



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on November 30, 2011

No Hiring Until Obama Leaves Office, Says Georgia Businessman

"I've got people that I want to hire now, but I just can't afford it," Looman, whose company operates cranes at construction sites, told Atlanta's [WXIA-TV](#). "And I don't foresee that I'll be able to afford it unless some things change in D.C."

"The way the economy's running, and the way my business has been hampered by the economy, and the policies of the people in power, I felt that it was necessary to voice my opinion, and predict that I wouldn't be able to do any hiring," he added.



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His chosen method of voicing his opinion was to place his "not hiring" message on his company's trucks and post photos of the signs on his personal Facebook page about six months ago. Until recently, the response was overwhelmingly positive (although he did receive a perfunctory visit from the Secret Service after someone reported him to the FBI as a threat to national security). Then last week "one of the photos went viral on the Internet," according to [WXIA](#); and that is when all the controversy began.

"Verbally there were a lot of threats," Looman told ABC News. "People were running my technicians off the road. They were focused on trying to make that message something more than it was."

It got so bad that Looman had to shut down his website — which, because he runs U.S. Cranes out of his home, displayed his home address and telephone number — and disconnect his phone lines. He even prevailed upon his friend, fellow Marine, and web developer Mike Sankewitsch to post a message in place of the [company website](#):

William (Bill) Looman is a veteran, a patriot, and most importantly, my friend and brother. He and I along with many other Marines, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen/women and Coasties, served, still serve, and shall continue to serve, so that the Constitution of the United States of America cannot be so trampled as to rob any American of their right to freedom of expression. All of you who have been less than kind in your assessment of Bill for his practice of that freedom, should be ashamed of yourselves. Every American has the right of freedom of speech, through the printed word or spoken, and for you to look down upon that right is to declare that not only do you not believe in the American Constitution, but to also declare to all that listen that you do not care to be branded an American. How sad that is.

Looman plainly blames President Obama for his company's troubles. "The buck stops [at Obama]," he told ABC News. "He is the leader of this nation and he needs to assume that position [sic] and understand it is his fault, ultimately."

But is Looman correct?

[Jay Bookman of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution](#) points out that while Looman is undoubtedly feeling the



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pinch from the downturn in construction, “the industry was benefiting a few years ago from an artificial construction boom that eventually went bust, as it inevitably must.” The bust, Bookman observes, began on George W. Bush’s watch: “Construction employment had already been falling for two years and was in the midst of a full-fledged freefall by the time Obama took office.” Thus, previous Presidents and Congresses — and the Federal Reserve, which does their bidding — bear the responsibility for both the boom and the bust; Obama had very little to do with either.

However, Looman is correct in the sense that Obama’s actions since moving into 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue have made the recession worse and are preventing recovery. [Bloomberg](#) found that while Obama has issued regulations at a slightly slower rate than Bush, the cost of those regulations has been higher. For instance:

The Obama administration has issued 16 rules to implement the 2009 health care overhaul. The SEC completed 10 major rules stemming from the Dodd-Frank financial reform in the last fiscal year, according to the GAO. Those are forecast to cost \$520 million.

The administration has 219 major rules under consideration, up from 137 in 2005, according to a report by the Competitive Enterprise Institute, a Washington-based group that advocates for limited government.

As attorney Jeff Rosen told Bloomberg: “This goes to the issue of uncertainty. For many businesses it’s not only that they’ve been hit by all these rules in 2009 and 2010, but there are 219 economically significant rules coming down the pike.” Recent polls, the report notes, bear out Rosen’s contention, with small business owners saying regulations are among their top problems.

“Regime uncertainty” was also one of the primary contributors to the length of the Great Depression, as economist [Robert Higgs](#) demonstrated in a 1997 paper. The constant barrage of regulations from the Roosevelt administration, combined with that administration’s general antipathy toward business, made investors so uncertain about what might be coming next that they simply sat on their capital, making recovery impossible.

Columnist [Austin Hill](#) reports that Steve Wynn, CEO of Wynn Resorts, Ltd., expressed similar sentiments with regard to the current regime in a conference call with investors last summer:

This administration is the greatest wet blanket to business, and progress and job creation in my lifetime.... My customers ... are frightened of this administration.... Everybody complains about how much money is on the side in America ... those of us who have business opportunities and the capital to do it are going to sit in fear of the President. And a lot of people don’t want to say that. They’ll say, God, don’t be attacking Obama. Well, this is Obama’s deal and it’s Obama that’s responsible for this fear in America.

What brought about the end of the Great Depression? Higgs maintained that the transfer of power from the hyperinterventionist FDR to the more conventional Harry Truman made investors feel “much more confident about the security of their private property ... set[ting] in motion the postwar investment boom that powered the economy’s return to sustained prosperity.”

Looman, therefore, may be correct that a change of administrations is precisely what is needed to ease investors’ fears and to bring the economy back from the brink, in turn enabling him to begin hiring again. With any luck, such change we can believe in is just over a year away.



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