

# Letters from our readers

9 August 2008

*The following is a selection of recent letters sent to the World Socialist Web Site.*

*On “The making and marketing of Barack Obama: Image and identity in US politics”*

Obama’s move to the center reminds me of the marketing hucksters’ ploy of rebranding of baked beans to increase sales. As David Walsh points out, you don’t get to become president of the USA unless you sell yourself out to America’s establishment. Allowing the establishment to manage and change your character is part of the deal. The establishment has decided that Obama the progressive won’t sell to America’s voters. Therefore Obama is moving to the right, to the so-called center. The establishment wants Obama to win by a landslide to draw attention from the fact that Obama is black. Obama has spent his adult life making himself into what the establishment buys and requires of a successful politician. He is practiced and successful in changing his character; in short, he knows how to rebrand himself. American voters will knowingly vote for a candidate who is experienced in changing himself. Voters are being told implicitly that Obama won’t change the way America is run. Goodbye to Obama, the agent of change. Hail to Obama, the uniter. A vote for Obama insures four years of same stuff, different day. Hail to America’s two-party but only one-policy warfare state.

LL

5 August 2008

The application of branding techniques to the crafting of electoral narratives and symbols, and the representation of political discourse as marketing, are the concrete forms that perception management takes in neocon/neoliberal times. From this we know that a revived anti-capitalist movement needs to go beyond “no logo”, towards the theoretical and practical negation of politics as marketing in favour of net/grass roots movement and a negation of symbolism in favour of the substantive.

The ultimate flaw of their approach is that perception management does not feed people or fuel their cars. Ultimately the neocon/neoliberal political class will have to rely on the armed fist of police state 2.0 and/or martial law in order to ensure the preservation of capital (which is their priority). Perhaps in view of what they will have to do as post-petroleum stagflation looms, they are selecting Obama to serve as the “face” for the system under the circumstances. Of course he is not any different than Bush! He never was.

NS

Trondheim, Norway

8 August 2008

Obama dissing, going after Osama. Perfect. Nothing could better reflect just how much our whole political system is corrupted and what an empty vessel Obama really is.

RM

7 August 2008

*On “Northern Territory intervention—Aboriginal education: a portrait of government discrimination and neglect”*

Thank you for the continuing coverage of the situation in the Northern Territories. I firmly believe that this series of policies is being watched by governments worldwide, and that if it proves “successful”, will be implemented in many other communities, though perhaps with minor cosmetic changes designed to suit the various populations in question.

Your continuing exposure of the lies and motives behind these policies is crucial in understanding and countering such programs.

CMS

Portland, Oregon, USA

7 August 2008

*On “Australian Federal Court upholds Kafka-like powers to cancel passports and visas”*

I just wanted to make the point that Josef K was

guilty. The moment he recognized and submitted to the trial was when he was killed. He was guilty of existing in a system that he did not understand; he was guilty for trusting the powers that be. K could not realize his ability to transcend his situation so he was executed.

OC

Tongyoung, South Korea

7 August 2008



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

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