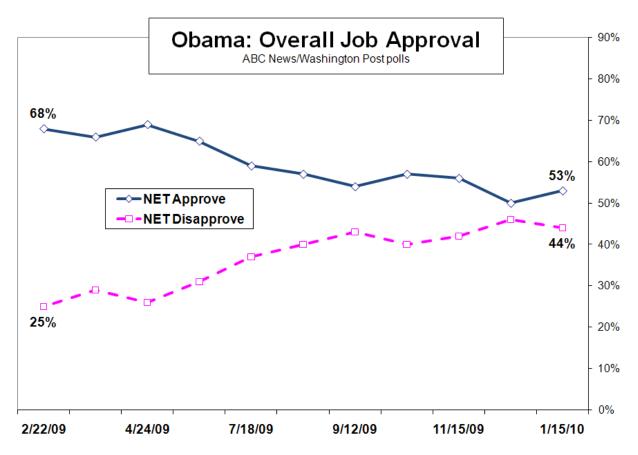
ABC NEWS/WASHINGTON POST POLL: OBAMA AT ONE YEAR EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE AFTER 12:01 a.m. Sunday, Jan. 17, 2010

President Obama at One Year: Lower Ratings, Higher Doubts

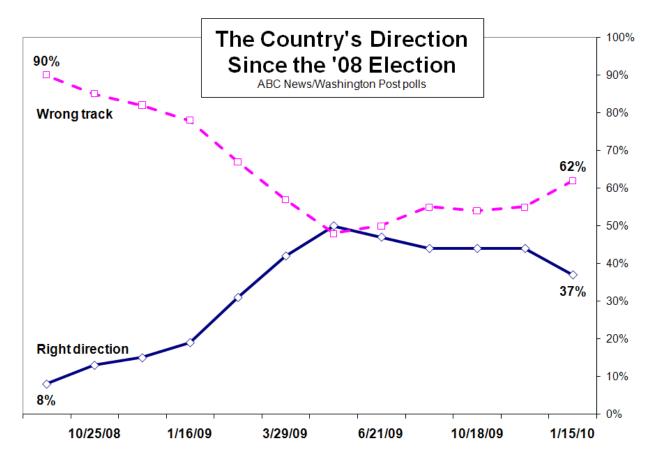
Bruised if unbroken, Barack Obama faces shrinking public confidence, increasingly negative views of the country's direction and far lower ratings than those he carried triumphantly into the White House a year ago this week.

But it could be worse.

Despite their disappointments, 53 percent of Americans in this ABC News/Washington Post poll approve of Obama's job performance overall – 15 points lower than his opening grade, but still just over half at the one-year mark. He remains personally popular, if far less so. And confidence in his leadership, as weakened as it is, greatly exceeds that in the Republicans in Congress, or, for that matter, in his own party.



The comedown nonetheless is dramatic, partly given the high expectations when Obama took office. Sixty-two percent of Americans now say the country's off on the wrong track, the most in 11 months. For the first time more than half, 53 percent, aren't confident in Obama to make the right decisions for the country's future. Just 41 percent say he's keeping his major campaign promises. And while a year ago 76 percent thought he'd bring "needed change" to Washington – his campaign mantra – far fewer, 50 percent, today say he's actually done so.



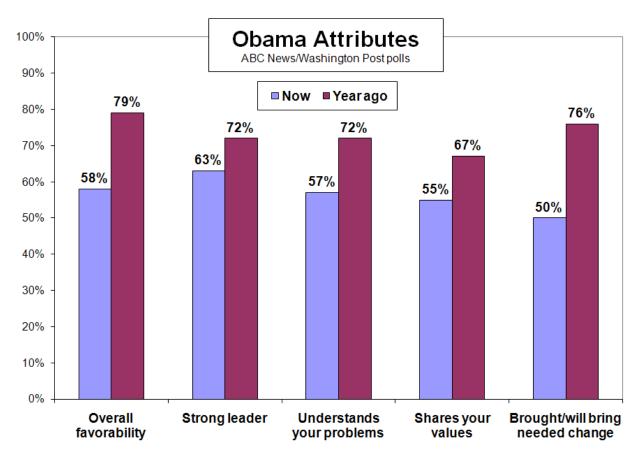
Indeed more than half, 52 percent, now say Obama hasn't accomplished much overall – up sharply from 36 percent at the three-month mark, the height of his economic recovery efforts. With the economy still rated as the country's most pressing problem, Obama's approval for handling it has fallen from 60 percent a month after he took office to 47 percent today. And a new low, barely over a third, says his policies are making the economy better.

The economy's not the only challenge. While Obama has focused attention on health care – its rating as the country's most pressing problem is sharply up – his prescription lacks broad support; 52 percent disapprove of the way he's handling the issue, more than half for the second month and up from 29 percent last spring. And he continues to take it on the chin for the deficit; 56 percent disapprove, more than half steadily since summer.

GRACE – There are some grace notes. Fifty-five percent approve of Obama's handling of the threat of terrorism; more, a notable 62 percent, approve of the way he's handled the government's response to the attempted Christmas Day bombing of a Northwest Airlines jet.

Obama's buoyed, as well, by the fact that 58 percent of Americans continue to express a favorable opinion of him personally, the most basic measure of a public figure's popularity. (George W. Bush, for comparison, left office with 37 percent favorability.) Obama's down a steep 21 points on this score, but it does remain positive for him.

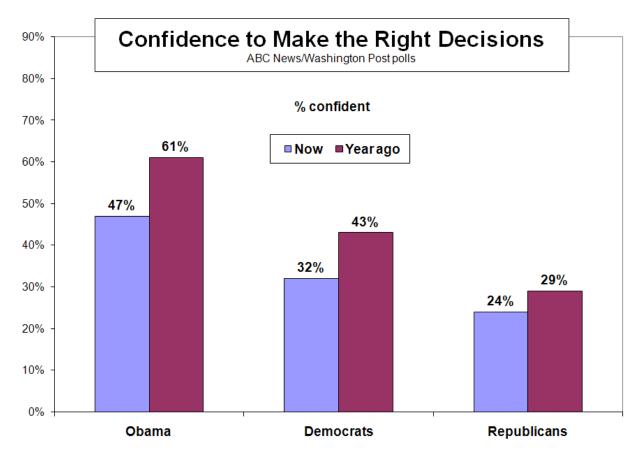
Moreover, 63 percent see Obama as a strong leader, 57 percent say he understands the problems of people like them and 55 percent think he shares their values. These are down, respectively, by 9, 15 and 12 points from their levels when he took office. But personal favorability and empathy serve as a politician's cartilage when the road gets rough, and Obama's aided by the fact that his remain positive overall.



Also, more than half of Americans, 54 percent, see Obama as "about right" ideologically, rather than too liberal, 37 percent (its peak was 40 percent in November) or too conservative. But this too, is down, from an usually high 65 percent "about right" when he took office.

CONFIDENCE and IRE – As noted, confidence in Obama's decision-making has deteriorated markedly. Forty-seven percent trust him to make the right decisions for the country's future, down from 61 percent when he took office. Fifty-three percent don't, up from 37 percent.

But that's better than the other chief players in Washington politics. Far more Americans, 75 percent, don't trust the Republicans in Congress to make the right decisions for the country's future; just 24 percent do – up 5 points from its nadir in October, but still only half Obama's level of trust. Sixty-eight percent don't trust decision-making by the Democrats in Congress, up 12 points since January. Thirty-two percent do.

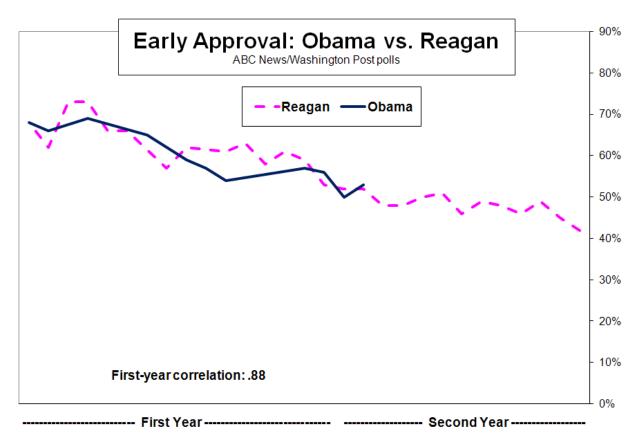


Some ire's also deflected by the fact that far more Americans blame the country's economic straits on the Bush administration, for inadequate regulation of the financial industry – 67 percent – than separately blame Obama, for not doing enough to turn things around, 36 percent. It's true, too, that today's 62 percent "wrong track" figure, while 14 points worse than its recent best last spring, is still better than its record 90 percent in October 2008.

Also, while 42 percent call the economy the single biggest problem for the president and the Congress to address, still far and away the top item, it's down from 66 percent a year ago. That reflects a large rise in the number who cite health care as the top problem, now 24 percent.

PRECEDENTS – To a large extent Obama's treading the predicted path for a president presiding over 10 percent unemployment. His course in approval almost precisely matches that of the last president to take office in the tempest of a recession, Ronald Reagan, who went from 68 percent job approval shortly after he took office to 52 percent at the one-year mark. Obama's gone from 68 percent to 53 percent in the comparable period. Their first-year ratings correlate at .88, with 1 representing a perfect match.

The worrying news for Obama is that Reagan went on to slip below 50 percent and pretty much stayed there throughout his second year, bottoming out at 42 percent at the two-year mark (and losing 26 House seats en route). He recovered only when the economy did.



Better for Obama is the long-term precedent; Reagan did recover, and completed his two-term presidency with an average 56 percent approval, solidly in the midrange for a postwar president.

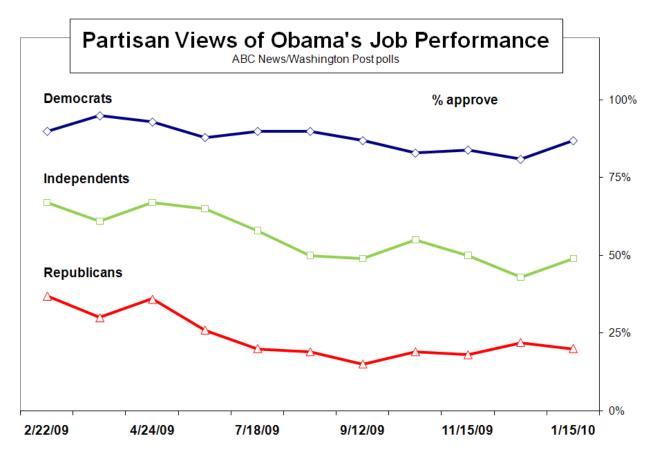
Some of Obama's ratings also call to mind another previous president. In January 1994, with the public mood fouled by a recession hangover, just 37 percent of Americans said Bill Clinton was keeping most of his major campaign promises, and 53 percent said he hadn't accomplished much so far – both similar to Obama's ratings now. Clinton, however, went on to end his two terms with an average 57 percent approval, almost identical to Reagan's.

The net change for Obama in his first year, down 15 points, is about the same as it was for Jimmy Carter as well as Reagan, and was worse for two presidents (both unelected) – Harry Truman, down 36 points in his first year, and Gerald Ford, down 26 points.

On an individual level, marks at one year in office don't always predict full-term success. George W. Bush soared at one year after 9/11, but had a disastrous second term; Richard Nixon had 63 percent approval after one year but ended with a career average of just 49 percent. Nonetheless, there is a relationship overall; for presidents since Truman, approval at one year correlates with full-career approval at .63. Exclude Bush and it's .82.

PARTISANSHIP – Partisanship and ideology are the two most powerful features of Obama's ratings – as is customary, and increasingly so in the past generation. Eighty-seven percent of Democrats approve of his performance in office, virtually unchanged from the first ABC/Post reading a month after he took office. That plummets to 20 percent approval among Republicans, down 17 points as the president's first year has unfolded.

More troubling for the administration is the shift among independents, the centerweight of national politics. Obama's approval rating in this group is down from 67 percent a year ago February to 49 percent now, an 18-point fall.



The trend is all the more important because independents, 38 percent of the public, outnumber Democrats and Republicans in this poll, as they did across 2009 for the first time since 1995. One key reason is continued defections from the Republican Party; 23 percent in this survey identify themselves as Republicans, matching the 2009 average and down steadily from its peak, 31 percent, on average in 2003. But Democrats have slipped too, to 32 percent now, compared with an average 36 percent in 2008, their best year since 1992.

The partisan divisions are different for Obama than they were for Reagan, who took office in a somewhat less partisan age. Reagan maintained 57 percent approval from independents after his first year, 8 points better than Obama, and also did better among Democrats than Obama among Republicans. But Reagan – perhaps surprisingly given his iconic status in the GOP – was a bit weaker in his own party at one year than Obama is today.

	First-year approval by party ID								
		Obama	Reagan						
	Dem	Dem	Ind	Rep					
First month	90%	67	37	56%	71	89			
First year	87	49	20	33	57	78			
Change	-3	-18	-17	-23	-14	-11			

All this has implications for the midterm elections, but there's also time for it to change. An ABC News analysis, reported in more detail last month, finds a substantial correlation since 1946, .51, between a president's approval rating a year before his first midterm election and his party's losses in that election. But the correlation is much higher, .8, using approval immediately before the midterm election. What matters more is not Obama's approval now, but where it is in 10 months.

GROUPS – Obama remains most popular among young adults, age 18 to 29, whose record level of support was crucial in the 2008 election. Nonetheless his approval rating is down 22 points in this group, from 84 percent last February to 62 percent now – a big drop in a core group. His approval from seniors, meanwhile, is down 17 points, to 42 percent, his weakest age group.

Obama's lost 11 points in approval among liberals and moderates the past year, but twice that, a 20-point drop, in approval among conservatives, from 49 percent last February to 29 percent now. It hurts him especially since the ranks of self-identified conservatives have grown, to 38 percent in this poll (about half again as many liberals) and 37 percent on average last year, the most in ABC/Post annual averages since 1988. (The 1988-2008 average was 32 percent.)

Obama has held tough among people who say they voted for him; 89 percent approve of his work. His rating falls to 11 percent among supporters of John McCain, and it's 53 percent among those who say they didn't vote. Indeed in some ways we're back to Nov. 4, 2008: Obama was elected that day with 53 percent of the vote – precisely his approval rating now.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone Jan. 12-15, 2010, among a random national sample of 1,083 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents, with an oversample of African Americans (weighted to their correct share of the population) for a total of 153 black respondents. Results for the full sample have a

3.5-point error margin. Click <u>here</u> for a detailed description of sampling error. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, PA.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at http://abcnews.com/pollingunit

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow (*= less than 0.5 percent).

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	Approve				Disapprove				
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion		
1/15/10	53	30	24	44	13	32	2		
12/13/09	50	31	18	46	13	33	4		
11/15/09	56	32	23	42	13	29	2		
10/18/09	57	33	23	40	11	29	3		
9/12/09	54	35	19	43	12	31	3		
8/17/09	57	35	21	40	11	29	3		
7/18/09	59	38	22	37	9	28	4		
6/21/09	65	36	29	31	10	22	4		
4/24/09	69	42	27	26	8	18	4		
3/29/09	66	40	26	29	9	20	5		
2/22/09	68	43	25	25	8	17	7		

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Obama is handling [ITEM]? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

a. Health care

	Approve				Disapprove				
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion		
1/15/10	44	24	21	52	9	43	4		
12/13/09	44	27	18	53	10	43	3		
11/15/09	47	28	19	49	8	41	3		
10/18/09	48	30	18	48	10	38	4		
9/12/09	48	32	15	48	10	38	4		
8/17/09	46	27	19	50	8	42	5		
7/18/09	49	25	24	44	11	33	7		
6/21/09	53	27	26	39	10	29	9		
4/24/09	57	NA	NA	29	NA	NA	13		

b. The threat of terrorism

	Approve				Disapprove			
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion	
1/15/10	55	31	23	42	14	28	4	
11/15/09	53	31	22	41	14	27	б	
9/12/09	55	31	24	34	12	23	11	
6/21/09	57	NA	NA	36	NA	NA	7	
4/21/09*	57	NA	NA	26	NA	NA	17	
*Pew								

c. The economy

	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
1/15/10	47	22	24	52	13	39	1
12/13/09	46	23	24	52	12	40	2
11/15/09	51	26	25	47	12	36	2
10/18/09	50	29	22	48	13	35	1
9/12/09	51	28	24	46	13	33	2
8/17/09	52	27	25	46	13	33	2
7/18/09	52	29	23	46	10	35	3
6/21/09	56	28	28	41	13	27	3
4/24/09	58	31	28	38	13	25	4
3/29/09	60	34	25	38	12	26	3
2/22/09	60	NA	NA	34	NA	NA	6

d. The situation in Afghanistan

	Approve				Disappro	ove	No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
1/15/10	50	22	28	45	18	27	6
12/13/09	52	24	28	44	13	32	4
11/15/09	45	23	23	48	16	32	6
10/18/09	45	22	23	47	17	31	7
9/12/09	55	23	33	37	17	21	7
8/17/09	60	25	35	33	14	19	7
7/18/09	62	33	29	30	13	17	8
4/24/09	63	NA	NA	26	NA	NA	11

e. The federal budget deficit

		Approve	<u> </u>		Disappro	ove	No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
1/15/10	38	18	20	56	15	41	6
12/13/09	37	16	21	56	12	44	6
11/15/09	42	19	23	53	10	43	5
10/18/09	45	20	25	51	14	37	4
9/12/09	39	17	22	55	13	42	6
8/17/09	41	19	22	53	12	41	5
7/18/09	43	19	24	49	11	38	8
6/21/09	48	22	26	48	13	35	5
4/24/09	51	NA	NA	43	NA	NA	7
3/29/09	52	NA	NA	43	NA	NA	5

3. Do you think things in this country (are generally going in the right direction) or do you feel things (have gotten pretty seriously off on the wrong track)?

		Rigł	ıt	Wro	ong	No
		direct	ior	n tra	ack	opinion
1/15/10		37		62	2	1
11/15/09		44		55	5	2
10/18/09		44		54	1	2
8/17/09		44		55	5	1
6/21/09		47		50)	3
4/24/09		50		48	3	2
3/29/09		42		57	7	1
2/22/09		31		67	7	2
1/16/09		19		78	3	3
12/14/08		15		82	2	3
10/25/08	LV	13		85	5	2
10/11/08	RV	8		90)	2
Call for	full	trend	to	1973.		

4. How much confidence do you have in [ITEM] to make the right decisions for the country's future - a great deal of confidence, a good amount, just some or none at all?

a. Obama

	-Grt	deal/Good	amt-		Some/No	one	
		Great	Good		Just	None	No
	NET	deal	amt	NET	some	at all	opinion
1/15/10	47	24	23	53	26	27	*
10/18/09	49	29	20	50	27	24	*
8/17/09	49	28	21	50	26	24	*
4/24/09	60	31	28	40	25	15	1
1/16/09	61	31	30	37	28	9	2

b. The Republicans in Congress

	-Grt	deal/Good	amt-		Some/N	one	
		Great	Good		Just	None	No
	NET	deal	amt	NET	some	at all	opinion
1/15/10	24	6	18	75	47	28	1
10/18/09	19	4	15	79	46	33	2
8/17/09	21	4	16	78	45	33	1
4/24/09	21	4	16	78	50	28	2
1/16/09	29	8	21	69	49	21	2

c. The Democrats in Congress

	-Grt	deal/Good	amt-		Some/N	one	
		Great	Good		Just	None	No
	NET	deal	amt	NET	some	at all	opinion
1/15/10	32	11	21	68	33	35	1
10/18/09	34	12	23	64	37	27	2
8/17/09	35	14	21	63	35	29	1
4/24/09	36	12	24	63	38	25	1
1/16/09	43	15	28	56	37	19	2

5. Would you say Obama is doing a better job as president than you expected, a worse job, or what? Is that much better/worse or somewhat better/worse?

		Better			Worse		As expected	No
	NET	Much	Smwht	NET	Smwht	Much	(vol.)	opinion
1/15/10	33	12	22	35	18	17	30	2
9/12/09	42	18	24	31	13	18	25	2
4/24/09	54	25	29	18	10	9	23	4
2/22/09	46	18	28	14	8	7	31	9
1/18/04 Bush	43	NA	NA	31	NA	NA	25	2
1/27/02 Bush	75	NA	NA	5	NA	NA	20	1
7/30/01 Bush	39	NA	NA	23	NA	NA	36	2
4/22/01 Bush	39	NA	NA	21	NA	NA	37	3
4/26/93 Clinton	35	NA	NA	28	NA	NA	34	3
2/28/93 Clinton	38	12	27	19	12	7	35	8

6-7 held for release.

8. What would you say is the one most important problem you would like to see Obama and the Congress deal with this year?

Compare to: Bush 1/15/10 12/14/08 12/11/06 12/18/05

Economy NET:	42	66	16	19
Economy	26	55	10	15
Jobs/Unemployment	13	8	3	2
Gasoline prices/Energy prices	1	1	3	2
Housing/Mortgages	*	1	NA	NA
Stock market/Wall Street	0	*	NA	NA
Banking/Insurance/Credit problems	1	*	NA	NA
Iraq/War in Iraq	6	9	44	32
Health care	24	6	6	11
Immigration	1	1	5	6
Terrorism/War on terrorism/				
Homeland security	5	2	4	5
Education	1	1	4	3
Medicare	1	*	1	3
Social Security	*	*	2	3
Taxes	1	1	2	2
Federal budget deficit	5	1	*	1
Environment	*	1	1	1
Poverty/Homelessness/Hunger	1	2	2	1
Ethics/Honesty/Corruption in				
government	1	1	2	1
Crime/Drugs	*	*	1	1
Prescription drug benefits	*	*	*	*
Global warming/Greenhouse effect	1	*	1	*
Foreign policy	*	*	NA	NA
Abortion	*	1	NA	NA
Morals/Family values	*	1	NA	NA
Afghanistan	2	NA	NA	NA
None	0	0	0	1
Other	5	4	6	6
No opinion	2	2	4	3

9. Overall, do you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of Barack Obama? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

		Favorable				Unfavoral	No	
		NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
1/15/10		58	38	20	40	13	27	2
11/15/09		61	39	21	38	11	27	1
9/12/09		63	40	23	35	12	24	2
4/24/09		72	46	26	26	11	15	2
1/16/09		79	50	29	18	9	9	3
11/2/08	LV	63	47	16	33	7	26	4
10/23/08	LV	63	47	16	34	7	27	3
10/11/08	RV	64	44	20	33	12	21	3
9/7/08	RV	58	35	23	36	12	24	7
8/22/08	RV	62	37	25	34	13	21	4
6/15/08		63	35	28	33	12	21	4
4/13/08		56	28	28	39	14	25	5
1/12/08		63	31	32	30	14	16	7
11/1/07		51	21	30	36	16	20	13
2/25/07		53	21	33	30	16	14	16
1/19/07		45	NA	NA	29	NA	NA	25
12/11/06		44	21	22	23	17	б	33

10. Please tell me whether the following statement applies to Obama, or not?

a. He understands the problems of people like you

Yes No No opinion 1/15/10 57 42 2

7/18/09	63	35	1
4/24/09	73	25	1
1/16/09	72	24	4

b. He is a strong leader

	Yes	No	No opinion
1/15/10	63	35	1
7/18/09	71	27	2
4/24/09	77	22	2
1/16/09	72	18	10

c. He has brought needed change to Washington

	Yes	No	No opinion				
1/15/10	50	49	1				
7/18/09	62	35	3				
4/24/09	63	34	2				
1/16/09*	76	22	3				
*"will bring"							

d. He shares your values

	Yes	No	No	opinion
1/15/10	55	43		1
4/24/09	60	38		2
1/16/09	67	30		3
7/13/08	56	39		5

11. Obama has been president for about one year. Would you say he has accomplished a great deal during that time, a good amount, not very much or little or nothing?

	-Grt deal/Good amt-			Not much/nothing			
		Great	Good		Not	Little or	No
	NET	deal	amt	NET	much	nothing	opinion
1/15/10	47	12	35	52	30	22	1
10/18/09*	49	14	35	50	27	23	1
4/24/09**	63	24	39	36	21	15	1
8/16/94 Clinton	36	6	30	64	39	25	*
1/23/94 Clinton	47	11	36	53	33	19	1
4/26/93 Clinton	37	5	32	63	38	25	*
* "about nine months"							

** "about three months or nearly 100 days"

12. (IF NOT MUCH/NOTHING) Who's mainly responsible for that - (Obama) or the Republicans in Congress)?

			Neither	Both	No
	Obama	Republicans	(vol.)	(vol.)	opinion
1/15/10	52	20	б	20	3
4/24/09	49	24	8	16	3
4/26/93 Clinton	40	40	1	17	2

13. Is Obama keeping most of his major campaign promises, or not?

	Yes	No	Some (vol.)	No opinion
1/15/10	41	46	8	4
4/24/09	60	26	8	6
5/15/94 Clinton	37	48	11	5
1/23/94 Clinton	37	46	7	10

4/26/93 Clinton 42 50 6 2

14. Changing topics, do you think Obama's economic program is making the economy (better), making it (worse) or having no real effect?

	Better	Worse	No effect	No opinion
1/15/10	35	23	41	2
10/18/09	41	22	35	2
8/17/09	43	23	32	2

15. How much blame do you think [ITEM] deserve(s) for the country's economic situation - a great deal, a good amount, only some or hardly any?

a. The Bush administration, for inadequate regulation of the financial industry

	- Grt	deal/Gd	amt-		Some/Hai	rdly any/1	None	
		Great	Good		Only	Hardly	None	No
	NET	deal	amt	NET	some	any	(vol.)	opinion
1/15/10	67	41	25	33	24	8	1	1
9/12/09	65	40	25	35	23	10	1	1
7/18/09	62	42	20	36	23	11	1	2
3/29/09	70	47	23	29	21	7	1	2

b. The Obama administration, for not doing enough to turn the economy around

	- Grt	deal/Gd	amt-	2	Some/Hai	dly any/N	Jone	
		Great	Good		Only	Hardly	None	No
	NET	deal	amt	NET	some	any	(vol.)	opinion
1/15/10	36	14	21	64	36	25	3	*
9/12/09	27	13	15	71	33	34	4	2
7/18/09	32	14	17	66	28	34	4	2
3/29/09	26	13	13	72	27	39	6	2

c. Held for release.

16. Do you think Obama's views on most issues are too (liberal) for you, too (conservative) for you, or just about right?

	Тоо	Тоо	About	No
	liberal	conservative	right	opinion
1/15/10	37	7	54	2
11/15/09	40	7	52	2
9/12/09	39	5	53	3
4/24/09	33	4	62	2
1/16/09	29	4	65	2
10/31/08 LV	39	3	56	2
10/21/08 LV	40	2	55	4
10/20/08 LV	39	2	55	4
10/11/08 RV	37	4	55	4
6/15/08	36	5	52	7
3/2/08	31	6	56	7

17-18 held for release.

19. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Obama is handling the government's response to the attempted terrorist bombing aboard an airliner last month?

Approve Disapprove No opinion

1/15/10 62 35 3

20-39 held for release.

40. Generally speaking, would you say you favor (smaller government with fewer services), or (larger government with more services)?

	Smaller govt.	Larger govt.	No
	fewer services	more services	opinion
1/15/10	58	38	4
6/21/09	54	41	4
1/16/09	53	43	4
6/15/08	50	45	5
11/1/07	50	44	5
6/20/04	50	46	4
11/4/02 LV	61	34	5
11/3/02 LV	60	34	5
11/2/02 LV	62	34	3
7/15/02	53	42	6
1/27/02	54	41	5
10/9/00 RV	58	32	10
10/1/00 RV	58	33	9
7/23/00	59	34	7
7/23/00 RV	61	32	7
4/2/00	56	38	7
8/16/98	59	35	6
8/5/96	63	32	5
7/8/92	55	38	7

41-43 held for release.

END