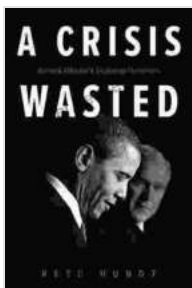


Crisis Wasted: Barack Obama's Defining Decisions

Barack Obama entered the White House in 2009 facing an unprecedented set of challenges. The country was in the midst of the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression, two wars were raging in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the healthcare system was in dire need of reform.



A Crisis Wasted: Barack Obama's Defining Decisions

by Reed Hundt

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Obama's handling of these crises would define his presidency. He would make some bold decisions, such as bailing out the auto industry and passing the Affordable Care Act. But he would also make some missteps, such as the escalation of the war in Afghanistan and the failure to close the Guantanamo Bay detention camp.

In this article, we will take a closer look at Obama's defining decisions and assess their impact on the country.

The Financial Crisis

The financial crisis of 2008 was the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. It began with the collapse of the housing market, which led to a widespread loss of confidence in the financial system. This, in turn, caused a sharp decline in economic activity and a rise in unemployment.

Obama responded to the crisis by signing into law the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), which provided \$700 billion in bailout funds to banks and other financial institutions. He also signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which provided \$787 billion in stimulus spending.

These measures helped to stabilize the financial system and prevent the economy from falling into a deeper recession. However, they also added to the national debt, which has since become a major issue of debate.

The Affordable Care Act

The Affordable Care Act, also known as Obamacare, was a major piece of legislation that aimed to reform the healthcare system in the United States. It was signed into law by Obama in 2010.

The Affordable Care Act has been controversial since its inception. Critics argue that it has led to higher healthcare costs and that it has taken away people's choice of doctors and health plans. Supporters, on the other hand, argue that it has provided health insurance to millions of Americans who previously did not have it and that it has slowed the growth of healthcare costs.

The future of the Affordable Care Act is uncertain. The Trump administration has taken steps to undermine the law, and Republicans in Congress have made several attempts to repeal it. However, the law remains in place for now, and it is unclear whether the Trump administration or Congress will be successful in their efforts to overturn it.

The Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

Obama inherited two wars from his predecessor, George W. Bush: the war in Iraq and the war in Afghanistan. Both wars were unpopular with the American public, and Obama campaigned on a promise to end them.

Obama began drawing down troops from Iraq in 2011, and the war formally ended in 2014. However, the war in Afghanistan continued, and Obama actually escalated the war in 2010 by sending an additional 30,000 troops to the country.

The war in Afghanistan ended in 2014, but the United States continues to maintain a presence in the country. It is unclear whether the war in Afghanistan was a success or a failure. The Taliban has returned to power, and the country is still plagued by violence and instability.

Obama's Legacy

Obama left office in 2017 with a mixed legacy. He was praised for his handling of the financial crisis and for passing the Affordable Care Act. However, he was also criticized for his escalation of the war in Afghanistan and for his failure to close the Guantanamo Bay detention camp.

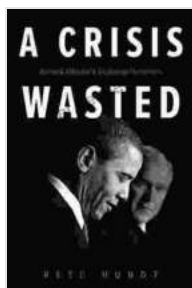
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American history. His decisions shaped the country in profound ways, and their impact will be felt for years to come.

Barack Obama's presidency was a time of great challenge and change. He made some bold decisions, such as bailing out the auto industry and passing the Affordable Care Act. But he also made some missteps, such as the escalation of the war in Afghanistan and the failure to close the Guantanamo Bay detention camp.

Obama's legacy is mixed. He is praised for his handling of the financial crisis and for passing the Affordable Care Act. However, he is also criticized for his escalation of the war in Afghanistan and for his failure to close the Guantanamo Bay detention camp.

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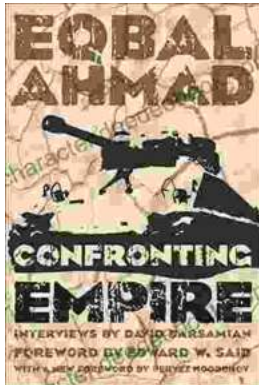
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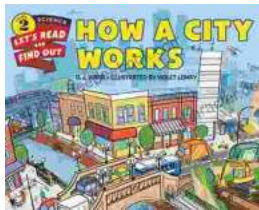
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