



IF OBAMA HAD A CITY, IT WOULD LOOK LIKE DETROIT

"The multiplication of public offices, increase of expense beyond income, growth and entailment of a public debt, are indications soliciting the employment of the pruning knife." --Thomas Jefferson (1821)

Launching the next leg of his perpetual campaign, [Barack Hussein Obama](#) took his "Change the Subject" snake oil sales pitch -- which he prefers to call the "[Better Bargain for the Middle Class](#)" tour -- on the road this week. In this, his 18th "political pivot" back to jobs, he is endeavoring to portray the feeble "economic recovery" -- less than 1 percent GDP in each of the last four years -- as his greatest success story. He will re-refocus on the "[Republican sequester](#)," blaming it for his economic policy failures.

Obama's objective is to rally support for even more taxes, spending and debt, in advance of upcoming budget negotiations with House Republicans.

During a seemingly endless stump speech in Galesburg, Illinois, on Wednesday, Obama droned on for nearly 8,000 words, not one of which was "Detroit." "We've come a long way since I first took office," he arrogantly proclaimed. "As a country, we're older and we're wiser." (Seriously, he said that -- as if he alone had raised the collective wisdom of the nation.) However, he did *not* mention that we're



deeper in debt than ever and perilously close to insolvency as a nation, that his socialist policies have failed as such policies always do, that most economic indicators are flat or down, that the number of impoverished families continues to grow, and that his administration is deeply mired in some very troubling scandals.

Regarding those scandals, he characterized his [IRS Patriot hit list](#) and the alteration of the [Benghazi attack script](#) just ahead of his 2012 re-election bid as an "endless parade of distractions ... and phony scandals." But there is nothing phony about the IRS targeting conservative groups, or the murder of Americans in Benghazi.

Last week, Obama lost more ground with his most loyal constituency, black voters, when the political value of the [Zimmerman/Martin case](#) died with the jury's not-guilty verdict.

Desperate to improve his favorability ratings, and to divert attention away from his administration's failings on every level -- including his increasingly beleaguered scheme to nationalize health care -- Obama is betting that his appearances before adoring, handpicked audiences will bolster his national approval. Given the endless media coverage of these staged events, that is probably a good bet.

Unfortunately for Obama, in the same week he announced his "economic success" summits across the nation, the city of Detroit announced its Chapter 9 bankruptcy filing -- with no way to cover billions in unfunded liabilities. That's the largest municipal bankruptcy in history. As you recall, just before his re-election last year, Obama claimed Detroit as one of his success stories: "We refused to let Detroit go bankrupt. We bet on American workers and American

ingenuity, and three years later, that bet is paying off in a big way."

Obviously not. Obama's "road forward" has proven to be a dead end for Detroit, as it has for the whole nation.

Recalling Obama's politically motivated remark to make the Zimmerman/Martin case part of his campaign last year -- "If I had a son, he would look like Trayvon" -- the obvious parallel for Obama in this instance would be, "If I had a city, it would look like Detroit."

Detroit is an apropos metaphor for [Obama's America](#). It is the prototypical terminal manifestation of the [Democratic Party's](#) socialist economic policies that have created ever-expanding [urban poverty plantations](#) in once-great cities across the nation. That in turn drives the departure of middle-class families for greener pastures in outlying suburban counties with better schools and lower crime.

Over just the last decade, some 240,000 of Detroit's residents (25 percent of its population), and thousands of businesses, fled the city's oppressive taxes and corrupt one-party government. Indeed, Detroit was a bustling city of nearly 2,000,000 residents as far back as 1950; today, that number is just over 700,000. (Not coincidentally, Detroit's last Republican mayor, Louis Miriani, served more than a half-century ago, from 1957 to 1962.)



DETROIT A.K.A STARNESVILLE

Traveling through Detroit, as with other blighted urban centers, I can't help but recall my travels through the urban wastelands of the Soviet Union in the 1980s. Ironically, Russian leaders today understand the importance of lower taxes and decentralized government as a catalyst for free enterprise and economic growth, while Democrat leaders in our nation advocate policies that stifle economic growth and centralize government.

The miles of shuttered businesses and fields of collapsing homes are also reminiscent of "Starnesville," the fictitious auto-manufacturing center in Ayn Rand's dystopian novel, "Atlas Shrugged." Rand wrote, "A few houses still stood within the skeleton of what had once been an industrial town. Everything that could move, had moved away... Beyond the town, on a distant hill, stood the factory of the Twentieth Century Motor Company..."

When Ayn Rand published her novel in 1957, Detroit had the highest per capita GDP in the nation. But Detroit, like Starnesville, became a desolate wasteland after the socialists gained political control of the city. Likewise, its decline is a harbinger for the rest of our national economy.

Detroit is not much worse off than Obama's hometown of Chicago or many other Democrat-controlled urban centers nationwide, all overrun with larded public-sector unions, government waste and skyrocketing debt. But the breaking point for Detroit, as it may be for other cities to follow, was its grossly underfunded retirement pension.

An underfunded municipal pension is somewhat similar to the unfunded Social Security Ponzi scheme at the national level. (Yes, I know there are U.S. Treasury IOUs in the so-called SSI "lockbox," but those pieces of paper are merely mortgages on future generations of Americans.)

In Detroit, decades of Democrat mayors since its zenith in the '50s punted the need to cut spending and waste, and to renegotiate grossly excessive union pension plans. And they got away with it as long as there were many more people paying taxes into the funds than were drawing money out of the funds. But during the last 20 years, the city's deteriorating demographic finally caught up to it. The result has been a steadily shrinking cash flow, and a dying city unable to raise enough taxes to keep cops on the street and city services functioning -- much less accommodate its enormous public-sector pension deficit.

Likewise, during the 1950s the [ratio of income earners](#) paying into Social Security versus retirees receiving benefits was 10:1. Now, it is fewer than 3:1. Furthermore, what was paid in over the decades was then "borrowed" to "invest" in nonstop government growth. Of course, the federal government can force many millions of "captive donors" in future generations to increase their "donations" to the SSI fund, but not even that inexcusable prospect can keep Social Security solvent.

Of course, while Detroit has unfunded liabilities of \$18 billion, the U.S. has unfunded liabilities in excess of \$220 *trillion*, a number that ought to compete for attention with the "mere" \$17 trillion of national debt.

So what will the charlatan Obama do about Detroit while on his latest campaign tour? For sure, Obama has two very significant constituencies represented in Detroit: Unions and black voters.

MSNBC's Melissa Harris-Perry's assessment of Detroit's crisis sets the tone for Obama's Motor City

strategy: "This lack of tax base is also exactly the kind of thing that many Republicans would impose on us. ... This is what it looks like when government is small enough to drown."

In other words, the problem wasn't that Detroit's municipal government was too big and corrupt and cowardly, but that Republican policies kept it *too small* and vulnerable to financial failure. (Clearly, Ms. Harris-Perry has a future as an Obama teleprompter speechwriter.)

White House spokesman Jay Carney says the administration is prepared to provide "assistance," not a bailout. I suspect Obama will propose bailout measures under some other name in anticipation that Republicans will reject those measures. Then he will blame Republicans for the city's decline. Obama's legions of low-information voters will buy it.

Regardless of his political charades, the fact remains that Detroit is a fitting metaphor for the consequences of socialism on our national economy.



Indeed, "If Obama had a nation, it would look like Detroit." And our nation will share Detroit's fate unless [grassroots American Patriots](#) reinvigorate, refortify and redouble our efforts through 2014 and beyond.