



Obama's New Course: More of the Same

The very latest recipient of federal government largesse is beleaguered Chrysler Corporation, a company that will likely not survive the first quarter of 2009, let alone the next calendar year, without declaring bankruptcy. Yet the federal government saw fit to bestow \$4 billion on Chrysler, probably to bail out prominent shareholders before the inevitable bankruptcy. Meanwhile, the federal government continues to prosecute the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and a myriad other military projects overseas, as well as preside over a vast array of welfare programs and subsidies.



Despite tens of trillions of dollars of debt and unfunded financial obligations, the federal government continues to borrow and spend as though money grows on trees — which, in the presto-chango economics of fiat (unbacked) paper money, it does.

Enter Barack Obama, a fresh face, saddled with endless wars, a federal government drowning in debt, and a host of other intractable problems brought about by decades of federal corruption and abuse. Throughout his campaign, Obama, exuding competence and confidence, promised change to a war- and recession-weary American public.

Were he former presidential candidate Ron Paul, Obama might be expected to do the right thing — to end America's debilitating overseas military activities, scale back the federal government to within constitutionally authorized bounds (bounds that have not been observed since before the First World War), and return our money to a sound footing — a gold and silver standard.

But Obama is not Ron Paul, and intends none of these things. Instead, youth, freshness, and glib campaign slogans notwithstanding, Obama intends to continue the policies of his predecessors, and very likely will take full advantage of the global crisis to further reduce America to fiscal and political servitude.

President-elect Obama believes only government — not the free market — can save us from economic ruin. "At this particular moment, only government can provide the short-term boost necessary to lift us from a recession this deep and severe," Obama warned this week in a speech at George Mason University, adding that the ongoing recession could "linger for years" unless Congress spends unprecedented sums on bailouts and other faux stimuli. While details of what the Obama camp has been calling the American Recovery and Investment Plan have not yet been made public, Obama's aides have indicated the price tag may exceed \$770 billion.

Regardless of how it's designed, Obama's stimulus package will only further ratchet up the deficit while doing little to jump-start the economy — an echo of the Bush administration's feeble economic stimulus package last year. The best possible stimulus would be to drastically reduce the burden of taxes and



Written by [Gary Benoit](#) on January 8, 2009

regulations that Americans are saddled with, but President Obama, as ideologically wedded to socialism as his predecessors, will, with the support of a willing Congress, only enlarge the federal welfare state. Handouts to the poor, unemployed, students, researchers, artists, farmers, and the countless companies still clamoring for bailouts will continue unabated, all of it tendered in money the federal government will have to borrow because it does not have the funds.

Then there's the \$1 trillion plan to bail out state governments, which are in no less severe financial straits than their extra-constitutional federal overseer. A coalition of governors, including Wisconsin's Jim Doyle and New York's David Paterson, are now lobbying for the federal government to allocate hundreds of billions to the states for education and to allow for middle-class tax cuts (no irony here, folks). The plan also contemplates \$350 billion for roads and other infrastructure projects and \$250 for state-administered welfare programs like Medicaid — all this because the states are facing mushrooming budget deficits as well (New York alone will have a predicted shortfall of \$15.4 billion).

As for foreign policy, Obama has stated that he intends to "engage immediately" in the Middle East, including the Gaza situation over which he is "deeply concerned." Obama has clarified that his interest in the Middle East is not "short term." He instead has plans for "building a process whereby we can achieve a more lasting peace in the region." In other words Obama, like his predecessors, has no intention of minding his own business, in the Middle East or presumably anywhere else. Look for ongoing wrangling with Iran and North Korea over their nuclear programs, continued U.S. military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, and possible new military commitments in Syria, the Sudan, and elsewhere. Obama, in a word, has no intention of reducing our profile as the world's policeman.

Those who voted for change in Barack Obama will soon be disappointed, as the new president charts a course from the very same roadmap his presidential predecessors have followed for nearly a century. Big government at home and abroad will continue to expand, to the detriment of our fast-disappearing freedoms and our evaporating wealth. Before long, the lament will likely be, as a popular Clinton-era bumper sticker styled it, "I voted for change. Now that's all I have left!"



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