

## CHALLENGES OF BARACK OBAMA'S PRESIDENCY

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**Abstract:** Barack Obama election for the White House as a great challenge in American History. He wasn't chosen on the basis of experience, nor for his role as leader of a party a movement. He had not been a governor or a general or a veteran legislator. He did not become president by the accident or by his predecessor's death in office. Obama was elected purely for himself, his personal and what he symbolized. In 48 brief months, he rose from the obscurity of a state legislature to become the first Democrat in more than three decades to win more than half of the popular vote. Messenger and message were inseparable; he offered himself as Exhibit A in the case for hope and change. Obama was a mirror which millions of people saw their cherished ideals reflected; tolerance, cooperation, equality, justice. Obama also directed billions to basic scientific research, hoping to sow seeds of discovery that would yield the next wave of American innovation. Eight years after Obama took office with the economy crashing around his ears, people are still arguing about his accomplishments. He knew that economy was in trouble. He had cited the nation's financial woes unrelentingly during his campaign to attack rival John McCain – and most Republicans really-as irresponsible. President Obama entered the White House during the worst financial crisis in the USA since the Great Depression and is credited with getting the economy back on course, reviving the job market and restoring consumer confidence. While performing this research paper the methods such as Historical Method, Verbal-textual Method and Descriptive method have been implemented for the realization of this project.

**Keywords:** Barack Obama, Democrats, Eight Years, Campaign, Great Depression.

### INTRODUCTION

United State of America is Constitutional Federal Republic that contains 50 states and one federal circuit. United State of America is part of democratic states in the world that usually boast about their appearance as the main holder of human rights not only national but also in the global.

President of the Republic is the highest institutional figure representative of a state with the Republican form of government and head of state. The country's Constitution gives him important functions, that of representing the national unity and the guarantor of constitutional principles to the political nature and functions of the executive.

The President significantly changed the form of government of the state and country. In republics states, president is generally elected directly by the people, is the backbone of local administrative and political, cannot dissolve parliament, against whom he is dependent (in these cases the Congress has the only power to put the president on the state of prosecution for acts contrary to national interests or treason: impeachment).

In the United States, President is elected by an Electoral College composed of representatives of each state of the federation and through a special mechanism may occur (as has happened in some cases) that the candidate nominated by a qualified majority of voters of college and it sometimes doesn't respond with received votes from the population. The American two-party system has been operating since the time after G. Washington's Presidency, from that time the Federals and Republicans were the first political groups. Those two-party systems among the time rarely have changed. Differently of others democracies in world American states reassure the system that the *winner takes all*.

### 1. EARLY LIFE

Barack Hussein Obama Junior the 44<sup>th</sup> president of United States of America was born in Honolulu Hawaii, on August 4<sup>th</sup> 1961. His religion is Protestant Christian. When Obama was two his parents divorced in 1966 his family moved in Indonesia. Barack Obama meets his father once a month; he was shaped more by his absences than his presence. His mother said when he was a little boy: *'My son is an American and he must understand it.'* Obama was born in but one year of his childhood spent in the State of Washington, and four other years he lived in Indonesia. His childhood was like anyone else's. (Paul Street, 2009, p.26)

### 2. PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS (2008)

Barack Obama announced his candidacy on 10 February 2007 and went for newspaper headlines when he was indubitable for his future career. His future platform was targeting to replace the failed Bush Presidency and to change the White House. It meant to find a way to change the principle of working in Washington DC. The scope of Obama's presidency was the estimation of public goods, more partisanship approaches, reduction of the unemployment rate, and reduction of loan interest, conduct political system and interethnic relations, justice and the rule of law, safety and security. McCain was a Republican nominee. The strategy of Obama was to be equating McCain and Bush as much as possible. The need for a great change the was the overarching campaign of Barack Obama on presidential elections on 2008. The special attention of President Barack Obama was

foreign policy. Obama already had become not only a star of American politics but beyond. America hardly waited to test the capabilities of this pragmatic leader who had strongly impressed the public with his many wise speeches during the campaign where they had been offered also promises for a change. Obama is not to be blamed the fault of why when the president took office, the economy was collapsing, unemployment was growing threats from terrorism as well as strategy and the war in Iraq and Afghanistan was not giving satisfactory results. Presumptive nominee Obama became the Democratic Party's winner on June 3, 2008; he won sufficient number of votes and delegates. Republican Presidential nominee John McCain was defeated by Democratic President on November 4, 2008.

Article II of the US Constitution defines the way of electing the president and vice president. Especially, the first paragraph of this article is determinant of forming electoral body that elects the president. This method is specific to the US presidential elections and at the same time unique in the world. This means that the president is not elected directly by popular vote, but by election, therefore, indirect way, by election of that body is called "electoral college". Even today the same indirect method operates on electing the president. "Electoral College", elected every four year meets only once, during the presidential election in December. The Electoral College is a corporate body. While the number of voters for each country range from 3 to 55 constituencies / voter, depending on the number of inhabitants of each country. The electoral colleges today numbers 538 electors, based on 100 members of the Senate, 435 members of the House of Representatives, and 3 electors from DC (District of Columbia), as a result of Amendment XXIII to the Constitution (adopted in 1961). Voters (Electors) gathered in the capitals of their respective states and vote with two ballots, one for the election of the president and one for vice president. Since the establishment of the Electoral College until elections in 2004, counted 157 voters that change the electorate who vote contrary to their commitment; these are called "Faithless electors - faithless elector". Indirect system of presidential elections in the US allows such a thing. For example, during the XIX century, three times it happened that the presidential candidate to the presidential election despite losing the popular vote obtained; due to loss of electoral votes, candidates have won the presidency with less popular vote, but with more electoral votes (John K. Adams (1824), Rutherford B. Hayes (1876) and Benjamin Harrison (1888). As long the twentieth century's never happened such a thing. ( *Harvey L. Schantz, 1996, p.71*)

### 3. FIRST 100 DAYS

In front the Capitol Hill Building became the inauguration ceremony of President Barack Obama. Among the important political personalities from the Obama administration, Senate, Congress and the Supreme Court, were and Sen. John McCain, Paul Ryan, Newt Gingrich, Nancy Pelosi, Bill and Hilary Clinton and many prominent figures. Present were former President Jimmy Carter and his wife, the families of Mr. Obama and first lady Michelle Obama. Of known personalities from the press, art and culture as Eva Longoria, actress Angela Bassett, American pop icon Cindy Lau per, John Legend, Beyoncé. He officially swore in a private ceremony at the White House. On January 21 he swore solemnly before American nation. President Obama was accompanied and introduced by Senator of New York Charles (Chuck) Schumer who said that the subject of the day is "Faith in America's Future."

When president Obama took his office, he was faced with economic recession, ongoing foreign wars. He prepared and campaigned on an ambitious agenda of reforms and a lot of alternative energies for reinventing educations and care of health and bringing down the national debt. At his inauguration speech, he summarized the whole situation by saying, "*Today I say to you that the challenges we face are real. They are serious and they are many. They will not be met easily or in a short span of time. But know this, America: They will be met.*" At 2012 elections Obama was faced with Mitt Romney. He hold the 8 years of his presidency from 2009-2017. ( *Harvey L. Schantz, 1996, p.100*)

The first 100 days of the presidency has taken on a special meaning since the time of President Franklin Roosevelt. Franklin Roosevelt became president at the height of the Great Depression in 1933 and his first priority was to reassure the public that better days will come. Obama in the White House brought a message of hope for better days, at a time when America was going through the most difficult economic crisis since the Great Depression era. "As of today we must start from a first to make America the best". (Stephen Mansfield, 2008, p.143)

But 100 days later, the United States remains affected by the recession and growing unemployment and critics say the president's efforts do not affect the country's long-term needs. "*I will give a mixed assessment of the work of the President during the 100 days; there were probably more negative things than positive*". ( *Stephen Mansfield, 2008, p.148*)

During his first days on presidency he provides a legal protection for insurance. He cut taxes for the families, for small businesses and for them who bought first time a home. He reached 3.5 trillion budget plans. On his 100days he undertook America's foreign policy and reached out improving relations with all Europe, China also

and Russian and he opened dialogue with Iran, Venezuela. In 2009 Obama awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. *"What is required of us now is a new era of responsibility — a recognition on the part of every American that we have duties to ourselves, our nation and the world; duties that we do not grudgingly accept, but rather seize gladly, firm in the knowledge that there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our character than giving our all to a difficult task."* (Stephen Mansfield, 2008, p.143)

#### **4. PRESIDENCY (2009 – 2017)**

Although he has also opponents who accuse President that wants to pursue an economic and social program of the extreme, spending plans warn that his government will increase the national debt. It can be said that some of the changes in the first days have been substantial; it was massive plan of financial incentives, which aims to provide solutions to the country's economic recovery. However, also remember Obama's decision to close the detention center in Cuba Guantanamo, as well as that for setting a deadline for withdrawal in August 2010 from Iraq.

Experts estimate that the overall level of support for President Obama has remained high and it adds that its influence politically and Congress face his critics. He signed The Control to the Budget in 2011, and effort to rein the spending of government and he tried to prevent from defaulting on financial obligations. In 2011, signed the military policy that was known as *"Don't Ask, Don't Tell"*. (Reprinted, 2008, p.155)

Obama approved USA participation in fighting the supporters of the rebels with NATO airstrikes in March 2011. He gave the permission for covert operation in Pakistan and killing Osama Bin Laden.

*"I guarantee you; we will move this country forward,"* Among the main objectives of his second term Obama cited the reduction of the budget deficit, resolving the issue that has to do with taxes, immigration reform development and reduce dependence on foreign oil. Obama also acknowledged that it is ready and fully open to discuss with his rival Mitt Romney issues of further development of the country. After counting the votes in Ohio State it was announced that Obama assured him 275 of the 270 electoral votes needed

Candidates go through several stages, initially struggling to win the party nomination, and then to be potential candidates to the presidential election. The United State Constitution provide that if no candidate win the majority of the votes, the House of Representatives elects the ballot president with one vote for each state, and the candidates who it takes the votes of a majority of all the states will win the elections. But if the House of Representatives fail to elect president, he continues the second round of voting in the House of Representatives until a new president is elected. *"Congress can declare legally who would perform the function of the President, or the manner in which to select the person who will to perform this function."* (Reprinted, 2008, p.155)

#### **5. SOCIAL POLICY OF BARACK OBAMA'S ADMINISTRATION**

Barack Obama was rated overall the social policies in 2006 like conservative men and liberal president by Almanac of American Politics. Obama started the reconstruction of Democratic platform. Firstly he made the step on Convention of the Rights of Person with Disabilities. Non-discrimination of persons with disabilities in America is just a bad story, the remains an issue that requires a special attention. There is a legal framework that provides for this right, but its implementation remains a necessity and awareness of all stakeholders about the rights of this community. The constitution and law prohibit discrimination against persons with physical disabilities, sensory, intellectual and mental disabilities in employment, education, health care and other state services. However, employees, schools and health personnel and other employees of the health services sometimes discriminate these people. Direct discrimination and indirect discrimination against persons with disabilities exists in all aspects of social and private life and is more pronounced in employment, education, access to buildings and services and the independent life.

Meanwhile, people with mental disabilities are almost totally excluded from the labor market. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities is a human treaty for international human rights. The Democratic Party required that will help, protect and ensure the right of persons with disabilities. The persons with disabilities are as object of charity, they must have medical treatments and protection. The implementation of freedom and respect of human rights are the main pillars in the normal functioning of democratic states which directly depends on the development of political, economic and legal democratic states. Protection of freedoms and human rights is the result of the influence of many different factors but the most important is the infliction of violence or unjust wars that have occurred throughout human history.

Obama's definition on human kind reveals as; 'all the people are created equally'. He is generated to care about the rights of all souls that live in America. In today's modern political, philosophical and sociological thoughts there is a different perception of vital needs and social integration of persons with disabilities. Even considering their situation it is necessary to overcome the mentality inhibitor monetarist and appreciate at the same time seriously negative impact that social status or the fact that being with "disabled" it often becomes a factor that brings consequences in violation of civic dignity and become a serious obstacle to the conditions required for

integral promotion of their personality. The issue of different treatment of persons with disabilities, at the present time is a socio-political financial problem, urban growing size and social pressures with greater intensity. ( *Stephen Mansfield, 2008, p.148*)

Obama in his statements reveals; ‘We are obliged to this social category to think more, in order to create the right conditions, given the universal principle that the quality of democracy is not assess the level of fulfillment of conditions and respect for the rights of normal people, but first from social care, attention and sensitivity of the full state of civil society, to meet the requirements, in order to precisely these people adhere to civil standards to achieve social dignity intact and display capabilities integral personality. Ultimately, American society is facing civic duty and social pressure, which gradually makes us more and more conscious and compels us, to change social attitudes towards persons with disabilities. To time it requires all individually, with social structures, political, governmental obey sincerely, agree unconditionally with the universal truth of our time, to ensure social justice and equality for all persons with disabilities. For the problem of people with disabilities is two-way and requires a mutual solution.’

The realities of the suffering that people with disabilities need to look beyond, not just to the social care, material support and financial compensation. Now society, the family, the community, our state institutions have the great task, to observe wider and humanly reality of suffering that they experience in the family and society. But that requires all of us to deal with them. *The only way to expand care and social solidarity.* (, Stephen Mansfield, 2008, p.18)

People with disabilities also need public assistance, but help to ensure personal dignity and their social integration. Obama said; ‘As a society we can not feel satisfied or self-sufficient only in the fact that the government has guaranteed payment of permanent social assistance for paraplegics and quadriplegics, for blind people and people with physical or mental illness’. Social assistance is provided to persons with disabilities is not everything they need. Above all, this financial measure cannot divert the struggle that needs to be done to meet the rights and dignity integral to their personality.

In the dictionary of the racial issues in the campaign for presidential elections in America, Barack Obama has urged Americans to find a solution to racial problems. Mr. Obama said that discussions about race now entered a path of no return. He also says that the attacks of September 11 were "payback" for foreign policy following the US. But at the same time, Mr. Obama said it was important to increase understanding of the causes of anger of the black community in America. The issue of race is an issue that the American nation cannot ignore now. The racial right was also part of Obama’s strategy. He offered a big support on this area.

The President of America engaged to protect and create workplaces about the lesbian, bisexual, gay and transgender community. He supported and conferred in his platform that the people that live in America are equal, also he gave them the right to be employed in military forces, gave them the right of adopting children. Same sex partners could care about a child that they adopted. Obama also legalized the same – sex – marriage. He personally believed that marriage is between men and women. Obama encouraged political party members and the citizens of USA about the religion, giving the idea that the church and the state must be separated.

Although most other industrialized countries have abolished the death penalty in some parts of the United States it continues to be applied. Surveys show that public support has dropped US death penalty, but remains at high level of 60%. However, polls also show that those in favor did not feel confident. The death penalty dates back to ancient times. Ways of execution of prisoners have been different, since stoning, hanging with rope guillotine, gas chamber, electric chair, etc. One of the ways of execution of death was crossing this macabre kind used in antiquity. During the Obama’s presidency a great care was taken about the safety of the judicial system and the manner these sentences are executed. A terrible year record of the death penalty in the US was 1996, with a record 315 executions. In 2014 the figure went down to 35%. The death penalty is legal in 32 US states, and is abolished in 18, and in some of these countries, such as in New York is considered as unconstitutional.

In second term of elections Barack Obama took around and environmental policy. He proposed new regulations about the power plant about the factories, refining the oil and the gas emissions. He has emphasized the commission to recommend new safety standards. Military power is the main instrument of global influence of the United States, for serving to maximize the values and American interests. The issue of national interests of the state, which can be defined as a set of requirements, which are essential for foreign policy makers in making decisions and finding alternatives, sets foreign policy goals.

## 6. POST- PRESIDENCY

In 2008, Obama promised a fund of 10 billion to help home owners to refinance their loans. White House failed to approve the program "affordable housing" (*Pamela Geller with Robert Spencer, 2008, p.45*) by creating a fund of 38.4 billion to help homeowners avoid eviction and their failure to pay the loan rats. He expanded the number of people that have access to public health system. In 2009 Obama expanded health insurance program for children, another draft law that was presented for the health assistance. Great regards relate to security sector



the withdrawal of US Troops from Iraq. During the time of Obama Presidency the military brigades left Iraq seven years and five months after the invasion of the country, then 2014 USA launched air strikes in the region, 3500 soldiers returned in Iraq and 50 soldiers in Syria. Barack promised a global nuclear effort. The promise was kept as part of world powers reached a nuclear deal with Iran but the nuclear program of North Korea remained intact.

Another challenge was the normalization of relations with Cuba, and giving the right to citizens Cuban - Americans to meet with their families. Other significant changes as international trade were left in the hands of Congress. Another promise was to close the notorious Guantanamo prison. Once sat in the White House, Obama signed an executive order to close the prison and the completion of the examination. Interrogation practices have changed but the prison remains yet open.

## **7. USA AND MAJOR CHANGES IN MACEDONIA**

During the presidency, USA had important interest in Balkan, in maintaining stability, peace and security in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Albania and in Kosovo. The USA has NATO's troops and a military camp called Bond Steel and they are politically and economically supporting the Republic of Kosovo. Macedonia is considered as a noteworthy partner of the United States, and it is appreciated Macedonia's contribution to global security. Obama reaffirmed the ties between Macedonia and USA, for looking forward of further advances in those partnership in years ahead. The USA is committed to promote Macedonia's membership in NATO and European Union and they cooperate with the leaders and civil society, helping to extend democratic institutions and the process of multi-ethnicity. The US government sponsors a number of programs of academic, professional and cultural exchange for young people, students, teachers, professionals, artists, athletes and young leaders in Macedonia. The goals of these programs are to promote mutual understanding between the United States and the Republic of Macedonia.

We support the country's membership in the Alliance, but the Alliance is an organization whose policies based on consensus. There must be consensus on acceptance of each new member. Currently there is a problem, in the name which is a problem for Macedonia's entry into NATO. (Robert Spencer, 2008, p.45)

## **8. CONCLUSION**

The election of President Barack Obama, the man of color, was a great challenge for USA since Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States, who served from March 1861 until his assassination in April 1865. Lincoln's merits are; for leading successfully the United States through its bloodiest Civil War preserving the Federation, strengthened the national government, modernized the economy, voted a writ suspending habeas corpus requiring a person under arrest to be brought before a judge or into court, especially to secure the person's release unless lawful grounds are shown for their detention. His final merit that cost him the life was the voting of Emancipation Proclamation Act in 1863, using the Army to protect escaped slaves, encouraging the Union to outlaw slavery, and pushing through Congress the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, to abolish the slavery.

The world compared the gathered crowd at the inauguration ceremony of Obama with Trump, also compared their inaugural speeches. Obama presidential dancing couple amazed the world with their charm, love, warmth smile and emotion. The opposite of those seen in the Donald Trump presidential dance, where Melanie appear rigid and not smiling when dancing with her husband president, who does not hesitate to smile falsely to participants and the public television. Critics estimated the gesture as if of low level of respect towards public. That was accounted as Donald Trump's first mistake in the Inauguration Day. The inauguration ceremony continued in the church with the new elected President and his wife Melanie Trump. Then they will go to the White House to meet with the preceding President Obama and the preceding first lady Michele, a tradition of many years of inauguration. When they arrived to the White House, Donald Trump abandoned Melanie as leaving her unattended, in contrary of Obama's gentle style and behavior that gave opportunity to Michael to be her first to meet Bush. The hand of Obama was all time together with the hand of Michael, which in diplomatic body language means a great family and great relationship, compared to Trump as underestimating his pure, fragile, diamond wife. Considering women future leaders of states, Trump agrees that women cannot lead one state. Obama thinks contrary. Obama is a capacity that appreciates gender classes' and gives high rank to women. There is another significant behavior to be compared. On a rainy day when he with Michael was going on a presentation he left the umbrella to his wife, he himself becoming wet. On the other side on the same circumstances, Trump left his wife walking on rain not even sharing the umbrella.

As for taxes, Obama promised to bring down taxes imposed by Bush presidency for families earning more than 250 thousand dollars or for people who earn more than 200 thousand dollars. In 2013 cuts taxes went into effect permanently for incomes below 450 thousand dollars for families and 400 thousand dollars for individuals. Having regard to financing Obama supported the creation of a centralized database for groups of lobbyists. In the

field of migration Obama promised to provide the possibility of issuing regular documents to illegal immigrants. After the failure of such a proposal in Congress, Obama took the presidential initiative to stop the deportation from the USA territory of four million illegal immigrants. This decision was blocked by a federal court and the Obama administration appealed to the High Court.

Obama reaffirmed the ties between Macedonia and USA for looking forward of further advances in all partnerships in years ahead. The USA are committed to promote Macedonia's membership in NATO and European Union. They cooperate with the leaders of the country, civil society and will continue to help democratic institutions and the structure of multi-ethnicity. The USA government sponsors a number of programs of academic, professional and cultural exchange for young people, students, teachers, professionals, artists, athletes and young leaders in Macedonia.

The 8 years of Obama's Presidency passed quickly he organized and did America to go forward. America during its history had another immense changer and a glorious President

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