



## **Elder: Hey, media, why no Trump-like scrutiny on Obamacare, 'stimulus' or the Iraq bug-out?**

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The media's "President Donald Trump is a congenital liar" narrative reeks of rampant hypocrisy to those who repeatedly complained while the same media gave President Barack Obama pass after pass for eight years. Obama wanted to become a "transformational" president. He succeeded, thanks in large part to a fawning, compliant media that mostly supported Obama's policies and ignored the falsehoods he used to pursue them.

Obamacare, to quote former Vice President Joe Biden, was a "big f---ing deal." Similarly, pulling all troops from Iraq and spending nearly \$1 trillion for so-called economic stimulus programs were also big deals. Each decision required deception that the Trump-hating media were only too happy to ignore.

First, Obamacare. Obama promised it would "lower premiums by up to \$2,500 for a typical family per year" and that "if you like your doctor, you will be able to keep your doctor, period." Obama falsely claimed that as his mother lay dying from cancer in Hawaii, she had fought with her insurance carriers about her hospital and medical bills. But the biggest falsehood was the promise that Obamacare would "bend the cost curve" down — that compelling insurance companies to carry people with pre-existing conditions would actually *reduce* health care costs.

But in an unguarded moment, economist Jonathan Gruber, a key Obamacare architect, admitted: "Lack of transparency is a huge political advantage. And basically, call it the stupidity of the American voter or whatever, but basically that was really, really critical for the thing to pass." About Romneycare, the Massachusetts health care plan he helped craft, Gruber made another admission: "The dirty secret in Massachusetts is the feds paid for our bill, OK? In Massachusetts we had a very powerful senator you may know named Ted Kennedy. ... Ted Kennedy and smart people in Massachusetts had basically figured out a way to sort of rip off the feds for about 400 million dollars a year."

Second, the economic "stimulus" plan. In December 2008, Vice President-elect Joe Biden said, "Every economist, as I've said, from conservative to liberal, acknowledges that direct government spending on a direct program now is the best way to infuse economic growth and create jobs." A couple weeks later, President-elect Obama said, "There is no disagreement that we need action by our government, a recovery plan to jump-start the economy."

Actually, there was disagreement, and a great deal of it.

More than 200 economists, including several Nobel Prize winners, disagreed with his plan to "stimulate" the economy with government spending. In a full-page ad taken out by the libertarian Cato Institute, these economists, joined later by 130 more economists, said: "With all due respect, Mr. President, that is not true. Notwithstanding reports that all economists are now

Keynesians and that we all support a big increase in the burden of government, we the undersigned do not believe that more government spending is a way to improve economic performance. ... It is a triumph of hope over experience to believe that more government spending will help the U.S. today. ... Lower tax rates and a reduction in the burden of government are the best ways of using fiscal policy to boost growth.”

Third, the Iraq pullout. Obama pulled out of Iraq against the advice of his national security team. His secretary of state, secretary of defense, national security adviser, CIA chief, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the U.S. ambassador to Iraq all advised Obama to leave a stay-behind force. But when ISIS grew and metastasized, Obama eventually sent back 5,000 troops, where they remain today.

Did the President, who once referred to ISIS as “a JV team,” admit his costly mistake? On the contrary, Obama claimed that President George W. Bush’s Iraq timetable forced him to withdraw. Hillary Clinton, during the 2016 presidential campaign, also claimed the Bush agreement forced Obama to withdraw based on the timetable supposedly agreed to by the U.S. and Iraq. Never mind that in 2011, then-Secretary of State Clinton advised Obama to keep some troops in Iraq, an acknowledgement that he could have negotiated to do just that.

FactCheck.org, a “nonpartisan, nonprofit ‘consumer advocate’ for voters” run by the University of Pennsylvania’s Annenberg Public Policy Center, examined the claim that Bush tied Obama’s hands on Iraq:

“We take no position on whether the U.S. should have left some combat troops in Iraq. But the record shows that (President Bush) agreed to the withdrawal deadline and agreed not to leave behind a residual force. Likewise, the Clinton campaign’s response that Iraq wouldn’t allow the Obama administration to renegotiate the terms of the withdrawal ignored criticism that Obama didn’t try hard enough. That criticism isn’t just partisan.” And most notably, “*His own defense secretary said Obama wasn’t actively engaged in the negotiations and allowed the opportunity to ‘slip away’*(emphasis added).”

These three major Obama policy decisions — Obamacare, leaving Iraq and “stimulus” — were based on deception. But unlike today’s anti-Trump “truth-telling media,” Obama’s media cheered, saluted or looked the other way.