

\$2 BILLION FOR SOLAR ENERGY, OPPOSITION SAYS BOO



In an effort to speed up economic recovery, the President announced on Saturday that the Department of Energy would be paying out \$2 billion to two solar energy companies. The companies, Abengoa Solar and Solar Manufacturing, have ambitious plans for the cash. The former wants to build one of the largest solar plants in the world, while the latter has its sights on manufacturing super high tech panels at two new factories. The assumption is that both companies' initiatives would create enough jobs to help kick start a sputtering economy. Jobs are simply not returning fast enough. Besides the money for these green projects, the President intends to pass legislation that will extend unemployment benefits, create loan programs for small businesses, and send much needed economic relief dollars to states for education, and crucial services and infrastructure. This will all cost money. A lot of money. The President's weekly address, as well as the Republican party's rebuttal, were covered by [the Caucus](#), a New York Times blog, and spoke to the G.O.P.'s new focus on and ever-vocal protests over the soaring national debt. The debt has now replaced national security as the party's singular mantra. Cries of socialism abound and the chains of debt our children and our children's children will toil under loom large in Republicans' minds or at least in their rhetoric. Though the deficit is concerning, it remains, necessarily, abstract and not, particularly, alarming when left in the ether. I tend to agree with Mr. Obama when he says of his adversaries that they simply "just don't get it." The crippled economy and its effects on the average Joe-the-Plumber are immediate, the deficit is for economists to argue. Political memory can be conveniently short. America racked up debt hand over fist during the depression (and the Cold War) and thereafter made some of its greatest strides ever, increasing its prestige in the world and on the economic stage. Times were dire then, just as now. People were desperate. Opposition to the New Deal was strident. FDR took a stand and fought back. Reagan beamed at the nation and pledged dollar after dollar to toppling the Soviets. I find Republican leaders' constant cries of wolf intellectually dishonest and a blatant ploy for votes and play on emotions. Sheer demagoguery. Until they come up with a viable alternative to healing our economic wounds I refuse, as should anyone who has felt the bite of the last several years' hardships, to take them seriously. Still, our current leader- the leader of the free world, no less- needs to dig his heels in, get tough and start building consensus. Now is not the time to play fair or be a nice guy. We are rapidly approaching both the year end and 2012 elections. Nice guys and their parties, generally, finish last.