



Obama's Top Ten: Excuses For Economic Failure

Obama Asked For Responsibility Of The Economy In 2009, But Today He Is A Sounding Board Of Excuses

In July 2009, Obama Took Responsibility For The Economy And Said “Give It To Me.” OBAMA: “Now, my administration has a job to do, as well, and that job is to get this economy back on its feet. That's my job. And it's a job I gladly accept. I love these folks who helped get us in this mess and then suddenly say, well, this is Obama's economy. That's fine. Give it to me. My job is to solve problems, not to stand on the sidelines and harp and gripe.” (President Barack Obama, [Remarks By The President On The American Graduation Initiative](#), Warren, MI, 7/14/09)

1. OBAMA BLAMES NEFARIOUS “HEADWINDS”

EXCUSE: July 30, 2012: Obama Cautioned Against “Some Continued Headwinds.” OBAMA: “We’re going to have some continued headwinds over the next several months.” (President Barack Obama, [Remarks At An Obama Victory Fund 2012 Fundraiser](#), New York, NY, 7/30/12)

REALITY: June 8, 2012: Obama Had Blamed Headwinds For The Economy “At Least 17 Times In The Past Three Years.” “Headwinds. President Barack Obama has talked about them — what the American economy still faces as it recovers from the worst recession since the 1930s — at least 17 times in the past three years.” (Mark Silva, “Obama’s ‘Headwinds’ Echo In Ad,” [Bloomberg](#), 6/8/12)

2. OBAMA BLAMES CONGRESSIONAL OBSTRUCTIONISM

EXCUSE: Obama Has Blamed Congress For The Weak Recovery. OBAMA: “Most economists will tell you that there is no doubt the economy has gotten stronger, but we are digging ourselves out a deep hole. There are a lot more things we could be doing. To get them done, we need cooperation of Congress. We got the payroll tax portion of [my American Jobs Act] done, but what we didn’t get done is the assistance I was proposing to the states to help them hire back teachers, firefighters, and first responders, because one of the weakest parts of this recovery has been state and local government hiring. Given the weaknesses of the construction industry, the American Jobs Act proposed that we rebuild schools, roads, bridges, airport, and ports. That would provide small businesses with opportunities as contractors and vendors in this rebuilding process. Again, Congress needs to act.” (Derek T. Dingle, “Oval Office Interview With President Barack Obama,” [Black Enterprise](#), 8/6/12)

REALITY: “Mr. Obama Has Been The Least Obstructed President Since LBJ In 1965 Or FDR In 1933, Which Is How We Got Here.” “The larger political subtext of Mr. Obama’s speech is that if Congress doesn’t pass his plan, he’ll then campaign against Republicans as obstructionist. Thus his speech mantra that Congress should ‘pass it right away.’ This ignores that Mr. Obama has been the least obstructed President since LBJ in 1965 or FDR in 1933, which is how we got here.” (Editorial, “The Latest Jobs Plan,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 9/9/11)

- **Obama Had “The Biggest Senate Majority In Decades” When He Came Into Office.** “In 2008, President Barack Obama swept into the White House, and Senate Democrats eventually picked up nine seats, giving the new commander in chief the biggest Senate majority in decades.” (John Bresnahan And Manu Raju, “Obama A Drag On Senate Democrats?,” [Politico](#), 10/20/11)

3. OBAMA BLAMES THE ARAB SPRING, JAPANESE EARTHQUAKE, AND THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY

EXCUSE: Obama Has Blamed Poor Economic Numbers On The Arab Spring, The Japanese Earthquake, And Events In Europe. OBAMA: “Let me start by saying a few words about our economy. There is no doubt this has been a tumultuous year. We’ve weathered the Arab Spring’s effect on oil and gas prices, the Japanese earthquake and tsunami’s effect on supply chains, the extraordinary economic uncertainty in Europe. And recently, markets around the globe have taken a bumpy ride.” (President Barack Obama, [Remarks By The President On The Administration’s Work To Prepare Our Nation’s Veterans For The Workforce](#), Washington, D.C., 8/5/11)

REALITY: In The Third Year Of His Administration, Obama Blaming Anyone Else For The Economy Was “Downright Silly.” “Within the first six months or even a year of a new administration, it’s fair game to blame predecessors for any problems. Indeed, it’s a legitimate and time-honored tradition by presidents of both parties. But such arguments get much less convincing as the second year comes to an end. Once into the third year, such claims sound downright silly. Gradually, any president and any administration take ownership of the problems facing the country.” (Charlie Cook, “Owning It Democrats Are In A Corner On Their Ownership Of The Economy And What They Can Do To Help Turn It Around,” [National Journal](#), 6/6/11)

4. OBAMA BLAMES THOSE WHO DON’T UNDERSTAND THE STORY OF HIS PRESIDENCY

EXCUSE: Obama Said He Is Trying To Tell The Story Of His Presidency Better On The Campaign Trail. TIME’s MICHAEL SHERER: “You said that one of the mistakes you see in the first term was not telling that story better. What does it mean to tell the story better in the next four years?” OBAMA: “...And that’s a story that I’m doing my best to tell during the campaign. That’s a story that I will continue to try to tell, if I’m fortunate enough to have a second term, in inaugurations, in States of the Union. I want to make sure that people understand that I’ve got a focus on growing this economy, not growing the public sector, but doing enough to ensure that we’ve got the best workers in the world, we’ve got the best technology in the world, and we’re competitive in the 21st century.” (Michael Sherer, “What He Knows Now: Obama on Popularity, Partisanship and Getting Things Done in Washington,” [TIME](#), 8/30/12)

REALITY: 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)

The Washington Post’s Dan Balz: Obama “Has Never Really Acknowledged That He Made Mistakes – Other Than Saying He Didn’t Do An Adequate Job Of Talking About His Accomplishments.” (Dan Balz, “What Is Obama’s Second-Term Plan?,” [The Washington Post](#), 9/4/12)

- **Obama Hasn't Offered Explanation Of Why His Policies Haven't Rescued The American Economy From Recession Except To Remind Them Of The Severity Of The Recession.** "Nor has he explained very well why his policies haven't wrenched the economy out of its current state any faster, other than to remind people of the severity of the recession he inherited and the domestic and global uncertainty that has kept growth low and the unemployment rate high." (Dan Balz, "What Is Obama's Second-Term Plan?," [The Washington Post](#), 9/4/12)

5. OBAMA BLAMES HIS BUSY SCHEDULE

EXCUSE: Obama Has Not Met With His Jobs Council In Six Months Because He Has Got "A Lot On His Plate." REPORTER: "So there's no reason they [the Jobs Council] haven't met publicly?" WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY JAY CARNEY: "No, there's no specific reason except the President's obviously got a lot on his plate." ([White House Press Conference](#), Washington, D.C., 7/18/12)

REALITY: Obama Has Attended 132 Fundraisers Since He Last Met With His Jobs Council. (CBS' Mark Knoller, [Twitter Feed](#), Accessed 9/14/12; Meetings Of The President's Council On Jobs And Competitiveness, [The White House](#), Accessed 8/3/12; CBS's Mark Knoller, [Twitter Feed](#), 9/17/12)

- **Obama Has Played 12 Rounds Of Golf Since He Last Met With His Jobs Council.** "President Obama marked his 51st birthday with a golf outing in Washington, D.C. A pool report said Obama arrived at Andrews Air Force base this morning for a round. According to CBS News reporter Mark Knoller, Obama's visit to the links is his 104th round since taking office." (Meghashyam Mali, "Obama Hits The Links To Celebrate 51st Birthday," [The Hill](#), 8/4/12)
- **Obama Boasted About "How Focused And How Hard-Working" His Jobs Council Was, Claiming That It Was Not A "Show Council."** OBAMA: "One of the things that's been striking about this Jobs Council is how focused and how hard-working everybody has been around this table. This has not been a show council. This has been a work council. And because of the extraordinary commitments that each and every one of you have made, we have generated I think as good a set of proposals as we have seen coming out of the private sector to help to guide and steer our economic agenda and our approach to jobs and growth over the next couple of years." (President Barack Obama, [Opening And Closing Remarks By The President To The Council On Jobs And Competitiveness](#), Washington, DC, 1/17/12)

6. OBAMA BLAMES HIS TERM LIMIT AS TOO SHORT TO FIX THE ECONOMY

EXCUSE: In An Interview With CBS's Steve Kroft, Obama Said The Fixing The Economy Will "Take More Than One Term. Probably Takes More Than One President." CBS's STEVE KROFT: "You declared your candidacy. And you said, 'The reason we've not met our challenges is a failure of leadership, the smallness of our politics, the ease with which we're distracted by the petty and the trivial, our chronic avoidance of tough decisions, our presence for scoring cheap political points instead of rolling up our sleeves and building a working consensus to take on big problems.' I mean those were eloquent words and true words. Unfortunately, they're still largely true today. Did you overpromise? Did you underestimate how difficult this was gonna be?" OBAMA: "I didn't overpromise. And I didn't underestimate how tough this was gonna be. I always believed that this was a long term project. That reversing a culture here in Washington, dominated by special interests, it was gonna take more than a year. It was gonna take more than two years. It was gonna take more than one term. Probably takes more than one president. The one thing I've prided myself on before I was president, and it turns out that continues to be true as president: I'm a persistent son of a gun. I just stay at it. And I'm just gonna keep on

stayin' at it, as long as I'm in this office. And we're gonna get it right. And America will succeed. I am absolutely confident about that." ("President Obama: The Economy, The Congress, The Future," [CBS News](#), 12/11/12)

REALITY: In 2009, Obama Said "If I Don't Have This Done In Three Years, Then There's Going To Be A One-Term Proposition." OBAMA: "That's exactly right. And — and, you know, a year from now I think people — are going to see that — we're starting to make some progress. But there's still going to be some pain out there. If I don't have this done in three years, then there's going to be a one-term proposition." (NBC's ["The Today Show"](#), 2/2/09)

7. OBAMA BLAMES HIGH GAS PRICES

EXCUSE: Obama Has Blamed High Gas Prices For The Dismal State Of The Economy. OBAMA: "And today, we're still fighting our way back from the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. The economy is growing again, but it's not growing as fast as we want it to grow. Our businesses have created almost 4.3 million new jobs over the last 27 months, but as we learned in today's jobs report, we're still not creating them as fast as we want. And just like this time last year, our economy is still facing some serious headwinds. We had high gas prices a month, two months ago, and they're starting to come down, and they were spiking, but they're still hitting people's wallets pretty hard. That has an impact." (President Barack Obama, [Remarks On Veterans Jobs, Golden Valley](#), MN, 6/1/12)

REALITY: In 2008, Then Senator Obama Blamed Washington For High Gas Prices. OBAMA: "Here in Indiana, gas costs \$3.60 a gallon. And across the country, gas costs more than at any time in the last 30 years. ... But the reason Americans keep going to the pump isn't because oil companies are being particularly innovative, it's because Washington didn't deal with the challenge of alternative energy when they had a chance." (Sen. Barack Obama, [Remarks At A Campaign Event](#), Indianapolis, IN, 4/25/08)

- **Since Obama Took Office, The Average Price Per Gallon Of Gas Has More Than Doubled From \$1.847 To \$3.847.** ("Gasoline And Diesel Fuel Update," [U.S. Energy And Information Administration](#), Accessed 9/17/12)

8. OBAMA BLAMES NEW TECHNOLOGY

EXCUSE: Obama Has Blamed ATMs And Airport Kiosks For His Failure To Create Jobs. OBAMA: "[T]here are some structural issues with our economy, where a lot of businesses have learned to become much more efficient, with a lot fewer workers. You see it when you go to the bank and use an ATM -- you don't go to a bank teller. Or you go to the airport, and you're using a kiosk, instead of checking in at the gate." (NBC's ["Today"](#), 6/14/11)

REALITY: "So Far, He Has Blamed The Stagnant Economy On ATMs, Ditches, Slurpees, Corporate-Jet Owners, The Tea Party, Republicans, Japan's Earthquake, The Arab Spring, The Arab Summer, George Bush, And 'Fat-Cat' Wall Street Something-Or-Others. The Kitchen Sink May Be Next." (Salena Zito, "Battlegrounds Of Resentment," [Pittsburgh Tribune-Review](#), 8/28/11)

9. OBAMA BLAMES THOSE WHO MISUNDERSTOOD THE DEPTH OF THE RECESSION

EXCUSE: In An Interview, Obama Claimed "We Understood That It Was Bad, But We Didn't Know How Bad It Was." OBAMA: "Well I think there's no doubt that I wish I knew and I wish everybody knew just how deep the crisis was when I was first sworn into office. I think we understood that it was bad, but we didn't know how bad it was." ("Raw Video: Complete Interview With President Obama," [KIRO TV](#), 12/13/11)

REALITY: During The Transition, Obama's Chair Of The Council Of Economic Advisers Christina

Romer Told Obama, “Mr. President-Elect, This Is Your Holy-S--- Moment” In Order To Convey The Fact That “The Economy Was Hurtling Towards A Depression.” “Politics had its moment just before the meeting, when the economists previewed their message for Axelrod: The economy was hurtling toward a depression. Axelrod knew things were bad, and even he hadn’t grasped how close America was to rock-bottom bad. He said his research suggested the public had no clue whatsoever. Summers, the Washington veteran, dryly whispered to Romer, the lifelong academic: ‘He doesn’t mean research the way we mean research.’ Okay, polling. Axelrod’s point was that the tidal wave hadn’t yet hit the shore. There hadn’t even been a real tsunami alert. ‘The American people,’ he said, ‘have not yet had their holy-shit moment.’ Stage-managing the meeting, Summers had assigned Romer to open with an overview of the emergency. With Axelrod’s analysis fresh in her mind, she began the most memorable sentence she’s ever uttered, a line that Obama’s aides have repeated ever since as a reminder of the mess dumped in his lap: ‘Mr. President-Elect, she said, ‘this is your holy-s--- moment.’” (Michael Grunwald, *The New New Deal; The Hidden Story Of Change In The Obama Era*, 2012, pp. 113-114)

September 2008: Obama: “We Are Going Through The Worst Financial Crisis Since The Great Depression.” (Sen. Barack Obama, [Remarks During First Presidential Debate](#), Oxford, MS, 9/26/08)

October 2008: Obama: “We Meet Here At A Time Of Great Uncertainty. Our Economy Is In Crisis.” (Sen. Barack Obama, [Remarks](#), La Crosse, WI, 10/1/08)

November 2008: Obama: “We Are Facing An Economic Crisis Of Historic Proportions.” (President-Elect Barack Obama, [Remarks Announcing Members Of The Economic Team](#), Chicago, IL, 11/24/08)

“In Reality, Though, Well-Respected Analysts And Economists From All Corners Were Sounding Alarms About The State Of The Economy -- In Early 2009, And Even Before.” (Alexander Eichler, “Jay Carney, Despite Evidence, Says Economists Didn’t Know How Bad The Recession Would Get,” [The Huffington Post](#), 12/8/11)

- **The Evidence Doesn’t Support The White House’s Claim That No One Knew How Bad The Economy Was In 2009.** “White House Press Secretary Jay Carney made a surprising assertion on MSNBC Wednesday, saying that in early 2009, as Barack Obama was taking office, there weren’t any major economists who understood just how bad the recession was. The problem is that the evidence doesn’t support his claim.” (Alexander Eichler, “Jay Carney, Despite Evidence, Says Economists Didn’t Know How Bad The Recession Would Get,” [The Huffington Post](#), 12/8/11)

10. OBAMA BLAMES THE DISMAL HOUSING MARKET

EXCUSE: President Obama Said “I’ll Be Honest With You, This [Housing] Is Probably The Biggest Drag On The Economy Right Now.” OBAMA: “Well, it’s a good question. And I’ll be honest with you, this is probably the biggest drag on the economy right now that we have -- along with I know the frustrations people have about gas prices. What we’ve really seen is the housing market, which was a bubble, had greatly over-inflated in all regions of the country. And I know I probably don’t get a lot of sympathy about that here because I can only imagine what rents and mortgages you guys are paying.” (President Barack Obama, [Remarks By The President At A Facebook Town Hall](#), Palo Alto, CA, 4/20/11)

REALITY: It Was Obama Who Announced Early On In His Administration That “We Will Not Roll Out An Aggressive Housing Plan.” “What about the thousands of homeowners who owed more on their mortgages than their homes were worth? asked Durbin. ‘We will not roll out an aggressive housing plan,’ Obama said, and it would not be part of the stimulus bill. The housing problem was massive and baffling, and none of them had solid ideas for fixing it.” (Bob Woodward, *The Price Of Politics*, 2012, p. 8)

- **The Decision To Not Undertake More Efforts To Aid Homeowners “Ultimately Was Political.”** “But the decision ultimately was political. Mr. Obama and his advisers were convinced

that even in the depths of an unyielding crisis, most Americans did not want their neighbors rescued at public expense.” (Binyamin Appelbaum, “Cautious Moves On Foreclosures Haunting Obama,” [The New York Times](#), 8/19/12)

- **“Obama’s Response To Housing Reflects The Failures Of This Administration, Both Large And Small.”** “Still, President Obama’s response to housing reflects the failures of this administration, both large and small.” (Liz Peek, “Homeowners Not Better Off Now Than Four Years Ago,” [The Fiscal Times](#), 9/5/12)