



# Then And Now: Obama Returns To Berlin To Find Lower Expectations

***Obama's Trip To Berlin Highlights His Diminished Standing At Home And Abroad***

**Five Years Later, Obama Is Returning To Deliver An Address In Berlin, Where He Gave A 2008 Campaign Address In Front Of A "Massive Crowd."** "Nearly five years after delivering a campaign speech to a massive crowd in Berlin, President Obama will return to Germany's capital this month to deliver a speech at the historic Brandenburg Gate. Obama's return to Berlin will draw comparisons to his visit in July 2008, when more than 200,000 people came to hear the then-Democratic presidential nominee speak at the Victory Column, a little more than a mile away." (Philip Rucker, "Obama To Return To Berlin To Deliver Speech At Brandenburg Gate," [The Washington Post](#), 6/5/13)

## **OBAMA OFFICIALS ARE TRYING TO AVOID COMPARISONS TO 2008**

***Obama Officials Feared That Europe's "Disenchantment" With Obama Would Be On Display At His Brandenburg Gate Speech***

**Today In Berlin, "Obama Faces A Cooler Reception" Than In 2008 When He Was "Cheered Like A Rock Star."** "Cheered like a rock star when he passed through Berlin five years ago on his way to the White House, Barack Obama faces a cooler reception and tough questions about U.S. spying methods when he returns next week for talks with Angela Merkel and a speech at the Brandenburg Gate." (Noah Barkin, "'Yes We Can' To 'Yes We Scan', Obama Returns To Berlin," [Reuters](#), 6/14/13)

- **"Back Then... A Euphoric Crowd Of 200,000 Turned Up To Hear The Democratic Presidential Contender Speak In The German Capital. ... But Five Years Later, Germany's Love Affair With The U.S. President Has Gone Cold."** "Back then, in a surprising outpouring of Teutonic affection for Obama, a euphoric crowd of 200,000 turned up to hear the Democratic presidential contender speak in the German capital. 'People of the world: Look at Berlin, where a wall came down, a continent came together, and history proved that there is no challenge too great for a world that stands as one,' he told the rapturous masses. 'This city, of all cities, knows the dream of freedom.' But five years later, Germany's love affair with the U.S. president has gone cold." (Marc Young, "Obama Loses German Hearts And Minds Ahead Of Berlin Visit," [Yahoo! News](#), 6/18/13)

**In An Attempt To Avoid “Unfavourable Comparisons With The Turnout In 2008,” Obama Will Address 4,000 Invited Guests On The Enclosed East Side Of The Brandenburg Gate.** “This time he is due to address roughly 4,000 invited guests on the eastern side of the Gate, in the enclosed Pariser Platz square. U.S. officials were apparently reluctant to have him speak on the western side, next to the park, because they feared unfavourable comparisons with the turnout in 2008.” (Noah Barkin, “‘Yes We Can’ To ‘Yes We Scan’, Obama Returns To Berlin,” [Reuters](#), 6/14/13)

- **“U.S. Officials Were Apparently Reluctant To Have Him Speak On The Western Side...”** “U.S. officials were apparently reluctant to have him speak on the western side, next to the park, because they feared unfavourable comparisons with the turnout in 2008.” (Noah Barkin, “‘Yes We Can’ To ‘Yes We Scan’, Obama Returns To Berlin,” [Reuters](#), 6/14/13)

**Obama’s Long-Awaited Speech In Berlin Is Being Met With “Disappointment” From An Audience That Has “Lost Its Euphoria For Him.”** “When U.S. President Barack Obama visits Germany on Tuesday and Wednesday, he’ll get the opportunity he was denied as a presidential candidate in 2008: a speech at Berlin’s most famous landmark, the Brandenburg Gate. But the audience will have lost its euphoria for him. In Germany, which viewed him as the great hope of world politics five years ago, there is disappointment that the Obama administration hasn’t changed U.S. foreign and security policies as much as hoped.” (Marcus Walker and William Boston, “Obama Faces Germans’ Disillusionment On Berlin Visit,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 6/16/13)

- **The Crowds At Obama’s Address Are Likely To Include “Signs Of Disenchantment.”** “German leaders and many analysts predict another big audience for Obama’s address but one that, unlike the first, may include a few signs of disenchantment with a president who, after less than a year in office, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his diplomatic promise.” (Scott Wilson, “On Europe Trip, Obama Will Face A Continent Frustrated By His Actions And Inaction,” [The Washington Post](#), 6/16/13)

## **THE PROMISE OF OBAMA’S CAMPAIGN STANDS IN STARK CONTRAST TO THE REALITY OF HIS PRESIDENCY**

**In His 2008 Berlin Speech, Obama Introduced Himself As “A Leader Who Could Summon Other Nations To Join The United States In Confronting The World’s Next Challenges.”** “Senator Barack Obama stood before a sea of cheering admirers on Thursday and sought to inspire fresh cooperation among American allies to defeat terrorism and other threats, introducing himself as a leader who could summon other nations to join the United States in confronting the world’s next challenges.” (Jeff Zeleny And Nicholas Kulish, “Obama, In Berlin, Calls For Renewal Of Ties With Allies,” [The New York Times](#), 7/25/08)

**Now, Obama Is Confronting “Diplomatic Fallout” From His European Counterparts Because Of His Administration’s Policies And Priorities.** “As he arrives Monday in Northern Ireland for his first trip to Europe in two years, Obama will be confronting the diplomatic fallout from his actions and in-action on some of the most urgent concerns of his European counterparts.” (Scott Wilson, “On Europe Trip, Obama Will Face A Continent Frustrated By His Actions And Inaction,” [The Washington Post](#), 6/16/13)

- **The Washington Post Headline: “On Europe Trip, Obama Will Face A Continent Frustrated By His Actions And Inaction.”** (Scott Wilson, “On Europe Trip, Obama Will Face A Continent Frustrated By His Actions And Inaction,” [The Washington Post](#), 6/16/13)

**In Europe, “The Glow Surrounding” Obama’s Presidency “Has Faded.”** “Even though Obama has fulfilled the last two of those promises, the glow surrounding his presidency in Europe has faded as he arrives Monday to speak in Belfast, a seaside city once known as a cauldron of sectarian conflict that is now prospering under a U.S.-brokered peace agreement.” (Scott Wilson, “On Europe Trip, Obama Will Face A Continent Frustrated By His Actions And Inaction,” [The Washington Post](#), 6/16/13)

- **A Recent Gallup Poll Showed A 10-Point Decline In Public Approval Of U.S. Leadership Compared To Obama's First Year In Office.** "A Gallup poll published in March showed that the public approval of U.S. leadership in Europe has dropped 11 percentage points since Obama's first year in office, to 36 percent, although it is still far higher than it was during the Bush administration's final year." (Scott Wilson, "On Europe Trip, Obama Will Face A Continent Frustrated By His Actions And Inaction," [The Washington Post](#), 6/16/13)

**German Newspaper *Der Spiegel*: "Obama Has Now Been In Office For Four-And-A-Half Years, But The Promise Remains Unfulfilled."** "In this way, Obama became a symbol of the best possible future for the country, a young politician who was the son of a white mother from Kansas and a black father from Kenya, born at a time when there were still states in the US that outlawed interracial marriage. He fulfilled the collective yearning for a new, friendlier America, one that is more open, tolerant and worldly, and for a new style of politics -- politics with a happy end. Obama has now been in office for four-and-a-half years, but the promise remains unfulfilled. Just as Kennedy was unable to truly complete the transformation of his country, Obama has also been forced to disappoint." ("Kennedy To Obama: The Evolution Of Trans-Atlantic Ties," [Der Spiegel](#), 6/11/13)

- **"The Obama Who Arrives In Berlin Will Be A Somewhat Reserved American Acquaintance Who Stays Only As Long As Necessary."** "It is Obama's ninth European trip as president, but only his first state visit to Berlin. It took him four-and-a-half years to pay his official visit to Germany, the undisputed dominant power in Europe. The trip carries a great deal of importance for the Germans. ... The Obama who arrives in Berlin will be a somewhat reserved American acquaintance who stays only as long as necessary. He will stay at the Ritz-Carlton, and Chancellor Angela Merkel and President Joachim Gauck will join him for relatively mundane meetings." ("Kennedy To Obama: The Evolution Of Trans-Atlantic Ties," [Der Spiegel](#), 6/11/13)