

Obama's Delusions: The Economy and Iraq

By [Shamus Cooke](#)

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Theme: [Global Economy](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAQ REPORT](#)

If you've listened to recent speeches the President has given about the economy and the Iraq war, you'd think that two of the biggest social issues facing working Americans are improving. But facts are stubborn things.

Take for example the numbers of jobs lost in the last two months: 221,000 in June, 131,000 in July.

Instead of taking the drastic measures needed to stop the continued hemorrhaging, the President had this to say on August 5th:

"Even though it's going to take years to repair all the damage caused by this recession, I am absolutely convinced that this nation is finally headed in the right direction. Our economy is growing again. We are adding jobs again [!]. America is moving forward again..."

Since Obama has access to the above job numbers, we must assume that he is either delusional or lying. We also cannot attribute this comment to a one-time slip of the tongue, because Obama has essentially made the same speech several times while promoting Democratic candidates nationwide.

Contrary to his recent statements, Obama has not improved the economy. He has overseen a catastrophic destruction of jobs on a state-by-state basis, in part due to state budget crises and the pathetic lack of response on the national level: Obama's first stimulus was under-funded and misdirected (too much emphasis on tax cuts for businesses, etc.), while Obama's recent "stimulus" — only \$26 billion — is simply farce.

The state budget crises are not over; many states are projecting long-term deficits in the billions of dollars that, if left untouched, will contribute further to the massive unemployment that continues to drive down wages for the employed workers.

In fact, the U.S. economy is in such sad shape, it was recently announced, that call center workers in India now make a similar wage to their U.S. counterparts, while autoworkers are being pressured to make 50 percent wage concessions.

When it comes to the Iraq war, Obama is equally off kilter. He recently announced the end of "combat operations" in Iraq, which we are meant to interpret as "mission accomplished."

Meanwhile, we are told, 50,000 troops will stay in Iraq — along with unknown thousands of "private contractors" (mercenaries) — capable of conducting "counter-terrorism operations." But the war has been advertised as one giant counter-terrorism operation for years, meaning, that very little has changed.

Obama's Bush-style war propaganda will do nothing to impress the Iraqis, who still live in a war-torn hell-hole, with over a million dead, millions of refugees having fled the country, while the remaining inhabitants are left to rot in a destroyed economy lacking widespread access to jobs, water, sanitation, electricity, etc, etc.

Of course, the troops leaving Iraq will simply be shifted to Afghanistan, while the troops staying in Iraq will be there to prop up a government that functions in limbo, lacking all authority outside the violence it learns from the remaining U.S. "trainers and advisors." Middle East Journalist Robert Fisk adds:

"[The U.S.] injected Iraq with corruption on a grand scale. They stamped the seal of torture on Abu Ghraib — a worthy successor to the same prison under Saddam's vile rule... They sectarianised a country that, for all its Saddamite brutality and corruption, had hitherto held its Sunnis and Shias together."

In short, the U.S. invasion of Iraq has made things worse for Iraqis, and Obama is selling the war as a victory as he recklessly dashes over to Afghanistan to repeat the atrocity.

The hundreds of billions of dollars that Obama will use to wage war in Iraq and Afghanistan could just as easily go to create jobs in the United States: public works could be financed by the government, as they were during the last Depression, that directly create jobs. The war money could also go to states suffering massive cutbacks in social services and public education. If working Americans sit idle, nothing will change, since power concedes nothing without a demand.

On October 2nd workers will directly confront the Obama administration over the above policies. Hopefully, these nationwide demonstrations, organized by the One Nation coalition, will begin a movement that challenges the corporate agenda we've suffered under for decades. Some in the coalition will attempt to channel the momentum to elect Democrats in November; the majority will demonstrate to challenge the policies of both the Democrats and Republicans. For more info: www.onenationworkingtogether.org

Shamus Cooke is a social service worker, trade unionist, and writer for Workers Action (www.workerscompass.org). He can be reached at shamuscook@gmail.com

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Michel Chossudovsky
Andrew G. Marshall (editors)

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