

Letters from our readers

11 September 2008

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

On “Obama vows not to rescind tax cuts for the rich if recession deepens“

The speed and extent of the Obama “bait-and-switch” is amazing, even for those of us who knew he was a fraud from the start. Everything that’s wrong with the Democrats is encapsulated in his campaign, as the many wide-ranging articles on the WSWs website have demonstrated.

Surely, if the Democrats again snatch defeat from the jaws of victory (and how could anybody lose to such a pair as McCain/Palin?), the blame game will kick into gear. I can hear the litany now: Obama/Biden lost because of Nader, racism, disgruntled Hillaryites, the ignorant, misled working class, and of course, the Democrats being too far to the “left.” Anything but the fact that the working class sees in him and his party no “change that we can believe in,” and nothing to distinguish them from the Republicans, just the same old prescription of more attacks on workers at home and abroad, and more favors for the wealthy.

We can thank the Obama campaign for driving the final nail in the coffin of the idea that the Democrats offer any alternative for the working class.

LM

9 September 2008

* * *

Obama’s obvious retreat on these extremely important national and international issues indicates he cannot be trusted to assume the helm of president of the United States. Of course, McCain is much further to the right than Obama and makes no bones about it.

There has been a tremendous, reckless transfer of wealth since Reagan took office in January of 1981, a transfer based on the increased taxation of relatively modest incomes and a massive decrease for those making over \$365,000 per year. Moreover, this continuing transfer results from the no-bid contracts to Republican friends such as Halliburton and defense contractors, and from the making of an illegitimate war. The war has led to an increase in gas, food, and transportation costs and therefore to huge profit margins for oil companies and associated corporations. In the Obama interview on ABC, the democratic candidate failed to as

much as acknowledge this monumental transfer of wealth, the fact that the rich were paying 70 percent on their profits during the Carter administration and 90 percent during WWII, and that the American people are being fleeced by their fascist government aligned with select corporations in the defense sector.

Also, what I think Obama is loath to concede is that he himself falls within the category of the rich and powerful. Is he so unselfish that he’ll increase his own taxes?

Additionally, Obama previously supported the notion that we should not increase troop levels in Iraq, and subsequently he maintained that the surge was not working. In his interview with fascist Bill O’Reilly, he backtracked and agreed in the heat of the moment that the surge is in fact working. What we know is that there are a number of existential factors that have contributed to a reduction in violence in Iraq, one of which happens to be improved cooperation between the Americans and various resistance factions (perhaps payments and promises of one kind or another were made) and between Al-Sadr and

Maliki. The surge itself as a factor in the reduction of violence was either minimal or nil, and certainly as a measure used exclusively would not have worked at all. Obama and O’Reilly therefore teamed up to deceive the American people in their failure to discuss agreements that transpired simultaneously with the so-called surge and the impact that such agreements must have had on the level of violence.

Finally, in his leap to the right, Obama wants merit pay for teachers. As a former public school teacher at the secondary level, I can attest to the rank stupidity of this right-wing notion. Public secondary schools are nothing if they are not internally highly political and therefore fraught with perverse relationships between teachers and administrators. Quite simply, the so-called merit pay for superior performance would most likely be given to those teachers who are not embarrassed to routinely kiss the asses of the administrators. On the other hand, of course, the best teachers who would in theory be entitled to merit pay and who are not comfortable playing politics with the lives of their students would likely not see a penny more than their regular salaries. What seems to be clear in Obama’s

endorsement of merit pay for teachers is his failure to sufficiently study the issue of teacher-administrator relations in schools where decisions are made based on the politics of the moment. Also, merit pay would undoubtedly increase the level of politics and decrease the quality of education in schools that are already widely considered low performing.

In the end, Obama if elected president will, without equivocation, err on the side of the political regardless of the harm it will likely to cause. As far as I am concerned, a vote for Obama is not too different from a vote for McCain. Obama lacks steadfastness and thus tends to waver depending on the direction of the political winds. I intend to vote for neither as I am certain it would be a waste of time.

SC

On "RNC in Twin Cities: Eight protesters charged with terrorism under Patriot Act"

What's most evident is the total blackout of the protests by the mainstream media. Shame on CNN for boasting it's "First with the News." It can now only claim to be "First with the Lies."

CS

Taipei, Taiwan

8 September 2008

On "Controversy continues over French soldiers' deaths in Afghanistan"

The French don't have enough fingers on both hands to do all the "finger pointing." Pure and simple, the Taliban have the upper hand the same as the Russians discovered. In resistance fighting, the regular army is the underdog because it operates according to a set plan. Resistance fighters have the advantage of picking the place and time and break off the fight whenever they want. It was that way when we were terrorizing the jackboot Germans in Holland; sixty years later it has not changed.

FBR

Thailand

8 September 2008

On "US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visits Libya"

Hi. Read the interesting comments. They very well reflect the ground situation. Locally, people knew for several months in advance that Condi was coming. (I am an Indian doctor working in Tripoli as a radiologist).

PB

Tripoli, Libya

8 September 2008

On "Indian government mounts brutal campaign of repression in Kashmir"

I appreciate the efforts by the author to bring the truth about Kashmir before the world. I am 30 years old and have seen the atrocities committed by the Indian forces on the innocent Kashmir people who fight for their freedom. It is

unfortunate that the world is not paying any attention to their suffering at the brutal hands of so-called democratic India. Kashmiris want freedom from India. My thanks to the author for bringing the truth about Kashmir to the world. May God bless you.

SA

2 September 2008

On "Angola becomes Africa's largest oil producer"

I found your report on Angola interesting. I was there recently and the high prices in Luanda were a shock. I understand that the main reason was that so many people had left the land due to the war or land mines that most food is imported, and in the shops in Luanda you pay 2,3 or 4 times the price you would in London. Naturally this is well beyond the means of most people. Luanda Port Oimbe and Lobito all have huge shantytowns, and I can only guess at how they scrape a living. There is a big push on to improve the infrastructure, including extensions to the docks you mention. Commercially the country has great potential but I don't suppose much of that will reach the poor. The elite have learned how to look after themselves.

MM

4 September 2008

On "British government moots passport and ID controls between UK and Ireland"

I keep being puzzled (or maybe not) that our western governments are all for free circulation of goods and capital, but are more and more clamping down on the free circulation of people, especially when they are poor, colored or Muslim. A policy which is inhumane, shortsighted and bound to backfire, judging from my experiences traveling abroad.

P

Etterbeek, Belgium

4 September 2008



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact