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# Joe Biden tells Democratic lawmakers the Obama years 'have been really, really hard for this country' – and the White House blames it on George W. Bush!

- The VP spoke to members of Congress on Friday, claiming Republicans are trying to claim credit for what little good economic news there is
- He acknowledged that many of the Democrats' priorities are deeply unpopular and said their numbers in Congress have shrunk as a result
- Biden's hopes for the top job are slim as he trails Hillary Clinton by a dramatic margin among Democratic voters
- White House press secretary insists that even if House Democrats are adrift, the president is not
- But Biden's admission put him back to blaming economic conditions on George W. Bush, even in the seventh year of Obama's presidency

By [David Martosko, US Political Editor](#) and [Francesca Chambers For Dailymail.com](#)

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Vice President Joe Biden suggested Friday morning that the Obama years have not been a time of prosperity and ease, but 'really, really hard for this country.'

But he still insisted that his boss, President Barack Obama, has made the right economic decisions. And hours later the White House blamed problems Obama inherited from his predecessor for an incomplete economic recovery.

Biden's odd juxtaposition – half blame, half credit – will lead to questions about whether he can create effective separation between himself and the president as he's trying to build momentum for his own run at the top job.

'To state the obvious, the past six years have been really, really hard for this country,' Biden told House Democrats at their annual retreat in Philadelphia.

'And they've been really tough for our party.'

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**TOUGH SPOT: VP Joe Biden has to run for president by claiming credit for the best of the Obama economy while disowning the rest**

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**BLAME BUSH: White House press secretary Josh Earnest said fretting House Democrats don't reflect President Obama's enthusiasm, even though he 'inherited' an economic quagmire from his predecessor**

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Pointing to New York Rep. Steve Israel, the former chairman of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, he said, 'Just ask Steve. They've been really tough for our party.'

'Together we made some really, really tough decisions,' Biden said Friday, reflecting on his party's legislative agenda in recent years, including the increasingly unpopular Affordable Care Act.

Those decisions 'weren't at all popular,' Biden said, and were 'hard to explain – hard to communicate why it was so important they had to be made.'

'And the decisions had real political cost. A lot of my friends and your friends in this caucus aren't here today because they had the nerve to stand up and do what they thought was right, knowing – knowing – in the face of unrelenting political criticism, and with Republicans and the tea party trying to stop us at every step of the way, they knew they were going to be in trouble.'

Still, he tried to buck up Democrats through their spotty applause.

'The decisions you made, the decisions the administration fostered, were the right decisions,' Biden said. 'They were the right ones. They worked for America.'

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Biden: 'The past six years have been really hard for this...



Republicans have steadily eroded Democrats' representation in Congress since Obama took office in 2009, finally taking over control of the U.S. Senate this month and diluting Democratic House membership by 11 seats.

Katie Martin Prill, communications director at the National Republican Congressional Committee, said Friday that Biden sounded like 'he now works for Republicans.'

'Democrats learned the hard way this past November that President Obama's policies are toxic and yet they want to double down on their support,' Prill said.

'It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that this idea is worse than the GoDaddy Super Bowl commercial.'

Republicans have steadily eroded Democrats' representation in Congress since Obama took office in 2009, finally taking over control of the U.S. Senate this month and diluting Democratic House membership by 11 seats.

House Democrats, blindsided by the November trouncing, titled one of their Friday meeting sessions: 'Where do we go from here?'

Earnest said on Friday that the president isn't feeling similarly adrift.

'I don't speak for all Democrats, he told Daily Mail Online in his daily briefing. 'I speak for just the most powerful Democrat in the world.'

Over laughter in the press briefing room, he insisted, 'I can tell you he's very clear about where he wants to take the country.'



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**'WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?': House Democrats are adrift after an electoral shellacking drive by defending Obama's policies, but the president is distancing himself to keep some luster on his legacy**

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A disconnect between Congressional Democrats and Obama is evident, however.

At their retreat, Democrats turned House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi to lead their session on the future of the party.

Pelosi and her allies have split with Obama on several issues, including compromise spending legislation backed by the White House that included a carve-out for Wall Street and a proposal to tax so-called '529' college saving accounts.

The president was forced to abandon that tax policy shift this week after Pelosi, Maryland Rep. Chris Van Hollen, the ranking Democrat on the House Budget Committee, and Illinois Sen. Dick Durbin, the No. 2 Democrat in the Senate, lobbied against the measure.

Biden's candid admission put the White House in a tough spot, too – back to blaming America's economic woes on what Obama 'inherited' from George W. Bush, even in the seventh year of his presidency.

Obama deserves credit for 'digging out of that financial crisis,' Earnest told Daily Mail Online on Friday.

'Because of the policies that this administration has put in place, our economy has bounced back stronger than ever, and we've laid a new foundation that we need to capitalize on.'

America's economy is growing more slowly than economists have expected, with fourth quarter 2014 numbers showing the impact of slowing government spending and diminishing business investments.

Gross domestic product expanded at just 2.6 per cent from October to December slowing from a 5 per cent pace in the previous three months.

During all of 2014, the economy grew at a rate of just 2.4 per cent

'Let's resolve to double down,' Biden told Democrats in Philadelphia. 'Let's resolve to double down right now.'



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[emncaity](#), Lubbock, less than a minute ago

Well...yeah. Not only Obama but Congress did in fact inherit an "economic quagmire." Absolutely true. Every president and every Congress do things that take a long time to undo, sometimes longer than the next term or two, even. Sometimes decades. When you invade a country that never attacked you, and you do it on the basis of trumped-up "intelligence" and a sales job, and that ends up costing you a couple trillion dollars, yeah, that's going to last longer than your last day in office. Sure is. And the next president and Congress will have to deal with whatever happened during these eight years, plus anything residual from previous generations as well. You need look no further than the U.S.'s ousting of a democratically elected leader in Iran in the '50s and the subsequent installment of the Shah to find an action by the government with repercussions far into the future. Same for the enormous national debt run up under Reagan (yes, Reagan -- look up the numbers).

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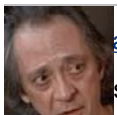
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[Adam Saline](#), greee, United States, about a minute ago

I love it the democrats have Feckless Joe and Bloody Hillary and I though the GOP was coming up dry.

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[altenbrunner](#), Los Angeles, United States, 4 minutes ago

is the only Democrat crazy enough to be honest. The Obama years have been the worst for this country.

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[Hibs36](#), Fairfax VA, United States, 14 minutes ago

Hahahahahahahaha! Oh my god, this guy truly missed his calling. He could've easily done stand-up comedy and made even more money. I mean, this guy is Steve Martin/Robin Williams funny and he's not even trying.

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[Jordan](#), London, United Kingdom, 18 minutes ago

Whether Biden or Clinton win the democratic nomination makes no difference. Both are establishment candidates. They will be owned by the donors.

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[Son of God](#), Edgartown, United States, 22 minutes ago

Secret Service: Please Please protect the President. We don't need this bozo in charge.....

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[B](#), Monterey, United States, 20 minutes ago

At least we would be able to control Biden.

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[Buckeye Chuck](#), Erehewon, United States, 29 minutes ago

Who would have thought that Joe Biden world be the most honest man in Washington?

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[emncaity](#), Lubbock, 3 minutes ago

I would. So would anybody who actually knows much about him beyond the tired media narrative regarding him.

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