



# Obama, Champion Of The Status Quo

***Obama Says He Ran For President To Change The Status Quo, But Now He's Asking For Four More Years Of It***

**Today, Obama Says He Ran For President In 2008 To End The "Status Quo" Of Special Interests In Washington.** OBAMA: "You know, back in 2008 I spent a lot of time here in New Hampshire. I know you guys saw a lot of me. And back then we talked about change we can believe in, but I said to people, you know I'm not just talking about changing parties or changing presidents. I'm talking about changing how our politics works. I ran because the voices of the American people, your voices all of you. Folks way in the back, and up front. You voices had been shut out of our democracy for too long by lobbyists and special interests and politicians who are willing to say and do anything just to keep things the way they are. The protectors, the guardians of the status quo." (Barack Obama, Remarks At A Campaign Rally, Concord, NH, 11/4/12)

## OBAMA HAS FAILED TO CHANGE WASHINGTON

**THEN: Obama: "Washington Is Broken. My Whole Campaign Has Been Premised From The Start On The Idea That We Have To Fundamentally Change How Washington Works."** (Sen. Barack Obama, [Remarks At Service Nation Summit](#), New York, NY, 9/11/08)

**NOW: Obama Now Says "You Can't Change Washington From The Inside."** "The most important lesson I've learned is that you can't change Washington from the inside. You can only change it from the outside." (President Barack Obama, [Univision Town Hall](#), Miami, FL, 9/20/12)

**Obama Has "Missed Or Passed Up Opportunities To Show His Willingness To Challenge The Status Quo."** "He also missed or passed up opportunities to show his willingness to challenge the status quo. And there is not much evidence that, as things turned sour, there was a fallback strategy for how to change the climate." (Dan Balz, "Obama Did Not Change Washington, Was There A Way Around United Republican Opposition?" [The Washington Post](#), 9/1/12)

**Obama Admitted Washington Is Stuck With "More Of The Same," And "Maybe A Little Worse."** CNN's WOLF BLITZER: "When we spoke here end of 2008, 'hope and change.' You know what I see in Washington still to this day? OBAMA: "More of the same." BLITZER: "The same old same old." OBAMA: "Yeah." BLITZER: "A lot of bickering, backstabbing." OBAMA: "Maybe a little worse." (CNN's [The Situation Room](#), 8/16/11)

**The Washington Post's Dana Milbank:** "The president came here to change Washington and Washington has changed him." (CNN's "Anderson Cooper 360," 3/8/12)

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**Polarization Is “As Deep As It Has Been In Modern Times.”** “Today Obama’s words sound quaint, even naive. Instead of bipartisanship, there is polarization as deep as it has been in modern times.” (Dan Balz, “Obama Did Not Change Washington, Was There A Way Around United Republican Opposition?” [The Washington Post](#), 9/1/12)

- **FactCheck.org: “[I]t’s Simply A Fact That The President Failed At ‘Bringing Democrats And Republicans Together.’”** “To be sure, the president did sign the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act into law in 2010, but it wasn’t enacted by ‘bringing Democrats and Republicans together.’ The bill passed the Senate on Dec. 24, 2009, by a vote of 60-39, without any Republicans voting for it. And when the House passed its version of the bill almost three months later, by a vote of 219-212, it too garnered no support from Republicans. We won’t offer any opinion about whether one side is more to blame than the other for that, but it’s simply a fact that the president failed at ‘bringing Democrats and Republicans together.’” (D’Angelo Gore, “Promises, Promises,” [Fact Check.org](#), 1/4/12)

**Historian Doris Kearns Goodwin Says Obama’s “Tenure Is Viewed Through The Prism Of His Failure To Transcend The Deep Divisions In Washington.”** “Doris Kearns Goodwin, who has written several presidential histories and has come to know Obama personally, said the 44th president’s policies — such as a stimulus package that may have averted another Depression and an overhaul of health care policy — most likely will be seen as profoundly far-reaching. But in contrast to the soaring expectations Obama himself helped set, Goodwin said his tenure is viewed through the prism of his failure to transcend the deep divisions in Washington.” (John F. Harris and Jonathan Martin, “DNC 2012: Barack Obama, The Conventional President,” [Politico](#), 9/3/12)

- **“And, Far From Breaking A Generation-Long Partisan Standoff In Washington, Obama’s Presidency Has Been Almost Entirely Defined By It.”** (John F. Harris and Jonathan Martin, “DNC 2012: Barack Obama, The Conventional President,” [Politico](#), 9/3/12)

**Obama Has Been “Unable To Bridge A Political Divide That Had Only Grown Wider Since He Took Office With A Promise To Change The Ways Of Washington...”** “A president who promised to bring the country together, who confidently presented himself as the transformational figure able to make that happen, now had his chance. But, like earlier policy battles, the debt ceiling negotiations revealed a divided figure, a man who remained aloof from a Congress where he once served and that he now needed. He was caught between his own aspirations for historical significance and his inherent political caution. And he was unable to bridge a political divide that had only grown wider since he took office with a promise to change the ways of Washington, underscoring the gulf between the way he campaigned and the way he had governed.” (Peter Wallsten, Lori Montgomery, and Scott Wilson, “Obama’s Evolution: Behind The Failed ‘Grand Bargain’ On The Debt,” [The Washington Post](#), 3/17/12)

## LOBBYISTS ARE A FIXTURE IN THE OBAMA WHITE HOUSE

**THEN: Obama: Lobbyists “Will Not Drown Out The Voices Of The American People When I’m President.”** OBAMA: “I won’t take money from PACs, won’t take money from federal registered lobbyists. They have not funded my campaign, they will not run my White House, and they will not drown out the voices of the American people when I’m president.” (Sen. Barack Obama, Remarks At Ault Park Pavilion, Cincinnati, OH, 10/9/08)

**NOW: “It’s Well-Known That President Barack Obama Has Surrounded Himself With Lobbyists.”** (John Carney, “Obama’s Lobbyist-Heavy Administration,” [CNBC](#), 11/1/11)

**“For All His Anti-Lobbyist Rhetoric, President Barack Obama Has Done More Than Almost Anyone To Help K Street Fatten Its Wallet.”** (Chris Frates, “A Second Stimulus For K Street?” [Politico](#), 3/17/11)

**Thomas Hale Boggs, Chairman Of Major Washington Lobbying Firm Patton Boggs: “There Are Lots Of Lobbyists Working For The Administration.”** BOGGS: “Now they’ve greatly changed that [last year, the Obama re-election campaign hired former lobbyist Broderick Johnson, and in March, Joe Biden tapped former lobbyist Steve Ricchetti as an adviser], there are lots of lobbyists working for the administration, which is probably going to make it work better in the second term.” (Catherine Ho, “Lobbying Icon Boggs Predicts Obama Win, Weighs In On Election’s Impact On K Street,” [The Washington Post](#), 10/7/12)

- **The Center For Responsive Politics Finds Over 300 Individuals In The Obama Administration Who Have Been Through The Revolving Door.** (Center For Responsive Politics, [Open Secrets](#), Accessed 11/1/12)

**PolitiFact Rated Obama’s Promise To Bar Lobbyists From His Administration As “Broken.”** “We rated that one a Promise Broken because his policy has substantial loopholes that have allowed Obama to essentially decide when he wants to ignore the rule. He’s right that on his first day in office, he signed an executive order to bar lobbyists from his administration. But the order also included a loophole — a ‘waiver’ clause that allows former lobbyists to serve. Waivers are granted by the administration itself, so they are little more than the administration saying it’s okay for the lobbyist to work for the administration.” (“Obama Says Lobbyists Have Been Excluded From Policy-Making Jobs,” [PolitiFact](#), 10/7/11)

- **PolitiFact: “Another Provision Allows Lobbyists To Serve If They Agree To Recuse Themselves From Discussions Related To Their Former Jobs.”** (“Obama Says Lobbyists Have Been Excluded From Policy-Making Jobs,” [PolitiFact](#), 10/7/11)
- **PolitiFact: “What About Those Recusals We Mentioned Earlier? The Administration Has Not Made Public How Many Of These Have Been Issued.”** (“Obama Says Lobbyists Have Been Excluded From Policy-Making Jobs,” [PolitiFact](#), 10/7/11)

**Lobbyists Have “Little Trouble Making Themselves Heard” In The Obama White House.** “Although Mr. Obama has made a point of not accepting contributions from registered lobbyists, a review of campaign donations and White House visitor logs shows that special interests have had little trouble making themselves heard.” (Mike McIntire and Michael Luo, “White House Opens Door To Big Donors, And Lobbyists Slip In,” [The New York Times](#), 4/4/12)

### ***Obama Pledged To End Washington’s Revolving Door, But Nothing Has Changed In Washington***

**THEN: Obama “Boasted” That His Pledge Would Close “The Revolving Door” That Lets Public Employees Use “Their Time In Public Service” To “Promote Their Own Interests.”** OBAMA: “And we need to close the revolving door that lets lobbyists come into government freely, and lets them use their time in public service as a way to promote their own interests over the interests of the American people when they leave.” (President Barack Obama, [Remarks By The President In Welcoming Senior Staff And Cabinet Secretaries To The White House](#), Washington, DC, 1/21/09)

**NOW: PolitiFact: “We Rate Obama’s ‘Revolving Door’ Policy For Former Lobbyists His Biggest Broken Promise.”** (Angie Drobnic Holan, “Not So Fast On Obama Revolving Door Policy,” [PolitiFact](#), 1/23/09)

**Despite Obama’s Pledge To Stop The Revolving Door, Nothing Has Changed In Washington.** “But with his administration at its midpoint, a traditional time for personnel turnover, it’s clear that despite Obama’s avowals, a longtime truism of Washington life — that a prestigious-sounding administration post can be a lucrative career enhancer — remains unchanged.” (Kenneth P. Vogel, “Obama Administration’s Revolving Door,” [Politico](#), 1/18/11)

- **Officials From The White House Have Left For Lucrative Jobs On K Street, Wall Street.** “In recent months, officials have quietly left the White House, the Federal Communications Commission, the Federal Highway Administration and the Departments of the Treasury, Commerce and Homeland Security for high-paying gigs on K Street and Wall Street, for top PR firms including the Glover Park Group and VOX Global and to work or lobby for powerful media and telecom companies including Facebook, Comcast, Bloomberg L.P., DirecTV, Sprint Nextel and T-Mobile.” (Kenneth P. Vogel, “Obama Administration’s Revolving Door,” [Politico](#), 1/18/11)

**“For All His Anti-Lobbyist Rhetoric, President Barack Obama Has Done More Than Almost Anyone To Help K Street Fatten Its Wallet.”** (Chris Frates, “A Second Stimulus For K Street?” [Politico](#), 3/17/11)

- **Obama’s Regulatory Policies Have Resulted In “K Street’s Second Stimulus.”** “Now, regulators are writing hundreds of new rules required by the twin reforms, creating a bonanza of new business for Washington lobbyists positioned to help companies influence and comply with the new regulations. Call it K Street’s second stimulus.” (Chris Frates, “A Second Stimulus For K Street?” [Politico](#), 3/17/11)
- **“Or As Another Lobbyist Put It, ‘God Bless Barack Obama, He’s Helping The Lobbyists.’”** (Chris Frates, “A Second Stimulus For K Street?” [Politico](#), 3/17/11)

## **OBAMA AWARDS HIS DONORS WITH EXCLUSIVE WHITE HOUSE ACCESS**

**Today, Obama Says “Folks At The Very Top Of This Country Don’t Need Another Champion In Washington.”** OBAMA: “You know, the folks at the very top of this country, they don’t need a champion in Washington. They’ll always have seat at the table. They’ll always have access and influence. We understand that. The people who really need a champion, are the Americans whose letters I read late at night after I come up from the oval office.” (Barack Obama, Remarks At A Campaign Rally, Concord, NH, 11/4/12)

### ***But Obama Has Been His Donors’ Biggest Champion***

**Obama Awards Top Donors With “VIP Access To The White House.”** “During his first nine months in office, President Obama has quietly rewarded scores of top Democratic donors with VIP access to the White House, private briefings with administration advisers and invitations to important speeches and town-hall meetings... High-dollar fundraisers have been promised access to senior White House officials in exchange for pledges to donate \$30,400 personally or to bundle \$300,000 in contributions ahead of the 2010 midterm elections, according to internal Democratic National Committee documents obtained by *The Washington Times*.” (Matthew Mosk, “EXCLUSIVE: Democratic Donors Rewarded With W.H. Perks,” [The Washington Times](#), 10/28/09)

**Top Donors Have “Direct Contact” With Obama’s Closest Advisers.** “New White House emails show a top donor to Barack Obama was in direct contact with one of the president’s closest advisers about the federal energy loan program, the latest disclosure underscoring the closeness between the administration and bundlers with a stake in Energy Department funding.” (Matthew Mosk and Ronnie Greene, “Donor Warned Obama That Solyndra ‘Could Haunt Him,’” [iWatch](#), 10/3/11)

**Obama’s Biggest Donors Are “Far More Likely To Visit The White House Than Others.”** “More broadly, the review showed that those who donated the most to Mr. Obama and the Democratic Party since he started running for president were far more likely to visit the White House than others.” (Mike McIntire and Michael Luo, “White House Opens Door To Big Donors, And Lobbyists Slip In,” [The New York Times](#), 4/4/12)

- **Among Donors Who Gave \$30,000 Or Less To Obama, About 20 Percent Have Visited The White House.** “Among donors who gave \$30,000 or less, about 20 percent visited the White

House, according to a New York Times analysis that matched names in the visitor logs with donor records.” (Mike McIntire and Michael Luo, “White House Opens Door To Big Donors, And Lobbyists Slip In,” [The New York Times](#), 4/4/12)

- **“But Among Those Who Donated \$100,000 Or More, The Figure Rises To About 75 Percent.”** (Mike McIntire and Michael Luo, “White House Opens Door To Big Donors, And Lobbyists Slip In,” [The New York Times](#), 4/4/12)
- **“Approximately Two-Thirds Of The President’s Top Fund-Raisers In The 2008 Campaign Visited The White House At Least Once, Some Of Them Numerous Times.”** (Mike McIntire and Michael Luo, “White House Opens Door To Big Donors, And Lobbyists Slip In,” [The New York Times](#), 4/4/12)

**“Many Of The President’s Biggest Donors, While Not Lobbyists, Took Lobbyists With Them To The White House, While Others Performed Essentially The Same Function On Their Visits.”** (Mike McIntire and Michael Luo, “White House Opens Door To Big Donors, And Lobbyists Slip In,” [The New York Times](#), 4/4/12)