between 18 And 24 Years Old.** ([Bureau Of Labor Statistics](#), Accessed 8/14/12)

- **Homelessness Among Female Veterans Has Escalated Over The Past Decade.** “Once primarily male veteran problems, homelessness and economic struggles are escalating among female veterans, whose numbers have grown during the past decade of U.S. wars while resources for them haven't kept up.” (Eric Tucker, “More Women Vets Are Homeless, But Housing Scarce,” [The Associated Press](#), 4/4/12)
- **Veterans Seeking Disability Compensation Are Experiencing “Staggering” Processing Delays At The VA.** “The Veterans Affairs Department faces a “staggering” backlog of 897,566 disability claims with more than 65 percent pending for more than 125 days, a problem compounded by an error rate of 16 percent, representatives of veterans' services organizations told lawmakers on the House Veterans Affairs Committee on Wednesday.” (Bob Brewin, “VA's Disability Claims Backlog Pushes 900,000,” [National Journal](#), 4/19/12)

“The Administration Has Proposed Increasing The Fees And Co-Pays For Retired Service Members Covered By The Military Health Care Program, TRICARE.” “With U.S. combat troops out of Iraq and a timetable set for drawing down in Afghanistan, the Pentagon is under increasing pressure to cut spending to help ease the nation's burgeoning deficit. Among other things, the administration has proposed increasing the fees and co-pays for retired service members covered by the military's health care program, TRICARE. The increases, to be phased in over four years, must be approved by Congress, which is facing the prospect of deep defense cuts already mandated by law.” (Leigh Munsil, “TRICARE Cost Hikes Draw Fire,” [Politico](#), 4/4/12)

- **In May, The Obama Administration Said It Was “Very Disappointed” That The House Refused To Increase TRICARE Fees In Its FY2013 Budget.** “The Administration is very disappointed that the Committee did not support the proposed TRICARE fee increases and included section 718, which, while supporting some fee increases, caps them at levels below those allowed under current law and below the requested authorization.” (President Barack Obama, Statement Of Administrative Policy, H.R. 4310 – National Defense Authorization Act For FY2013, [Washington, DC](#), 5/15/12)