



Obama's Redistribution Presidency

Obama's Policies Have Echoed His Support For The Redistribution Of Wealth

Obama: "I Actually Believe In Redistribution." "Let me just close by saying as we think about the policy research surrounding the issues that I just named, the policy research for the working poor, broadly defined. I think that what we are going to have to do is somehow resuscitate the notion that government action can be effective at all. There has been a systematic – I don't think it's too strong to call it a propaganda campaign against the possibility of government action and its efficacy. And I think some of it has been deserved. Chicago Housing Authority has not been a model of good policymaking. And neither necessarily have been the Chicago Public Schools. What that means that as we try to resuscitate this notion that we're all in this together, leave nobody behind. We do have to be innovative in thinking how - what are the delivery systems that are actually effective and meet people where they live? And my suggestion I guess would be that the trick – and this is one of the few areas where I think there are technical issues that have to be dealt with as opposed to just political issues. I think the trick is figuring out how do we structure government systems that pool resources and hence, facilitate some redistribution because I actually believe in redistribution, at least at a certain level to make sure everybody's got a shot." (State Senator Barack Obama, [Remarks At Loyola University Panel](#), Chicago, IL, 10/19/98)

OBAMA'S OWN CHIEF ADVISERS AND ALLIES EQUATE DEPENDENCE WITH ECONOMIC STIMULUS

White House Senior Adviser Valerie Jarrett Said Unemployment Checks Help Stimulate The Economy. VALERIE JARRETT: "Even though we had a terrible economic crisis three years ago, throughout our country many people were suffering before the last three years, particularly in the black community. And so we need to make sure that we continue to support that important safety net. It not only is good for the family, but it's good for the economy. People who receive that unemployment check go out and spend it and help stimulate the economy, so that's healthy as well." (Valerie Jarrett, Remarks At A Student Summit At North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC, 2/21/12)

- [VIDEO: WH Senior Adviser: Unemployment Stimulates the Economy](#)

Obama Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack Says More People On Food Stamps Means More Jobs . WES MOORE: "Mr. Secretary, good morning. Many people don't know that actually food stamps fall under the Department of Agriculture. And a report was just released that nearly 1 in 7 Americans now are currently on food stamps. What strategies -- what's being done right now and being done going

forward that is really addressing poverty and the poor within the country and bringing some alleviation to those kinds of numbers?" SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE TOM VILSACK: "Well, obviously, it's putting people to work, which is why we're going to propose some interesting things during the course of the forum this morning. Later this morning, we're going to have a press conference with myself and Secretary Mavis and Secretary Chu to announce something that's never happened in this country which we think is exciting in terms of job growth. But I should point out that when you talk about the snap program or the food stamp program, you have to recognize that it's also an economic stimulus. Every dollar of snap benefits generates \$1.84 in the economy in terms of economic activity. If people are able to buy a little more in the grocery store, then someone has to stock it, shelve it, process it, package it, ship it. All of those are jobs. It's the most direct stimulus you can get in the economy during these tough times. The reason why these numbers have gone up is we've done a pretty good job of working with states that have done a poor job in the past about the getting word out about this program. States like California and Texas and Florida underperformed and we're now working with them to make sure that people who are eligible get the benefits and therefore help stimulate their local economy." (MSNBC's "[Morning Joe](#)," 8/16/11)

- **VIDEO: Obama Ag Secretary: More People On Food Stamps Means More Jobs**

White House Press Secretary Jay Carney Says That Unemployment Benefits Create Jobs.

REPORTER: "I understand why extending unemployment insurance provides relief to people who need it, but how does it create jobs?" WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY JAY CARNEY: "Oh, it is by -- I would expect a reporter from the Wall Street Journal would know this as part of the entrance exam just to get on the paper -- (laughter.) But the -- no, seriously. It is one of the most direct ways to infuse money into the economy because people who are unemployed and obviously aren't earning a paycheck are going to spend the money that they get. They're not going to save it; they're going to spend it. And unemployment insurance, that money goes directly back into the economy dollar for dollar virtually. So it is -- and when it goes back in the economy, it means that everywhere that those people -- everywhere that that money is spent has added business. And that creates growth and income for businesses that then lead them to making decisions about job -- more hiring. So there are few other ways that can more directly put money into the economy than providing unemployment insurance." ([White House Press Briefing](#), 8/10/11)

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi Said Unemployment Benefits "Creates Jobs To Help Reduce The Deficit." "'Unemployment insurance, the economists tell us, return \$2 for every \$1 that is put out there for unemployment insurance,' Speaker Nancy Pelosi said on the House floor. 'It injects demand into the economy, it creates jobs to help reduce the deficit,' Pelosi said." ("Nancy Pelosi: Unemployment Benefits 'Creates Jobs'," [Real Clear Politics](#), 12/2/10)

- **VIDEO: Pelosi Thinks Unemployment Benefits Create Jobs**

Pelosi Claimed Unemployment Checks Creates Jobs Faster Than "Almost Any Other Initiative You Can Name."

"'It injects demand into the economy,' Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) said of unemployment checks. 'It creates jobs faster than almost any other initiative you can name.'" ("Pelosi: Unemployment Checks Serve As A 'Job Creator,'" [Real Clear Politics](#), 7/1/10)

- **VIDEO: Pelosi: Unemployment Checks Create Jobs Faster Than Almost Any Other Initiative**

OBAMA'S POLICIES PRIORITIZE DEPENDENCY OVER PROSPERITY

The Stimulus Centered More On Short-Term Handouts Than Long-Term Employment

When The Obama Transition Team Was Debating How To Spend The Stimulus, Food Stamps And Unemployment Benefits Were “No-Brainers.” “The big question was how to spend it. Unemployment benefits, food stamps, and other aid to vulnerable families would be no-brainers, acing the three-T test while providing \$505 billion to people in need. Furman’s PowerPoint also included \$80 billion worth of aid to states, to prevent fifty gubernatorial mini-Hoovers from undermining Obama’s stimulus with drastic layoffs and other anti-stimulus.” (Michael Grunwald, *The New New Deal*, 2012, p. 95)

Obama’s Campaign Viewed Unemployment Benefits And Food Stamps As “Excellent Stimulus.” “The team’s Clinton-era combat veterans did not assume that passing jobs bills would be easy. They remembered Republicans blocking their relatively tiny \$19 billion stimulus in 1993, even after Democrats whittled it down and offered offsets. They tended to be skeptical of Obama’s post-partisan dreams. So even though unemployment benefits and food stamps were excellent stimulus, Lew warned that Republicans would criticize them as big-government welfare.” (Michael Grunwald, *The New New Deal*, 2012, p. 82)

When Shaping Their Stimulus Plan, The Obama Campaign Prioritized An Increase In Food Stamps, Followed By Extensions In Unemployment Insurance. “A new Brookings stimulus analysis titled ‘If, When, How’ rated both strategies ‘ineffective or counterproductive,’ while a Moody’s Economy.com analysis of how much growth various policies would produce per dollar – the Keynesian multiplier – scored both below 50 cents. The Brookings report was written by two Clinton administration economists – Jason Furman, a Summers protégé who was running the Hamilton Project, and Doug Elmendorf, another former Summers student – but the Moody’s author, Mark Zandi, was a McCain campaign adviser. By contrast, policies benefiting lower-income families provided much more bang for the buck, because the poor can’t afford to hoard. Increases in food stamps earned the highest multiplier from moody’s adding \$1.73 in output for each dollar cost. Extending unemployment benefits, which normally expire after six months, came in second. Those strategies battled for 3-for-3. The benefits would go out instantly, target families likely to spend, and fade once the economy improved.” (Michael Grunwald, *The New New Deal*, 2012, p. 62)

- **Biden Economic Adviser Jared Bernstein: “Everyone Was Carrying Around This List Of Multipliers,’ ... ‘And Food Stamps Was Always At The Top.”** “Jared Bernstein, who was Joe Biden’s main economic adviser during the financial crisis, told me that Zandi’s chart was taken very seriously by the economic team. ‘Everyone was carrying around this list of multipliers,’ Bernstein said. ‘And food stamps was always at the top. That had the largest multiplier.’ (Almost four years later, Bernstein still had the food-stamp multiplier committed to memory.)” (Paul Tough, “Obama Vs. Poverty,” [The New York Times](#), 8/15/12)

When Devising The Stimulus, Obama Advisers Jason Furman And Jared Bernstein Sought To “Modernize And Expand The System” Of Unemployment Insurance. “So Furman and Bernstein worked with House Democrats like New York’s Charlie Rangel and Jim McDermott of Washington to modernize and expand the system, providing \$7 billion in incentives for states to eliminate the time lags and loosen their eligibility rules. Governors would be reward for extending benefits to part-time workers, as well as workers who quit jobs to care for a family member, follow a spouse who had to relocate, or escape domestic violence. These reforms wouldn’t attract much attention, but they would extend the New Deal safety net to new cohorts of deserving workers while providing an automatic Keynesian stabilizer in terms of high unemployment.” (Michael Grunwald, *The New New Deal*, 2012, pp. 169-170)

The Stimulus Suspended The Time Limits For Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents Who Do Not Work At Least 20 Hours Per Week In A Job From April 2009 To September 2010. “Section 1019(e) of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA,P.L. 111-5) suspended the

ABAWD time limits for those who do not work at least 20 hours per week in a job. This suspension covered the period April 2009 through September 30, 2010; it will be discussed further in a subsequent section.” (“FY 2007-FY2012: Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Requirements, Statistics, And Waivers,” [Congressional Research Service](#), 9/14/12)

- **From 2008 To 2010, The Number Of ABAWD Participants On Food Stamps Increased From 1.9 Million To 3.9 Million.** (“FY 2007-FY2012: Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) Requirements, Statistics, And Waivers,” [Congressional Research Service](#), 9/14/12)

A Vision Of “The Life Of Julia” For Every American

“As A Story, ‘The Life Of Julia’ Is A Mess; It’s Got The Verisimilitude Of A String Of Paper Dolls. As An Argument, It’s Worse.” “But ‘The Life of Julia’ borrows its aesthetic from *USA Today* and its narrative logic from Chutes and Ladders. It is a very bad place to begin a campaign. As a story, ‘The Life of Julia’ is a mess; it’s got the verisimilitude of a string of paper dolls. As an argument, it’s worse. Better public education and affordable health care are worth fighting for, urgently, and they matter to everyone, but the heart of the fight is not over whether Julia, a fictitious college-educated Web entrepreneur, can one day plant Brussels sprouts.” (Jill Lepore, “Oh Julia: From Birth To Death: Left And Right,” [The New Yorker](#), 5/8/12)

- ***Politico’s Mike Allen: “‘The Life Of Julia’ Takes Her From Age 3 To Age 67, And At Every Single Point Along The Way, The Government Is Giving Her A Hand.”*** (MSNBC’s [“Morning Joe,”](#) 5/4/12)
- ***MSNBC’s Mika Brzezinski: “At Some Point We Do Have To Be Able To Inspire Innovation And Hope And Get People On Their Way.”*** (MSNBC’s [“Morning Joe,”](#) 5/4/12)
- ***MSNBC’s Willie Geist: “And No One Wants To Think That From The Age Of 3 They Are Going To Need The Government To Take Care Of Them.”*** (MSNBC’s [“Morning Joe,”](#) 5/4/12)

OBAMA’S POLICIES OF REDISTRIBUTION HAVE ONLY EXACERBATED THE PROBLEM AND LEFT MORE PEOPLE DEPENDENT ON THE GOVERNMENT

“49.1%: Percent Of The Population That Lives In A Household Where At Least One Member Received Some Type Of Government Benefit In The First Quarter Of 2011.” (Phil Izzo, “Number Of The Week: Half Of U.S. Lives In Household Getting Benefits,” [The Wall Street Journal’s “Real Time Economics,”](#) 5/26/12)

A Record 46.7 Million Americans Were On Food Stamps In June 2012. (“Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program: Number Of Persons Participating,” [USDA Food And Nutrition Service](#), Accessed 9/6/12)

Since President Obama Took Office, The Number Of Americans Receiving Food Stamps Has Increased From 31.9 Million To 46.7 Million, A Record 46 Percent Increase. (“Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program: Number Of Persons Participating,” [Food Research And Action Center](#), Accessed 8/10/12; “Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program: Number Of Persons Participating,” [USDA Food And Nutrition Service](#), Accessed 9/6/12)

Bloomberg Headline: “Food-Stamp Use Climbs To Record, Reviving Campaign Issue” (Alan Bjerga, “Food-Stamp Use Climbs To Record, Reviving Campaign Issue,” [Bloomberg](#), 9/4/12)

- **“The Number Of Americans On Food Stamps Hit A Record High In June...”** “The number of Americans on food stamps hit a record high in June, and economists don’t expect much improvement as long as unemployment remains high. Those receiving benefits through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program numbered 46.37 million, the government said in a report that hit just days ahead of the monthly nonfarm payrolls report, which the Labor Department releases Friday. The two numbers are inextricably linked as the economy battles its

way back from the crippling recession that the National Bureau of Economic Research says ended in 2009.” (Jeff Cox, “Record 46 Million Americans Are On Food Stamps,” [CNBC](#), 9/4/12)

Nearly 17 Million Americans Suffered From “Very Low Food Security” In 2011. (Alisha Coleman, Mark Nord, Margaret Andrews, and Steven Carlson, “Household Food Security In The United States In 2011,” [USDA](#), 9/5/12)

- **At 16.4 Percent, The Overall Food-Insecurity Rate For Individuals In 2011 Remains Almost Unchanged From “When It Surged To The Highest Levels Since The Agriculture Department Began Monitoring Food Security In 1995.”** “The overall food-insecurity rate for individuals was 16.4 percent, almost unchanged since 2008, when it surged to the highest levels since the Agriculture Department began monitoring food security in 1995.” (Charles Abbott, “Nearly 17 Million Americans Repeatedly Short Of Food: Report,” [Reuters](#), 9/5/12)

In 2011, 46.2 Million Americans Lived In Poverty, As The Official Poverty Rate Was 15 Percent. “In 2011, the official poverty rate was 15.0 percent. There were 46.2 million people in poverty (Figure 4 and Table 3).” (Carmen DeNavas-Walt, Bernadette D. Proctor, and Jessica C. Smith, “Income, Poverty, And Health Insurance Coverage In The United States: 2011,” [U.S. Census Bureau](#), 9/12/12)

- **Under Obama, Poverty Has Either Increased Or Been Stagnant.** “After 3 consecutive years of increases, neither the official poverty rate nor the number of people in poverty were statistically different from the 2010 estimates (Figure 4 and Table 3).” (Carmen DeNavas-Walt, Bernadette D. Proctor, and Jessica C. Smith, “Income, Poverty, And Health Insurance Coverage In The United States: 2011,” [U.S. Census Bureau](#), 9/12/12)