



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on February 19, 2009

Obama's Broken Promises at One Month

After that, George W. Bush blatantly [lied](#) to the American people when he said, "Now, by the way, any time you hear the United States government talking about wiretap, it requires — a wiretap requires a court order. Nothing has changed, by the way. When we're talking about chasing down terrorists, we're talking about getting a court order before we do so."



Now we have Barack Obama as president. And the question is: one month after taking the oath of office, how is he doing in keeping his promises?

And the answer is "not very well."

Here's a review of how well he is conforming to his promises to the public:

Transparency - Broken Promise #1: "I'll make our government open and transparent so that anyone can ensure that our business is the people's business. As Justice Louis Brandeis once said, sunlight is the greatest disinfectant.... No more secrecy." (campaign speech in Green Bay, Wisconsin, September 22, 2008 — [video/transcript](#))

Reality: President Obama has made government less open and transparent, not more. The WhiteHouse.gov website is simply a mess. When Presidents Clinton and Bush were in the White House, WhiteHouse.gov posted every word uttered by the president almost in real time. Under President Clinton, two versions of speeches ("as prepared" and "as delivered") were often posted, with the "as prepared" remarks usually posted before the president said them. President Bush's WhiteHouse.gov also posted every word the president said within hours, although Bush's White House staff downgraded the Clinton-era WhiteHouse.gov website search capability to an almost unusable search engine.

President Obama's WhiteHouse.gov website typically doesn't post the president's words for days after an event. And even then, they only post prepared remarks. Question-and-answer remarks from town meetings, like those used to sell the "stimulus" bill in [Elkhart, Indiana](#), and [Ft. Myers, Florida](#), took a week to appear on the WhiteHouse.gov website. His first press conference — held on February 9 — is still not posted on the White House website 10 days later.

And Barack Obama has already twice exploited the same "state-secrets" ploy that the Bush administration used to suppress information about U.S. torture tactics ([here](#) and [here](#)) in federal court. Government is not more open under Obama. In fact, it's more secretive than ever.

Five Days - Broken Promise #2: "When there is a bill that ends up on my desk as President, you will have five days to look online and find out what's in it before I sign it. When there are meetings between lobbyists and a government agency, we will put as many as possible online for every American to watch. When there is a tax bill being debated in Congress, you will know the names of the corporations that would benefit and how much money they would get. And we will put every corporate tax break and



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every pork-barrel project online for every American to see. You will know who asked for them and you can cast your vote accordingly." (campaign speech in Green Bay, Wisconsin, September 22, 2008 - [video/transcript](#))

Reality: This was the first Obama promise to be broken as president, though not his first promise to be broken. Not only did he sign the "stimulus" bill less than five days after the text of it was posted on the White House website, he broke the promise with the first two bills he signed. "The first bill Obama signed into law, the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, wasn't posted online until after he signed it January 29. He signed legislation expanding children's health insurance on February 4 after posting it online February 1," Mike Soraghan from *The Hill* newspaper [reported](#).

Change on Economy - Broken Promise #3: "What I won't do is return to the failed theories of the last eight years that got us into this fix in the first place, because those theories have been tested and they have failed. And that's part of what the election in November was all about." ([Press Conference](#), February 9, 2009)

Reality: President Obama has followed President Bush's policy precisely. Bush's economic policies can be summed up as "spend a lot more, cut taxes selectively, thereby spiking the budget deficit." Bush simply threw borrowed tax dollars at economic problems, including "stimulus" bailouts.

Obama's policy with the "stimulus" and bailout bills is the same: spend a lot more, cut taxes selectively, thereby spiking the budget deficit.

The budget President Bush inherited from the Clinton era was officially balanced, though in reality the government continued to spend more money than it took in, as evidenced by the increase in the national debt each year. But during the George W. Bush years, the debt problem grew much worse, with Obama inheriting a \$1 trillion deficit that will balloon [to approximately \\$2 trillion](#) this year alone.

President Obama truthfully said in his [weekly February 7 video address](#) that "we can't expect relief from the tired old theories that, in eight short years, doubled the national debt, threw our economy into a tailspin, and led us into this mess in the first place."

The problem is that he is following precisely "the tired old theories" that "led us into this mess in the first place."

Lobbyists in the White House - Broken Promise #4: "I have done more to take on lobbyists than any other candidate in this race. I don't take a dime of their money, and when I am president, they won't find a job in my White House." ([campaign promise](#))

Reality: Lobbyists found [positions on Obama's transition team](#) even before he was elected president. And when it made headlines, [Obama backtracked](#), allowing lobbyists to take any job as long as they hadn't lobbied in a field related to their new position in the past year.



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