

IV. BARACK OBAMA – THE CANDIDATE OF DEFEAT

When it comes to America’s victory in the war against Islamofascism, Barack Obama is the candidate of defeat. Through his public statements and his voting record, he has made it clear that America’s victory in the war in Iraq is not important to him and that he is either ignorant of or unwilling to confront the evil of Islamofascism.

- VOTING FOR DEFEAT

Unlike his main rivals for the Democrat presidential nomination, Barack Obama had the political “advantage” of not having been in the U.S. Senate in 2001 when America was attacked by Islamofascist terrorists. He did not have to cast tough votes on sending troops to Afghanistan or on the congressional authorization for the use of force against Iraq. When the presidential primary campaign began, he worked studiously to burnish his credentials among key leftwing constituencies in the Democrat Party – especially the radical anti-military, “Blame America First” crowd.

- ✘ On February 17, 2007, as Al Qaeda’s insurgency in Iraq was growing, Obama voted to oppose President Bush’s decision to send reinforcements to Iraq, predicting that it would fail.¹
- ✘ In March, Obama voted to impose a timetable for withdrawal from Iraq, an action which, if followed, would have telegraphed to the entire world – to America’s enemies as well as our allies – that we had given up and were acknowledging Al Qaeda had won.²
- ✘ In July, Obama voted for a similar measure.³
- ✘ For his commitment to America’s defeat in Iraq and repeated promises immediately to withdraw U.S. troops, Obama was endorsed by the radical leftwing group MoveOn.org on February 1, 2008.⁴

- INVESTED IN RETREAT AND DEFEAT

The success of the surge ordered by President Bush, championed by John McCain and directed by General David Petraeus, is not a matter of debate. The *Associated Press* reported on July 26, 2008:

“The United States is now winning the war that two years ago seemed lost. ...the Iraqi government and the U.S. now are able to shift focus from mainly combat to

¹ US Senate Roll Call No. 51, 110th Congress, 1st Session

² US Senate Roll Call No. 116, 110th Congress, 1st Session

³ US Senate Roll Call No. 252, 110th Congress, 1st Session

⁴ MoveOn.org press release, “MoveOn Endorsement Throws Progressive Weight Behind Behind Obama,” Feb. 1, 2008 <http://moveon.org/press/pr/obamaendorsementrelease.html>

mainly building the fragile beginnings of peace -- a transition that many found almost unthinkable as recently as one year ago.

“Despite the occasional bursts of violence, Iraq has reached the point where the insurgents, who once controlled whole cities, no longer have the clout to threaten the viability of the central government.”⁵

Even liberal Democrats, like former Clinton White House counsel Lanny Davis, admitted that the surge succeeded. Davis wrote in an op-ed on July 21, 2008, “And then in early 2007 came the surge, which so many of us in the anti-war left ... predicted would be a failure, throwing good men and women and billions of dollars after futility. **We were wrong.** The surge did, in fact, lead to a reduction of violence, confirmed by media on the ground as well as our military leaders.”⁶

During one of his most powerful speeches on the need for a united foreign policy to confront and defeat the evil of Islamofascism, Senator Joseph Lieberman warned that too many Democrats had become “emotionally invested in a narrative of defeat and retreat in Iraq.”⁷

Unfortunately, Barack Obama’s willing embrace of the radical Left got him stuck between Iraq and a hard place – unable and unwilling to acknowledge America’s success. Sadly, Obama has proved Sen. Lieberman right – he was “invested in a narrative of defeat and retreat” – and he rode to victory in the Democrat primaries on the strength of the Code Pink, MoveOn.org, “Blame America First” crowd that has come to dominate the Democrat Party.

- “STUCK ON STUPID”

In the twisted “logic” of the radical Left, liberating 25 million Iraqis from a brutal dictator and bringing democracy to the heart of the Middle East amounts to an impeachable offense. And Barack Obama did not hesitate to use Hillary Clinton’s vote to authorize the use of force in Iraq against her in order to win the Democrat presidential nomination.

By securing the endorsement of the anti-war group MoveOn.Org and by rallying other disaffected leftwing groups to his banner, Barack Obama pinned his hopes for electoral success on America’s losing the war in Iraq – no matter the consequences for the greater war against Islamofascism. The radical Left that has tried so hard to force our defeat in

⁵ *Associated Press*, “U.S. Now Winning Iraq War That Seemed Lost,” July 26, 2008
<http://ap.google.com/article/ALeqM5jzxqARN0Huv38n5pgDfdBRwuoizgD925HT7G0>

⁶ *Washington Times*, “Confessions of an anti-war Democrat,” July 21, 2008,
<http://www.washtimes.com/news/2008/jul/21/confessions-of-an-anti-iraq-war-democrat/>

⁷ Sen. Joseph Lieberman, Center for Politics and Foreign Relations at The Johns Hopkins University, Nov. 8, 2007
<http://lieberman.senate.gov/newsroom/release.cfm?id=287039>

Iraq is, to borrow a phrase, “stuck on stupid.” We don’t need folks like that running the Pentagon or working in the White House. But a funny thing happened on the way to the general election. The surge worked; America did not lose the war.

After feeling the heat for not having been to Iraq, Obama visited the Middle East with a senatorial delegation in summer 2008. Yet, even after having gone to Iraq, after having met with General David Petraeus and seeing our success for himself, Obama still refused to acknowledge the good news or admit that President Bush and Senator McCain were right. Consider this exchange that took place with *ABC News* reporter Terry Moran during Obama’s summer 2008 world tour:

Moran: “The surge of U.S. troops, combined with ordinary Iraqis’ rejection of both al Qaeda and Shiite extremists have transformed the country. Attacks are down more than 80% nationwide. U.S. combat casualties have plummeted, five this month so far, compared with 78 last July, and Baghdad has a pulse again. If you had to do it over again, knowing what you know now, would you support the surge?”

Obama: “No, because -- keep in mind that...”

Moran: “You wouldn’t?”

Obama: “Well, no,...”⁸

Obama is running as the candidate of “change,” yet even when he sees success, he cannot change his mind and admit he was wrong. Believe it or not, Obama’s stubborn arrogance, his emotional investment in the leftwing narrative of defeat and retreat, rubbed even the media the wrong way.

On July 24, *USA Today* ran a lead editorial, headlined “Why Can’t Obama Admit the Obvious?” Here is a brief excerpt:

“...the extra U.S. troops, brilliantly deployed by Gen. David Petraeus, have made a huge difference in calming the chaos. In doing so, it also contributed to the other developments. Why then can’t Obama bring himself to acknowledge the surge worked better than he and other skeptics, including this page, thought it would? What does that stubbornness say about the kind of president he’d be?”⁹

A week prior, the liberal *Washington Post* expressed its frustration with Obama’s naïve understanding of the war. Here’s a quote from a July 16th editorial:

⁸ Newsbusters, “ABC’s Moran Touts Obama’s ‘Star Power,’ But Hits Him On Surge,” July 21, 2008
<http://www.newsbusters.org/blogs/brent-baker/2008/07/21/abcs-moran-touts-obamas-star-power-hits-him-surge>

⁹ *USA Today*, “Why Can’t Obama Admit The Obvious,” July 24, 2008
<http://blogs.usatoday.com/oped/2008/07/our-view-on-ira.html#more>

“The message that the Democrat sends is that he is ultimately indifferent to the war’s outcome -- that Iraq ‘distracts us from every threat we face’ and thus must be speedily evacuated regardless of the consequences. That’s an irrational and ahistorical way to view a country at the strategic center of the Middle East, with some of the world’s largest oil reserves. Whether or not the war was a mistake, Iraq’s future is a vital U.S. security interest.”¹⁰

Obama’s refusal to admit the obvious and to support America’s victory in the war led former Tennessee Senator Fred Thompson to remark on the *Sean Hannity Show* on July 23, 2008, that Barack Obama is the only presidential candidate in recent political memory to campaign for the White House, to seek the votes of the American people to be our next commander-in-chief, by running against a winning American military strategy. That is a stunning and chilling thought.

President Bush and General David Petraeus have won the war in Iraq. But the larger war against Islamofascism remains. Barack Obama failed the test of leadership by failing to support the cause of victory against Al Qaeda in Iraq.

- NO SUPPORT FOR OUR TROOPS

When it comes to demonstrating his support for our troops, Obama has struck out badly three times in the past year alone.

Even though he may have genuinely disagreed with the war, on September 20, 2007, Obama got a chance to demonstrate his independence and show his support for our troops and their commanders. He miserably failed that test of leadership too.

As General David Petraeus prepared to deliver his testimony before the Senate on the progress of the surge in Iraq, he was greeted in Washington with a full page ad taken out in the *New York Times* by the leftwing group MoveOn.org, whose endorsement Obama was courting at the time.

The MoveOn ad mocked General Petraeus as “General Betray Us” and smeared his character by suggesting that he was “cooking the books for the White House.”¹¹ It was a disgusting attack against a decorated hero who has brilliantly served his country.

The ad sparked a nationwide outcry, and on September 20, 2007, at 12:36 PM, the Senate went on the record and voted overwhelmingly, 72-to-25, to condemn the ad.¹² But, true to his old trick in the Illinois legislature, where he voted “present” over 100 times, Barack

¹⁰ *Washington Post*, “The Iron Timetable,” July 16, 2008

http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/15/AR2008071502531_pf.html

¹¹ *ABC News*, “MoveOn.org Ad Takes Aim at Petraeus,” Sept. 10, 2007

<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/Decision2008/story?id=3581727>

¹² Senate Roll Call No. 344, 110th Congress, 1st Session

Obama did not vote on the resolution condemning MoveOn.org's disgusting ad. He wasn't out campaigning. Senator Obama was in Washington, D.C., on September 20, 2007. He voted on a bill at 11:58 AM and on another bill at 2:54 PM.

But when the resolution sponsored by Senator John Cornyn of Texas to condemn the MoveOn.org "General Betray Us" ad came to the Senate floor for a vote at 12:36 PM, Barack Obama was nowhere to be found. When it came time to defend a decorated American war hero who was leading our troops in a successful new strategy to achieve victory in Iraq, Barack Obama chose to be AWOL rather than to risk offending a radical special interest group whose money and manpower he desperately needed to overcome Hillary Clinton in the primaries.

✘ STRIKE ONE!

Ten months later, during his summer 2008 world tour, Senator Obama would have an opportunity to make up for this slight to the commander of U.S. forces in Iraq by paying a visit to wounded U.S. troops in military hospitals in Germany. But just before leaving Germany, it was announced that his campaign had abruptly cancelled the visit to the U.S. military's Landstuhl Regional Medical Center.

According to the *Los Angeles Times*, the Obama campaign's shifting explanations of the abrupt cancellation raised more questions than answers. On July 24, 2008, the *LA Times* reported that, "Obama spokesman Robert Gibbs released a statement Thursday night saying the senator had decided 'out of respect for these servicemen and women that it would be inappropriate to make a stop to visit troops at a U.S. military facility as part of a trip funded by the campaign.'" ¹³

But that explanation didn't pass the "straight face test." The Obama campaign had gone to great lengths just days earlier to explain that the senator's much-hyped Berlin address would not be a "political speech" or a "political rally," since a campaign event on foreign soil would be unseemly. ¹⁴

So, the Obama campaign then tried to blame the Pentagon. On the morning of July 25th, Scott Gration, an Obama military advisor, said that Senator Obama really had wanted to thank the wounded troops at Landstuhl, but that the Pentagon said it would be viewed as a campaign event and that Obama wasn't welcome. ¹⁵

Needless to say, that backhanded slap didn't sit well with the professionals at the Pentagon. Bryan Whitman, a spokesman for the Pentagon, told the *Washington Post*, "Nobody denied Senator Obama the opportunity to visit our wounded being cared for at

¹³ *Los Angeles Times*, Obama's cancellation of a military hospital visit leaves unanswered questions, July 24, 2008 <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/washington/2008/07/obama-cancels-x.html>

¹⁴ *Politico*, "Obama tries to dial down politics," July 22, 2008 <http://dyn.politico.com/printstory.cfm?uuid=4A670F03-3048-5C12-002034DF88C14E66>

¹⁵ *Los Angeles Times*, Obama's cancellation of a military hospital visit leaves unanswered questions, July 24, 2008

Landstuhl. Obviously, as a sitting senator, he has an interest in that and can certainly visit in an official capacity.”

But Whitman added that there were “restrictions on what you can do as a candidate for political office, that stems from trying to maintain political neutrality and not have the military involved in politics. The senator’s staff was informed of the limits on what the military can do with respect to a political campaign and how we could support a senator’s visit to Landstuhl and, quite frankly, I expected them to have the visit.”¹⁶

In other words, the Pentagon politely informed Senator Obama that he and his Senate staff were more than welcome to visit our troops – IF he was coming in his official capacity as a United States senator. But, if Obama wanted to use the troops as a campaign photo op, that would not be permitted. So, Obama cancelled.

✘ STRIKE TWO.

A few weeks later, word broke that Obama had backed out of a major candidates’ forum at Fort Hood, Texas, home to America’s largest military base. The event had been sponsored by several veterans’ organizations. Scheduled for August 11th, CBS had agreed to broadcast the event live, where Barack Obama and Senator John McCain would address active duty members of the military, veterans and their family members. Senator McCain accepted the invitation, but the Obama campaign declined, citing a scheduling conflict.¹⁷

Where was Barack Obama on August 11th the day when the Fort Hood military forum was to be held? He was on vacation in Hawaii.

✘ STRIKE THREE.

- GUTTING NATIONAL DEFENSE

In the heat of the Democrat primary in late February, a YouTube video showed up and instantly went viral. It was Barack Obama telling the liberal group Caucus for Priorities how he intended to dramatically reduce the Pentagon’s budget.¹⁸

✘ In the video, Obama pledged to cut “tens of billions of dollars of wasteful spending” and offers this specific example: “I will cut investments in unproven missile defense systems.”

¹⁶ *Washington Post*, “Obama Campaign Cancels Visit to U.S. Service Members in Germany,” July 26, 2008
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/25/AR2008072502979.html>

¹⁷ *Army Times*, “Hood event with candidates is on hold,” July 30, 2008
http://www.armytimes.com/news/2008/07/military_forthood_townhall_072908w/

¹⁸ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dI32Y7wDVDs>

- ✘ In the same video, Obama goes on to promise not to “weaponize space” and
- ✘ Obama pledges to “slow our development of future combat systems.”
- ✘ He also promises to “set a goal of a world without nuclear weapons.” While reducing nuclear weapons may be a laudable goal, arms control agreements often end up working a lot like gun control laws -- the law abiding party honors the agreement and the criminal party ends up with the advantage.

Obama’s bizarre pledge to unilaterally surrender America’s hard-won superpower status must be welcome news to tyrants, dictators and enemies of peace and freedom in every corner of the world.

It may also explain why thugs like North Korea’s Kim Jong Il, Libya’s Moammar Gadhafi and Cuba’s Fidel Castro have publicly expressed their preference for a “President Obama” to lead the United States of America.¹⁹ With a Jimmy Carter/Neville Chamberlain-style pacifist like Barack Obama in the White House, tyrants would have little reason to worry.

Americans, on the other hand, just might. Barack Obama’s own running mate, Senator Joe Biden, has been very critical of Obama’s lack of experience and naïve views. In fact, during a 2007 Democratic debate, Biden said Obama wasn’t ready:

STEPHANOPOULOS: But Senator Biden, ...You were asked: Is he [Obama] ready? You said, “I think he can be ready, but right now I don’t believe he is. The presidency is not something that lends itself to on-the-job training.”

BIDEN: I think I stand by the statement.²⁰

Why would Senator Biden say that? Well, maybe because Barack Obama has made outrageous statements like he’s willing to meet with America’s worst enemies without preconditions during the first year of his administration.²¹ And Obama told a crowd of 80,000 people in Portland, Oregon, that Iran was a “tiny” country that did not “pose a serious threat to us...”²²

Another serious foreign policy concern is Obama’s constantly evolving and confusing position on Israel, which even his own long-time friends can’t seem to figure out. Former Israeli ambassador to the United States, Daniel Ayalon, wrote in January 2008:

“On the two occasions that I met with the Senator [Obama], he proved himself as a polite, inquisitive and energetic politician. Yet, I was left with the impression that

¹⁹ *Investors Business Daily*, “Know Them By Their Endorsements,” June 24, 2008

²⁰ *ABC News* transcript, Democratic Debate, August 19, 2007
<http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/Decision2008/story?id=3498294>

²¹ *CNN/YouTube* debate, July 24, 2007, <http://www.cnn.com/2007/POLITICS/07/23/debate.transcript/>

²² *CNN*, “McCain, Obama trade jabs over Iran policy,” May, 19, 2008
<http://www.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/05/19/mccain.free.trade/index.html>

he was not entirely forthright with his thinking. ...The four years ahead are far too critical for global security to place the presidency of the United States in the hands of a leader whose campaign is leaving us with more questions than answers.”²³

And then there was the fiasco over Obama’s statement to the 2008 AIPAC convention on the status of Jerusalem. In early June of this year, Barack Obama addressed 7,000 attendees at the American Israeli Public Affairs Committee’s annual convention. The conservative *Washington Times* described Obama’s speech as “his most hawkish speech on the Middle East to date.” There, Obama told the crowd, “Jerusalem will remain the capital of Israel, and it must remain undivided.”²⁴

Hours later, Obama was back-peddling on his commitment to Jerusalem, suggesting that the Holy City, the center of Judaism, was just part of a “range of issues” subject to negotiation. Obama would later explain the confusion to *CNN*’s Fareed Zakaria this way: “You know, the truth is that this was an example where we had some poor phrasing in the speech.”²⁵ Thus, Obama’s one good position was thus quickly “thrown under the bus” due to “some poor phrasing” by the golden-tongued orator.

In a time of war, when our nation is fighting a radical enemy that decapitates its prisoners, turns its children into bombs, denies the Holocaust while calling for the destruction of Israel and America, our nation cannot afford to send confusing and contradictory messages to our own people and the world. We need a leader with conviction and one who will speak with clarity. Anything less is inviting aggression.

And even Barack Obama’s own running mate understands that. On October 19th, Biden warned an audience of liberal donors that if Obama is elected, we will face a crisis. Here’s an excerpt of Joe Biden’s comments:

“It will not be six months before the world tests Barack Obama...The world is looking. ...Remember I said it standing here if you don’t remember anything else I said. Watch, we’re gonna have an international crisis, a generated crisis, to test the mettle of this guy. I can give you at least four or five scenarios from where it might originate. And he’s gonna need help. ...we’re gonna need you to use your influence, your influence within the community, to stand with him. Because it’s not gonna be apparent initially, it’s not gonna be apparent that we’re right.”²⁶

In a foreign policy crisis, Americans almost always rally behind a president as he defends our country. But here is Joe Biden warning that the public won’t like how Obama responds to this crisis he is predicting. What does Biden know that we don’t? Is it worth the risk he obviously thinks we would be taking if Obama is elected president?

²³ *Jerusalem Post*, “Who Are You, Barack Obama?” Jan. 23, 2008

<http://www.jpost.com/servlet/Satellite?cid=1201070769195&pagename=JPost%2FJPArticle%2FPrinter>

²⁴ National Public Radio, Obama AIPAC speech transcript,

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=91150432>

²⁵ *CNN*, “CNN exclusive: Obama on foreign policy,” July 13, 2008, <http://www.cnn.com/2008/POLITICS/07/13/zakaria.obama/>

²⁶ *Politico*, “Biden: Obama Will Be Tested,” Oct. 20, 2008

http://www.politico.com/blogs/bensmith/1008/Biden_Obama_will_be_tested.html