

GIBBS' WALK-BACK: CLUELESS ABOUT "IN AMERICA"



Gibbs and Pres. Obama check out what's up "in America" from a safe distance. (Official White House photo by Pete Souza)

In Robert Gibbs' intemperate rant about hippies, he seemed to distinguish between the "professional left" he was targeting and the Progressives "in America" who are clapping loudly over Obama's accomplishments.

Progressives, Gibbs said, are the liberals outside of Washington "in America," and they are grateful for what Obama has accomplished in a shattered economy with uniform Republican opposition and a short amount of time.

In a piece that had a lot to piss me off, the suggestion that professional DC hack Robert Gibbs should lecture hippies about what people "in America" think of Obama's economic policies was the worst.

Maybe that's because I'm out here "in America" and I'm still seeing a shattered economy.

My belief that Gibbs just doesn't get that fact was confirmed when, in the walkback of his attack, he again boasted of Obama's success at "getting our economy moving again."

But in 17 months, we have seen Wall Street reform, historic health care reform, fair pay for women, a recovery act that pulled us back from a depression and got our economy moving again, record investments in clean energy that are creating jobs, student

loan reforms so families can afford college, a weapons system canceled that the Pentagon didn't want, reset our relationship with the world and negotiated a nuclear weapons treaty that gets us closer to a world without fear of these weapons, just to name a few.

Now, don't get me wrong. Aside from areas that depend on the military and intelligence industrial complex (like the DC metro bubble in which Gibbs lives), MI has benefited more from Obama's economic decisions than anywhere else. Not only did Obama rescue GM and Chrysler, but a lot of those "record investments in clean energy" are battery jobs in MI. As I've written before, I just wish there were a similar killer app to use as the excuse for investment in Nevada and Arizona.

But the truth is these states, including MI, are still functionally in far worse than a recession. The economy on Wall Street may be moving again, but without consumer demand, the economy on Main Street is not. Too many consumers are so far underwater on their house (which Obama's disastrous HAMP has failed to fix in any appreciable way) they're not going to be spending anytime soon. Heck, no one's going to be spending so long as wages remain stagnant or falling.

And that reality out here "in America" is the key to Obama's problems (the ones that—as Chris Bowers shows—really do extend to liberals outside of DC) with voters.

No matter how many mean names Gibbs calls hippies, the real issue is that he, the voice of the Obama Administration, appears totally clueless about why America isn't clapping louder about the Administration's economic "successes."