

Questions for Senator Obama

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Steve McCullough

Now that Senator Barack Obama has wrapped up the Democratic Party's presidential nomination, it's time for him to answer some questions about where he stands on the issues that are important to the American people. Here are my questions for the senator:

First, you have made withdrawing US troops from Iraq the top priority of your campaign saying that you want all "combat brigades out of Iraq within 16 months." Are you still committed to this deadline for removing troops from Iraq regardless of the military situation on the ground? Are you going to ignore our own military commanders including Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who has said your position could take "gains we have achieved and struggled to achieve and turn them around overnight"? What are you going to do once our military forces have been withdrawn from Iraq should Iran and Al-Qaeda decide to take action to overthrow the Iraqi government by force? Do you not believe that US troop withdrawal will be seen as a huge victory for these two entities who have stated on more than one occasion that they see Iraq as the pivotal battleground against democracy and Western values? You have said that you would move US military units to other countries in the region so that they could quickly "re-deploy" to Iraq if necessary. Where, exactly, are you going to relocate our military? Are you willing to pay twice in American blood and treasure for military victories that we have already achieved? As Commander-in-Chief, these are difficult decisions that you will have to make. What is there in your background which suggests that you have the experience to make the military decisions necessary to safeguard America's interests in the Middle East and the rest of the world? You have promised that once you are elected you will reduce our military strength, you will cut spending on missile defense, and you will cut funding for future weapons systems. Do you believe this a wise course of action during a time of war and increased terrorist threats to America?

Secondly, we have heard about your personal relationships with terrorists William Ayers and Bernardine Dohrn who, as members of the Weathermen in the 1970's, bombed government buildings and attempted assassinations of US Army officers, and continue to say that they have no regrets for their actions and wish they had done more. Additionally, you were a member of the Trinity United Church for more than 20 years and attended many sermons where the Reverend Jeremiah Wright proclaimed the nonsense that America invented the AIDS virus to exterminate black people and that the government introduced crack cocaine into African-American neighborhoods in order to imprison black people. Your "spiritual advisor" (your description) also vehemently stated that we should not say, "God Bless America" but, rather, "God damn America" because ours is an evil nation. Reverend Wright has also praised the race-baiter Louis Farrakhan and the terrorist group Hamas. And, although you have recently resigned your church membership from Trinity United, you have not renounced the black liberation theology advanced by your former pastor. In fact, it was only after Father Michael Pflieger, another who you claim helped shape your moral views, made racist remarks from your church pulpit about the evil of white people and described America as, "the greatest sin against God", that you decided to leave Trinity United. However, you also said, "I'm not denouncing the church and I'm not interested in people who want me to denounce the

church", adding, "the church have been suffering from the attention my campaign has focused on them". It sounds like you are leaving the church for political reasons only. Why can you not denounce a church which puts forth racist, anti-American sentiments? Do you or your wife who says she is "proud for the first time in my adult life to be an American" share some of these feelings? We still have not heard about all your dealings with Tony Rezko, a Chicago slumlord who donated \$10,000 to your campaign from an alleged crooked kickback scheme and is now on trial. What are we to make of all these troubling relationships you have had for many years with terrorists, racists, and indicted crooks? You have promised a "change" in the political atmosphere but you appear to be just another politician who will associate with anyone who can help advance your career. Where's the change?

Next, you have proposed a "Global Poverty Act" which would give more than \$845 billion of US taxpayers' money to other nations over and above the billions that we already give. You have said that, "It must be a priority of American foreign policy to commit to the elimination extreme poverty". I am afraid, Senator Obama, that the American people will be the ones experiencing extreme poverty once you have enacted all of your big government programs. In addition to a government-run health care program (estimated cost of \$100 billion), you have also proposed a 10-year, \$150 billion program to establish a "green energy sector"; a \$60 billion "National Infrastructure Reinvestment Bank" to construct and repair highways, bridges, and other infrastructure; a government sponsored college loan program and federal pre-K nursery school program; more tax dollars for illegal aliens, giving them amnesty and allowing them to have drivers licenses, Medicaid and Social Security benefits; and a \$340 billion tax credit benefit. And there's more...lots more. To pay for all of this, you have proposed a \$2 trillion tax increase on all individuals (not just the "rich") and an increased corporate tax rate which is already one of the highest in the world at 40%, including federal and state taxes. You are also in favor of raising the capital gains tax rate to 20-25 percent. How is all of this going to help an already struggling American economy? Are you not afraid, Senator Obama, that your big tax-and-spend initiatives will drive the economy straight into a recession?

Also, despite your claims of support for the Second Amendment rights for Americans, you have pledged to "ban the sale or transfer of all forms of semi-automatic weapons". You have stated that the DC law which prevented citizens from defending themselves was "constitutional" and you refused to join with 55 other senators to support the Supreme Court case opposing the DC gun ban. In 1996 you supported "banning the manufacture, sale and possession of handguns" in Illinois. In 2004 you voted against the DeMar self-defense bill to protect citizens who use handguns in self-defense in their homes and businesses. The bill was overwhelmingly voted into law despite a veto by the governor. You were one of only 20 state senators to vote against the bill. You have been endorsed by several anti-gun groups including the deceptively-named, American Hunters and Shooters Association (AHSAs). It appears, Senator Obama, that you believe American citizens should not be allowed to defend themselves with firearms. How do you explain your anti-Second Amendment comments and actions?

On the cultural front, there is not a single issue on which you have broken with the positions of left-wing interest groups - from gay marriage, to abortion, to legalized drugs. Although you claim that you oppose gay marriage, in 2004 you said that you opposed the Defense of Marriage Act which was meant to prevent gay marriage from being imposed on the country without the consent of the American people. Shouldn't the people, rather than unelected judges, decide on the definition of marriage? You received a perfect 100% voting rating from NARAL over the past three years and you have stated that you oppose "notifying parents of minors who get out-of-state abortions". You have also said that you support partial birth abortions. If you are elected president will you attempt to overturn the Partial Birth Abortion Act of 2003? How do you feel about the millions of babies who have been put to death by abortion? Also, you have admitted to using drugs in the past and you say that you favor decriminalizing the use of marijuana. Do you or do you not believe that drug use is harmful to our children? If you believe it is harmful why would you want drugs to be more readily available?

You have expressed your intent to name justices to the Supreme Court in the mold of Ruth Bader Ginsberg, Stephen Breyer, and David Souter - judges who have made decisions based more on their personal, political and moral views than on constitutional and legal principles. You said that you want judges who have "the empathy to understand what it's like to be poor, or African-American, or gay, or disabled, or old". You voted against the confirmation of Chief Justice John Roberts - one of only 17 nay votes (all Democrats) - justifying your opposition by saying that difficult cases should be decided by "one's deepest values, one's core concerns, one's broader perspective on how the world works, and the depth and breadth of one's empathy". As a lawyer, do you believe that issues should be decided based upon constitutional and statutory language? Or, should a judge make decisions based upon personal feelings? Do you believe that the will of unelected judges supersedes the votes of the American people?

Finally, you have made "hope" and "change" the centerpiece slogans of your campaign, promising fresh national unity and a higher purpose. The national media and young people, especially, love your idealistic rhetoric. But are you the unifier who you claim to be? Your voting record is among the most partisan in the Senate and you were rated the most liberal senator in 2007 by the National Journal, a non-partisan publication. Your policy agenda is more liberal than Hillary Clinton's or Ted Kennedy's or any Democratic nominee since George McGovern. The change that you advocate seems to be nothing more than a reversion to the failed big-government policies of the Jimmy Carter and Lyndon Johnson administrations. If you are truly a unifier, which liberal policies are you willing to compromise for the sake of unity? What bi-partisan legislation are you prepared to support?

So far you have avoided answering any of these questions. The Democratic Party has nominated for President a freshman Senator with barely three years of national experience who most of America still barely knows. You are the least tested and least experienced nominee for the presidency in modern times. Are you prepared to do more than obfuscate, dodge and ignore the tough questions? America needs more than a smooth-talking, politically-correct, empty-suit President. What American voters want to know, Senator Obama, is who are you? Who, really, are you?

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