

You Didn't Build That!

By MacPundit

Actually, we did, including the bridges and roads!

"You didn't build that." went around the world at light speed. I know, I know, he was talking about bridges and roads. Okay, I'll give him that. But he may be sorry I did.



You see, there's a little problem with Mr. Obama's explanation—the one some of you doubled down on. Now pay attention. After he extolled the importance of bridges and roads, he said:

"If you've got a business, you didn't build that. Somebody else made that happen."

He said he meant that businesses can't succeed without the bridges and roads that the government built. So he was telling us the government built the bridges and roads first and the businesses benefited from that. He said he was talking about the bridges and roads when he said, "You didn't build that." So to be absolutely clear, he said the businesses did not build the bridges and roads.

So there. I said I'd give it to him. Are you still with me? Good. Now I have a couple of inconvenient little questions.

1. Where did the government get the money to build the bridges and roads?
2. Who built them?

Do you see the problem with our leader's explanation? Government does not create wealth. Government has no money until it takes it from the private sector, which, of course, is the only part of our economy that actually does create wealth. The fact is, it creates all the wealth! It also creates all the jobs, feeds all the people, builds all the houses, makes all the clothes—and, yes, it pays for and supplies all the workers to build all the bridges and roads.

How does the private sector do all those things? Well, it is made up of millions of organizations we call “businesses” and these businesses figure out what is needed and then they fill all the needs. They invest their money, their time, their talents, and they hire, train and pay people to do the work. (You did notice that they create jobs?)

Now this is important:

If the businesses did not do all of those things first—before the bridges and roads were built—there would be no money with which to build the bridges and roads.

Are you struggling with this? I realize how difficult it is for some of you to give credit to those awful business people, but unless you're living in the woods au naturel, those nasty businesses made everything you own. I know, it's a hard pill to swallow. But it's true. Go way back in history and you will see small shops in quaint little villages. There were shoemakers and bread makers and furniture makers, and the people walked on and drove their wagons on rutted, bumpy dirt roads. That is, until the villages and towns could get enough

money from the businesses and the people who worked for the businesses in order to have proper roads built—and maybe a bridge here and there, too.

Hysteron proteron – Preposterous, absurd, ridiculous

So, you see, our leader has placed the famous cart before the horse. As a Harvard man, he may be familiar with a figure of speech known as hysteron proteron in which the thing that should come second is put first. This sort of misplacement is sometimes referred to as being preposterous, absurd, or ridiculous. Personally, I think any or all of them fit quite nicely.

To summarize: The private sector not only supplies the money to build the bridges and roads, with few exceptions, it also builds the bridges and roads. Typically, the government contracts with private sector companies to do the work. But even when government workers do the work, they are paid with taxpayer money, which has been created in the private sector.

So let's finish where we began: He was talking about bridges and roads. Okay, I'll give him that.