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Jobs Update: The Death of US Engineering

By [Paul Craig Roberts](#)

The [May payroll jobs report](#) released June 2 by the Bureau of Labor Statistics confirms the jobs pattern for the 21st century US economy: employment growth is limited to domestic services.

In May the economy created only 67,000 private sector jobs. Job estimates for the previous two months were reduced by 37,000.

The new jobs are as follows: professional and business services, 27,000; education and health services, 41,000; waitresses and bartenders, 10,000. [Manufacturing](#) lost 14,000 jobs.

Total hours worked in the private sector declined in May. Manufacturing hours worked are 6.6 percent less than when the recovery began four and one-half years ago.

American economists and policymakers are in denial about the effect of [jobs offshoring](#) on US employment. Corporate lobbyists have purchased fraudulent studies from economists that claim offshoring results in more US employment rather than less. The same lobbyists have spread disinformation that the US does not graduate enough engineers and that they must import foreigners on work visas. Lobbyists are currently pushing, as part of the immigration bill, an expansion in annual H-1B work visas from 65,000 to 115,000.

The alleged "**shortage**" of US engineering graduates is [inconsistent](#) with [reports from Duke University](#) that 30 to 40 percent of students in its master's of engineering management program accept jobs outside the profession. About one-third of engineering graduates from MIT go into careers outside their field. Job outsourcing and work visas for foreign engineers are reducing career opportunities for American engineering graduates and, also, reducing salary scales.

When employers allege a shortage of engineers, they mean that there is a shortage of American graduates who will work for the [low salaries](#) that foreigners will accept. Americans are simply being [forced out of the engineering professions](#) by jobs outsourcing and the importation of foreigners on work visas. Corporate lobbyists and their hired economists are destroying the American engineering professions.

American engineering is also under pressure because [corporations have moved](#)

[manufacturing offshore](#). Design, research and development are now following manufacturing offshore. A country that doesn't make things doesn't need engineers and designers. Corporations that have moved manufacturing offshore fund R&D in the countries where their plants have been relocated.

Engineering curriculums are demanding. The rewards to the effort are being squeezed out by jobs offshoring and work visas. If the current policy continues of substituting foreign engineers for American engineers, the profession will die in the US.

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Paul Craig Roberts [[email him](#)] was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in the Reagan Administration. He is the author of [Supply-Side Revolution : An Insider's Account of Policymaking in Washington](#); [Alienation and the Soviet Economy](#) and [Meltdown: Inside the Soviet Economy](#), and is the co-author with Lawrence M. Stratton of [The Tyranny of Good Intentions : How Prosecutors and Bureaucrats Are Trampling the Constitution in the Name of Justice](#). Click [here](#) for Peter Brimelow's Forbes Magazine interview with Roberts about the recent epidemic of prosecutorial misconduct.

