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Race against time

Once elected, every candidate comes face-to-face with the daunting task of trying to keep his campaign promises. Mirek Topolánek famously said that he can't tell voters in advance what he plans to do, because they wouldn't vote for him. More so than ever before, the new U.S. president will likely find it necessary to throw out his campaign pledges once he takes office. Barack Obama will find it difficult to cut taxes for 95% of working Americans and at the same time to resolve the mounting economic crisis. The initial Barack bounce will no doubt be positive both in the U.S. and abroad. Once the unavoidable belt-tightening in the U.S. kicks in, though, any U.S.-led projects abroad will have to be reevaluated. This means not only the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but also the missile-defense system in Central Europe. Obama probably won't cancel the Czech-based radar on principle, but it will be a race against time to see if it can be approved and launched before the economic crisis claims it and other victims.

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