

Barack Hussein Obama

- Was elected President of the United States on November 4, 2008
- U.S. Senator from Illinois, 2005-2008
- Illinois state senator, 1996-2004

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Profile of Barack Obama Through Election Day 2008:

[Democrat](#) Barack Hussein Obama, Jr. was elected President of the United States on November 4, 2008. Prior to that, he had served four years as a U.S. senator from Illinois (2005-2008) and eight years as an Illinois state senator (1996-2004).

Barack Obama says he was born in Hawaii on August 4, 1961, to a white mother from Kansas and a black Muslim father from Kenya. His parents had met when they were students at the University of Hawaii.

In his 1995 memoir *Dreams from My Father*, Obama describes his mother, Anna, as "a lonely witness for secular humanism, a soldier for New Deal, Peace Corps, position-paper liberalism."

Obama's father, also named Barack ([Swahili](#) for "One who is blessed by God") Obama, left his rural Luo-speaking village and his own Muslim father to become an "agnostic" and study economics abroad.

Barack Obama, Jr.'s place of birth is a matter in dispute. As Frank Gaffney [reported](#) in *The Washington Times* on October 14, 2008:

"There is evidence Mr. Obama was born in Kenya rather than, as he claims, Hawaii. There is also a registration document for a school in Indonesia where the would-be president studied for four years, on which he was identified not only as a Muslim but as an Indonesian. If correct, the latter could give rise to another potential problem with respect to his eligibility to be president. [The U.S. Constitution stipulates that only a natural born citizen of the United States may be eligible for the presidency.]

"Curiously, Mr. Obama has, to date, failed to provide an authentic birth certificate which could clear up the matter."

When Obama was two years old, his father left the family and returned to [Harvard University](#); he thereafter went to Kenya, where he became a globe-traveling economist for that nation's government.

When Obama was six, his mother married an Indonesian oil manager, a "non-practicing Muslim," and the family moved to Jakarta, Indonesia, where the boy's half-sister Maya was born. The family would reside there for four years.

Muslim Upbringing as a Child:

Vis a vis Barack Obama's religious upbringing, Islam scholar Daniel Pipes [reports](#) the following:

"In Islam, religion passes from the father to the child. Barack Hussein Obama, Sr. [his Kenyan birth father] was a Muslim who named his boy Barack Hussein Obama, Jr. Only Muslim children are named 'Hussein'.... [Barack Obama's] stepfather, Lolo Soetoro, was also a Muslim. In fact, as Obama's half-sister, Maya Soetoro-Ng explained to [Jodi Kantor](#) of the *New York Times*: 'My whole family was Muslim, and most of the people I knew were Muslim.' An Indonesian publication, the [Banjarmasin Post](#) reports a former classmate, Rony Amir, recalling that 'All the relatives of Barry's [Barack's] father were very devout Muslims.'"

Obama's good friend, the attorney and novelist Scott Turow, [writes](#) that Obama as a child spent "two years in a Muslim school, then two more in a Catholic school." School records show that when Obama attended [Catholic school](#), he was [enrolled](#) as [a Muslim](#).

Journalist Paul Watson of the *Los Angeles Times* [learned](#) from Obama's childhood friends that "Obama sometimes went to Friday prayers at the local mosque."

Kim Barker of the *Chicago Tribune* [found](#) that "Obama occasionally followed his stepfather to the mosque for Friday prayers."

An Indonesian friend of Obama, Zulfin Adi, [states](#) that "[Obama] was Muslim. He went to the mosque. I remember him wearing a sarong [a garment associated with Muslims]."

Obama's former classmate in Indonesia, the aforementioned Rony Amir, [recalls](#) Obama as having been "previously quite religious in Islam."

In December 2007 Obama [would say](#), "I've always been a Christian. The only connection I've had to Islam is that my grandfather on my father's side came from that country [Kenya]. But I've never practiced Islam."

In February 2008 he [elaborated](#), "I have never been a Muslim.... [O]ther than my name and the fact that I lived in a populous Muslim country for four years when I was a child [Indonesia, 1967-71], I have very little connection to the Islamic religion."

The 1970s and CPUSA Member Frank Marshall Davis:

At age ten, Obama was sent back to Hawaii to be raised largely by his white, middle-class, maternal grandparents, and to attend the prestigious Punahou Academy. For only one month of his life, also when he was ten, Obama was visited by his biological father.

In the Seventies, the Obama family became friendly with [Frank Marshall Davis](#) (1905-1987), a black writer and fellow Hawaiian resident. Davis [wrote](#) for the *Honolulu Record* (a Communist newspaper) and was a known member of the Soviet-controlled Communist Party USA (CPUSA). He soon became the young Barack Obama's mentor and advisor.

In *Dreams From My Father*, Obama [writes](#) about Davis but does not reveal the latter's full name, identifying him only as "a poet named Frank" -- a man with much "hard-earned knowledge" who had known "some modest notoriety once" but was now "pushing eighty." (Several sources -- including Professor Gerald Horne, Dr. Kathryn Takara, and libertarian writer [Trevor Loudon](#) -- have [confirmed](#) that Obama's "Frank" was indeed Frank Marshall Davis.)

Obama in his book [recounts](#) how, just prior to heading off to [Occidental College](#) (in California) in 1979, he spent some time with "Frank and his old Black Power dashiki self." Obama writes that "Frank" not only had told him that college was merely "an advanced degree in compromise," but also had cautioned him not to "start believing what they tell you about equal opportunity and the American way and all that sh--."

Columbia University:

From Occidental, Obama transferred to [Columbia University](#) in New York City, where he graduated in 1983 with a degree in political science.

Socialist Scholars Conferences:

In *Dreams From My Father*, Obama reveals that during his student years at Columbia he "went to socialist conferences at Cooper Union and African cultural fairs in Brooklyn." Specifically, these were [Socialist Scholars Conferences](#) (SSC), which featured the elite of socialist academia as well as union activists, political revolutionaries, reformers, and opponents of "corporate greed." [According to the libertarian writer Trevor Loudon](#), guest speakers at these conferences included "members of the Communist Party USA and its offshoot, the Committees of Correspondence, as well as [Maoists](#), Trotsyists, black radicals, gay activists and radical feminists."

Community Organizer:

Obama applied for work as a community organizer with groups across the United States while working as a writer and financial analyst for Business International Corporation.

One small group of 20-odd churches in Chicago offered Obama a job helping residents of poor,

predominantly black, Far South Side neighborhoods. Accepting that opportunity, Obama moved to Chicago and in June 1985 became Director of the Developing Communities Project, where he worked for the next three years on initiatives that ranged from job training to school reform to hazardous waste cleanup. David Freddoso, author of the 2008 book *The Case Against Barack Obama*, summarizes Obama's community-organizing efforts as follows:

"He pursued manifestly worthy goals; protecting people from asbestos in government housing projects is obviously a good thing and a responsibility of the government that built them. But [in every case except one] the proposed solution to every problem on the South Side was a distribution of government funds ..."[1]

Trained in the Saul Alinsky Method:

Obama was [trained](#) by the [Saul Alinsky](#)-founded Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) in Chicago. (The Developing Communities Project itself was an affiliate of the [Gamaliel Foundation](#), whose modus operandi for the creation of "a more just and democratic society" is rooted firmly in the Alinsky method.) Alinsky was known for having helped to establish the aggressive political tactics that characterized the 1960s, and which have remained central to all subsequent revolutionary movements in the United States.

In the Alinsky model, "organizing" is a euphemism for "revolution" -- a wholesale revolution whose ultimate objective is the systematic acquisition of power by a purportedly oppressed segment of the population, and the radical transformation of America's social and economic structure. The goal is to foment enough public discontent, moral confusion, and outright chaos to spark the social upheaval that Marx, Engels, and Lenin predicted -- a revolution whose foot soldiers view the status quo as fatally flawed and wholly unworthy of salvation. Thus, the theory goes, the people will settle for nothing less than that status quo's complete collapse -- to be followed by the erection of an entirely new system upon its ruins. Toward that end, they will be apt to follow the lead of charismatic radical organizers who project an aura of confidence and vision, and who profess to clearly understand what types of societal "change" is needed.

But Alinsky's brand of revolution was not characterized by dramatic, sweeping, overnight transformations of social institutions. [As Richard Poe puts it](#), "Alinsky viewed revolution as a slow, patient process. The trick was to penetrate existing institutions such as churches, unions and political parties." Alinsky advised organizers and their disciples to quietly, subtly gain influence within the decision-making ranks of these institutions, and to introduce changes from that platform.

One of Obama's early mentors in the Alinsky method, Mike Kruglik, would later [say](#) the following about Obama:

"He was a natural, the undisputed master of agitation, who could engage a room full of recruiting targets in a rapid-fire Socratic dialogue, nudging them to admit that they were not living up to their own standards. As with the panhandler, he could be aggressive and confrontational. With probing, sometimes personal questions, he would pinpoint the source of pain in their lives,

tearing down their egos just enough before dangling a carrot of hope that they could make things better."

For several years, Obama himself [taught workshops](#) on the Alinsky method.

Introduction to ACORN and Project Vote:

Beginning in the mid-1980s, Obama worked with [ACORN](#), a grassroots political organization that grew out of [George Wiley's](#) National Welfare Rights Organization (NWRO). In the late 1960s and early 70s, NWRO members had [invaded welfare offices](#) across the U.S. -- often violently -- bullying social workers and loudly demanding every penny to which the law "entitled" them.[2]

Obama also worked for [Project Vote](#), ACORN's voter-mobilization arm. Project Vote's professed purpose was, and remains, to carry out "non-partisan" voter-registration drives; to counsel voters on their rights; and to litigate on behalf of the voting rights of the poor and the "disenfranchised." [3] Obama [was the attorney for ACORN's lead election-law cases](#), and he worked as a trainer at ACORN's annual conferences, where he taught members of the organization the art of radical community organizing.

Harvard Law School and Khalid al-Mansour:

In 1988 Obama applied for admission to [Harvard Law School](#). At the time, a Muslim attorney and black nationalist named [Khalid Abdullah Tariq al-Mansour](#) asked civil rights activist Percy Sutton to send a letter of recommendation to his (Sutton's) friends at Harvard on Obama's behalf.

Al-Mansour formerly had been a close personal adviser to [Huey Newton](#) and [Bobby Seale](#), having helped them establish the [Black Panther Party](#) in the 1960s. He thereafter became an advisor to a number of Saudi billionaires known for funding the spread of Wahhabi extremism in America. Al-Mansour also showed himself to be a [passionate hater](#) of the United States, Israel, and white people generally.

With al-Mansour's help, Obama in 1988 was accepted by Harvard Law School, where he became president of the *Harvard Law Review*. He graduated magna cum laude in 1991.

From April to November of 1992, Obama served as the Director of "Illinois Project Vote," which registered approximately 150,000 mostly poor, mostly Democratic voters in Chicago's Cook County before that year's presidential election.

Also in 1992, Obama married Michelle Robinson (now [Michelle Obama](#)).

Litigator for Davis, Miner, Barnhill & Galland, P.C.:

In 1993 Barack Obama took a job as a litigator of voting rights and employment cases with the law firm Davis, Miner, Barnhill & Galland, P.C. (a.k.a. Davis Miner). That same year, he also became a [lecturer](#) at the University of Chicago Law School.

In 1994 Obama worked for Davis Miner on a case titled *Barnett v. Daley*, where he was part of a legal team that [challenged](#) the [racial makeup](#) of Chicago's voting districts. The Obama team sought to raise the number of black super-majority districts from 19 to 24. According to the judge in the case, Richard Posner, Obama and his fellow litigators held that "no black aldermanic candidate in Chicago has ever beaten a white in a ward that had a black majority of less than 62.6 percent, and it is emphatic that the ward in which the population is 55 percent black is not a black ward -- is indeed a white ward, even though only 42 percent of its population is white."

In a 1995 case known as *Buycks-Roberson v. Citibank*, Obama and his fellow Davis Miner attorneys charged [that Citibank was making too few loans to black applicants](#), and they [won the case](#).^[3]

More ACORN Connections:

Also in 1995, Obama [sued](#), on behalf of ACORN, for the implementation of the Motor Voter law in Illinois. Jim Edgar, the state's Republican governor, opposed the law because he believed that allowing voters to register using only a postcard would breed widespread fraud.

ACORN would later invite Obama [to help train its staff](#). Moreover, Obama eventually would sit on the Board of the [Woods Fund of Chicago](#), which gave a number of sizable [grants to ACORN](#) -- [including](#) \$45,000 in 2000, \$75,000 in 2001, and \$70,000 in 2002.

Million Man March (1995):

Obama -- along with such notables as [Al Sharpton](#) and [Jeremiah Wright](#) -- [helped organize](#) the October 1995 Million Man March in Washington, DC, which featured [Nation of Islam](#) leader [Louis Farrakhan](#). [Said](#) Obama in the immediate aftermath of the March:

"What I saw was a powerful demonstration of an impulse and need for African-American men to come together to recognize each other and affirm our rightful place in the society.... Historically, African-Americans have turned inward and towards black nationalism whenever they have a sense, as we do now, that the mainstream has rebuffed us, and that white Americans couldn't care less about the profound problems African-Americans are facing."

Bill Ayers, Bernardine Dohrn, and Obama's Entry into Politics:

In the mid-1990s, Obama developed a friendship with fellow Chicagoans [Bill Ayers](#) and his wife [Bernardine Dohrn](#), university professors who hosted meetings at their home to introduce Obama to their neighbors during his first run for the Illinois state senate in 1996. Ayers (who contributed money to Obama's 1996 campaign) and Dohrn had been leaders of the 1960s domestic terrorist group [Weatherman](#), a Communist-driven splinter faction of [Students for a Democratic Society](#). The pair had participated personally in the bombings of New York City Police Headquarters in 1970, the Capitol building in 1971, and the Pentagon in 1972. To this day, both have remained unrepentant about their former terrorist activities and their hatred of the United States.^[4]

There is strong [evidence](#) suggesting that [Ayers contributed heavily, if not entirely, to the writing](#) of Obama's 1995 memoir, *Dreams From My Father*.

When questioned about his relationship with Ayers during an April 2008 Democratic primary debate, Obama [responded](#):

"This is a guy who lives in my neighborhood, who is a professor of English in Chicago, who I know, and who I have not received some official endorsement from. He is not somebody who I exchange ideas from [with] on a regular basis. And the notion that somehow, as a consequence of me knowing somebody who engaged in detestable acts forty years ago when I was eight years old, somehow reflects on me and my values doesn't make much sense ... [T]his kind of game, in which anybody who I know, regardless of how flimsy the relationship is, [that] somehow their ideas could be attributed to me, I think the American people are smarter than that. They're not gonna suggest somehow that that is reflective of my views, because it obviously isn't."

Chicago Annenberg Challenge and Bill Ayers:

But in reality, Obama's ties to Ayers were deep and longstanding. In 1995, for instance, [Obama was appointed as the first Chairman](#) of the Chicago Annenberg Challenge (CAC), a "school reform organization" founded by Ayers, who would later write, in his book *Teaching Toward Freedom*, that his educational objective was to "teach against oppression" as embodied in "America's history of evil and racism, thereby forcing social transformation."

When *National Review Online* writer Stanley Kurtz in 2008 asked the Obama presidential campaign about the nature of its candidate's connection to Ayers and the CAC, the campaign issued a statement claiming that Ayers had not been involved in the "recruitment" of Obama to the CAC board in 1995. But when Kurtz [reviewed](#) the CAC archives at the Richard J. Daley Library at the University of Illinois, he found that Ayers in fact had been one of five members of a working group that assembled the initial CAC board which hired Obama.

"Ayers founded CAC and was its guiding spirit," Kurtz [wrote](#) in September 2008. "No one would have been appointed the CAC chairman without his approval." [According to Kurtz](#), the CAC archives show that Obama and Ayers worked as a team to advance the foundation's agenda -- with Obama responsible for fiscal matters while Ayers focused on shaping educational policy. The archived documents further reveal that Ayers served as an ex-officio member of the board that Obama chaired through CAC's first year; that Ayers served with Obama on the CAC governance committee; and that Ayers worked with Obama to write CAC's bylaws.

A September 2008 *WorldNetDaily* report [offers still more details](#):

"Ayers made presentations to board meetings chaired by Obama. Ayers also spoke for the Chicago School Reform Collaborative before Obama's board, while Obama periodically spoke for the board at meetings of the collaborative ... According to the documents, the CAC granted money to far-leftist causes, such as the radical Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, or ACORN, which ... has done work on behalf of Obama's presidential campaign."

[WorldNetDaily reported further](#) that "while Obama chaired the board of the CAC, more than \$600,000 was granted to an organization founded by Ayers and run by Mike Klonsky, a former top communist activist. Klonsky was leader of the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party, which was effectively recognized by China as the all-but-official U.S. Maoist party." [Said Stanley Kurtz:](#)

"Instead of funding schools directly, [the CAC] required schools to affiliate with 'external partners,' which actually got the money. Proposals from groups focused on math/science achievement were turned down. Instead CAC disbursed money through various far-left community organizers, such as ACORN."

Kurtz has provided the following [synopsis](#) of the CAC/Ayers agendas:

"The CAC's agenda flowed from Mr. Ayers's educational philosophy, which called for infusing students and their parents with a radical political commitment, and which downplayed achievement tests in favor of activism. In the mid-1960s, Mr. Ayers taught at a radical alternative school, and served as a community organizer in Cleveland's ghetto.

"In works like 'City Kids, City Teachers' and 'Teaching the Personal and the Political,' Mr. Ayers wrote that teachers should be community organizers dedicated to provoking resistance to American racism and oppression. His preferred alternative? 'I'm a radical, Leftist, small-c-communist,' Mr. Ayers said in an interview in Ron Chepesiuk's, 'Sixties Radicals,' at about the same time Mr. Ayers was forming CAC."

Between 1995 and 1999, Obama and CAC distributed [\\$110 million](#) to a variety of leftist education enterprises for "experiments" in Chicago's public schools.

Obama Endorses Ayers Book:

In December 1997 Obama wrote a blurb [praising](#) Ayers' recently published book, *A Kind and Just Parent: The Children of Juvenile Court*, calling it "a searing and timely account of the juvenile court system, and the courageous individuals who rescue hope from despair."

The Pro-Soviet Alice Palmer Paves Obama's Path to Elected Office:

A notable attendee at the aforementioned political gatherings which Ayers and Dohrn hosted on behalf of Obama (in the mid-1990s) was Democratic state senator [Alice J. Palmer](#) (of Illinois' 13th District), who quickly developed a friendly relationship with Obama. Prior to her stint in politics, Palmer had worked for the Black Press Institute and was editor of the *Black Press Review*. During the Cold War, she supported the Soviet Union and spoke out against the United States. In the 1980s she served as an [executive board member](#) of the U.S. Peace Council, which the FBI identified as a Communist front group (and which was an affiliate of the World Peace Council, an international Soviet front). Palmer participated in the World Peace Council's Prague assembly in 1983 -- just as the USSR was launching its "nuclear freeze" movement, a scheme that would have frozen Soviet nuclear and military superiority in place.

State senator Palmer was instrumental in Obama's entry into politics. In 1995 Palmer decided to pursue an opportunity to run for a higher office when Mel Reynolds, the congressman from Illinois' 2nd District, resigned from the House of Representatives amid a sexual scandal involving him and an underage campaign volunteer. As Palmer prepared to leave the state senate, she hand-picked Obama as the person she most wanted to fill her newly vacated senate seat. Toward that end, she [introduced](#) Obama to party elders and donors as her preferred successor, and helped him gather the signatures required for getting his name placed on the ballot.

Obama Betrays Palmer:

But in November 1995, [Jesse Jackson, Jr.](#) defeated Palmer in a special election for Reynolds' empty congressional seat. At that point, Palmer filed to retain the Democratic nomination for the state senate seat she had encouraged Obama to pursue; that seat would be up for grabs in the November 1996 elections. She asked Obama to politely withdraw from the race and offered to help him find an alternative position elsewhere.

But Obama refused to withdraw, so Palmer resolved to run against him (and two other opponents who also had declared their candidacy) in the 1996 Democratic primary. [To get her name placed on the ballot](#), Palmer hastily gathered more than the minimum number of signatures required. Obama promptly challenged the legitimacy of those signatures and charged Palmer with fraud. A subsequent investigation found that a number of the names on Palmer's petition were invalid, thus she was [knocked off the ballot](#). (Names could be eliminated from a candidate's petition for a variety of reasons. For example, if a name was printed rather than written in cursive script, it was considered invalid. Or if the person collecting the signatures was not registered to perform that task, any signatures that he or she had collected likewise were nullified.)

Obama also successfully challenged the signatures gathered by his other two opponents, and both of them were disqualified as well. Consequently, Obama ran unopposed in the Democratic primary and won by default.

"I liked Alice Palmer a lot," [Obama would later reflect](#). "I thought she was a good public servant. It [the process by which Obama had gotten Palmer's name removed from the ballot] was very awkward. That part of it I wish had played out entirely differently."

Endorsement by the New Party:

In 1995 Barack Obama [sought](#) the [endorsement](#) of the so-called New Party for his 1996 state senate run. He was successful in obtaining that endorsement, and he used a number of New Party volunteers as [campaign workers](#). By 1996, Obama himself [had become](#) a [member](#) of the New Party.

Co-founded in 1992 by Daniel Cantor (a former staffer for [Jesse Jackson's](#) 1988 presidential campaign) and Joel Rogers (a sociology and law professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison), the New Party was a [Marxist](#) political coalition whose [objective](#) was to endorse and elect leftist public officials -- most [often](#) Democrats. The New Party's short-term objective was to move the [Democratic Party](#) leftward, thereby setting the stage for the eventual rise of new

Marxist third party.

Most New Party members hailed from the [Democratic Socialists of America](#) and [ACORN](#). The party's Chicago chapter also included a large contingent from the Committees of Correspondence, a Marxist coalition of former [Maoists](#), Trotskyists, and Communist Party USA members.

The Marxist Carl Davidson and the 1996 State Senate Race:

Another key supporter of Obama's 1996 state senate campaign was [Carl Davidson](#), a Marxist who in the 1960s had been a [national secretary](#) of [Students of a Democratic Society](#) and a national leader of the anti-Vietnam War movement. In 1969 Davidson (along with [Tom Hayden](#)) helped [launch](#) the "Venceremos Brigades," which covertly transported hundreds of young Americans to Cuba to help harvest sugar cane and interact with Havana's communist revolutionary leadership. (The Brigades were organized by [Fidel Castro](#)'s Cuban intelligence agency, which trained "brigadistas" in guerrilla warfare techniques, including the use of arms and explosives.)

[In 1988](#) Davidson founded [Networking for Democracy](#) (NFD), a program [encouraging](#) high-school students to engage in "mass action" aimed at "tearing down the old structures of race and class privilege" in the U.S. "and around the world." In 1992 he [became a leader](#) of the newly formed Committees of Correspondence, a Marxist coalition of former [Maoists](#), Trotskyists, and members of the Communist Party USA. In the mid-1990s Davidson was a major player in the Chicago branch of a [Marxist](#) political coalition known as the [New Party](#), whose endorsement Obama [actively sought](#) -- and received -- for his Illinois state senate run in 1996. Moreover, Obama used a number of New Party volunteers as [campaign workers](#).

Democratic Socialists of America Endorse Obama:

Obama's 1996 senate campaign also secured the [endorsement](#) of the [Democratic Socialists of America](#) (DSA), the largest socialist organization in the United States and the principal U.S. affiliate of the Socialist International. Obama's affiliation with DSA was longstanding, as evidenced by his [reference](#), in *Dreams From My Father*, to the fact that during his student years at Columbia University he "went to socialist conferences at Cooper Union," a privately funded college for the advancement of science and art. From the early 1980s until 2004, Cooper Union had served as the usual venue of the annual [Socialist Scholars Conference](#). [According to Trevor Loudon](#), guest speakers at these conferences included "members of the Communist Party USA and its offshoot, the Committees of Correspondence, as well as [Maoists](#), Trotskyists, black radicals, gay activists and radical feminists." Mr. Loudon [observes](#) that "Obama speaks of 'conferences' plural, indicating [that] his attendance was not the result of accident or youthful curiosity."

Obama won his 1996 race for the Illinois state senate in the 13th District, which mostly represented poor South Side blacks but also a few wealthy neighborhoods.

Joyce Foundation:

In 1998 Obama became a board member of the Chicago-based [Joyce Foundation](#), which targets its philanthropy in large measure toward organizations dedicated to the agendas of radical environmentalism, "[social justice](#)," prison reform, and increased government funding for social services, particularly for minorities. Obama would remain a board member for three years, during which time the Joyce Foundation made grants to such groups as the Chicago [Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law](#), the [Children's Defense Fund](#) of Ohio, the [Jane Addams Resource Corporation](#), the [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#), the [World Wildlife Fund](#), the [National Wildlife Federation](#), the [Sierra Club](#) Foundation, the [Natural Resources Defense Council](#), the [Izaak Walton League of America](#), the [Union of Concerned Scientists](#), [SUSTAIN](#), the [Tides Center](#), the [Environmental Working Group](#), the [World Resources Institute](#), the [League of Women Voters Education Fund](#), the [Democracy 21 Education Fund](#), the [Brennan Center for Justice](#), the [Brookings Institution](#), [Alliance For Justice](#), the [Council on Foundations](#), the [Center for Community Change](#), the [National Network of Grantmakers](#), [Physicians for Social Responsibility](#), the [U.S. Public Interest Research Group Education Fund](#), the [Nine to Five Working Women Education Fund](#), the [Rockefeller Family Fund](#), [Environmental Defense](#) and the [Urban Institute](#).

Woods Fund of Chicago and Bill Ayers:

Obama also had been a member of the [Woods Fund of Chicago](#) since 1993. In 1999 he was joined on this board by Bill Ayers, who would serve alongside Obama until the latter left the Fund in December 2002. (In 2002 -- while Obama was still on the board -- the Woods Fund made a grant to Northwestern University Law School's Children and Family Justice Center, where Ayers' wife, Bernardine Dohrn, was employed.)

Failed Congressional Campaign (2000):

In 2000, Obama ran against former [Black Panther](#) and incumbent congressman [Bobby Rush](#) in the Democratic Primary for the U.S. House of Representatives. Rush denounced Obama as an "elitist" who "wasn't black enough," and crushed him by nearly a two-to-one vote margin. Obama returned to the Illinois state senate for another four-year term.

Rashid Khalidi, Ali Abunimah, and the the Arab American Action Network:

As noted earlier, during his state senate years Obama was a lecturer at the University of Chicago law school, where he became friendly with [Rashid Khalidi](#), a professor in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations. Obama and his wife [were regular dinner guests](#) at Khalidi's Hyde Park home. Khalidi and his wife Mona had founded in 1995 the [Arab American Action Network](#) (AAAN), noted for its contention that Arab Americans face widespread discrimination in the United States, and for its view that Israel's creation in 1948 was a "catastrophe" for Arab people. In 2001 and again in 2002, the [Woods Fund of Chicago](#), while Obama served on its board, made grants totaling \$75,000 to AAAN.

In 2003 Obama would [attend](#) a farewell party in Khalidi's honor when the latter was leaving Chicago to embark on a new position at Columbia University. At this event (which was [also](#)

[attended](#) by William Ayers and Bernardine Dohrn), Obama [paid public tribute](#) to Khalidi as someone whose [insights](#) had been "consistent reminders to me of my own blind spots and my own biases... It's for that reason that I'm hoping that, for many years to come, we continue that conversation -- a conversation that is necessary not just around Mona and Rashid's dinner table," but around "this entire world." Khalidi then returned the favor, telling the largely pro-Palestinian attendees that Obama deserved their help in winning a U.S. Senate seat, [stating](#), "You will not have a better senator under any circumstances."

[According to journalist John Batchelor](#), "AAAN vice-president [Ali Abunimah](#) of [Electronic Intifada](#) [a website that, like AAAN, refers to Israel's creation as a "catastrophe"] has remembered Mr. Obama's speaking in 1999 against 'Israeli occupation' at a charity event for a West Bank refugee camp; and Mr. Abunimah ... has also recalled Mr. and Mrs. Obama at a fundraiser held for the then-Congressional candidate Obama in 2000 at Rashid and Mona Khalidi's home, where Mr. Obama made convincing statements in support of the Palestinian cause."

Obama Likens Aspects of America to Nazi Germany:

In a January 18, 2001 radio interview, Obama said: "There's a lot of change going on outside of the Court that judges have to essentially take judicial notice of. I mean you've got World War II, you've got the doctrines of Nazism that we are fighting against, that start looking uncomfortably similar to what's going on, back here at home."

Robert Blackwell and the Quid Pro Quo:

Shortly after Obama's unsuccessful run for Congress in 2000, he was deeply in debt, with little cash at his disposal (his annual part-time salary as a state senator was \$58,000) and a stagnant law practice that he had largely neglected during a year of political campaigning.

In early 2001 a longtime political supporter, Chicago entrepreneur Robert Blackwell, Jr., hired Obama to provide legal advice for his (Blackwell's) growing technology firm, Electronic Knowledge Interchange (EKI). In exchange for his services, Blackwell paid Obama an \$8,000 retainer each month for roughly a 14-month period -- a total of \$118,000.

In return for these payments, Obama pressured the Illinois state tourism board to send a \$50,000 grant to EKI. He also issued a formal written request for Illinois officials to furnish a \$50,000 tourism promotion grant to another Blackwell company, Killerspin, which sells equipment and apparel related to the sport of table tennis. The day after Obama wrote this letter, his U.S. Senate campaign received a \$1,000 donation from Blackwell.

Killerspin would not receive the full \$50,000 it was seeking that year, but only \$20,000. With Obama's help, however, the company eventually secured \$320,000 in state grants between 2002 and 2004 to subsidize the table tennis tournaments it sponsored. [As blogger Ed Morrissey observes](#): "This looks like a rather obvious *quid pro quo*.... In exchange for \$118,000 in salary, Blackwell received \$320,000 in state taxpayer money and influence at the highest level of state politics."

Obama's presidential campaign website reported that Blackwell in 2008 committed to raise between \$100,000 and \$200,000 for Obama's White House run that year.

Iraq War:

Obama was an outspoken opponent of the Iraq War ever since it was first discussed as a possible means of unseating [Saddam Hussein](#) from power. On October 2, 2002, Obama gave an antiwar [speech](#) alongside [Jesse Jackson](#) on the very day that President Bush and Congress had agreed on a joint resolution authorizing the use of force against Iraq. (That date was Gandhi's birthday, and thus was selected for its symbolism.) It was with this speech that Obama first caught the attention of the American public.

Suggesting that the prospect of war was largely a Republican ploy to distract voters from domestic issues that were impacting minorities negatively, Obama said: "What I am opposed to is the attempt by potential hacks like [Republican strategist] Karl Rove to distract us from a rise in the uninsured, a rise in the poverty state, a drop in the medium income, to distract us from corporate scandals and a stock market that has just gone through the worst month since the Great Depression. That's what I am opposed to."

The Chicago rally was [staged](#) by a group called Chicagoans Against the War. Some of the key organizers were Carl Davidson (the aforementioned Marxist antiwar activist and Obama supporter), BettyLu Saltzman (an officer of the [New Israel Fund](#)), and Marilyn Katz (a former Students for a Democratic Society radical in the Sixties).

In July 2004, Obama delivered the keynote address at the Democratic National Convention in Boston. He [used the speech](#) to introduce himself to a national audience while impugning the Bush administration and the War in Iraq.

U.S. Senate Campaign (2004):

In 2004 Obama ran for one of Illinois' two seats in the U.S. Senate. The *Chicago Tribune* endorsed Obama's campaign. More importantly, the *Tribune* persuaded a Democrat-appointed judge in California to open the sealed divorce records of Obama's Republican opponent to the media. The resulting sex scandal, based on allegations in the divorce records by a Hollywood actress eager to prevent her ex-husband from getting custody of their children, prompted the Republican to resign from the race.

With a \$10 million campaign war chest from contributors, and with no Republican opponent who could garner much support, Obama had an open road to become the next U.S. Senator from Illinois. His friend and political supporter, the longtime Chicago alderwoman [Dorothy Tillman](#), [helped](#) him win the voting in Chicago's predominantly black wards. He also received valuable backing from the Jesse Jacksons, [Junior](#) and [Senior](#), and Rev. Jackson's [Rainbow Coalition](#).

Alliance with MoveOn.org:

In March 2005 Obama joined forces with the Web-based, grassroots political network [MoveOn](#) - which seeks to use its fundraising clout to push the Democratic Party ever further to the political left -- in an effort to raise campaign money for West Virginia Senator Robert Byrd's 2006 reelection bid. In a letter to MoveOn members, Obama [wrote](#): "You and millions of others, working through MoveOn, have helped change the way politics works in this country."

Obama Defines Conservatism:

[In a 2005 commencement address](#), Obama described the conservative philosophy of government as one that promises "to give everyone one big refund on their government, divvy it up by individual portions, in the form of tax breaks, hand it out, and encourage everyone to use their share to go buy their own health care, their own retirement plan, their own child care, their own education, and so on." "In Washington," said Obama, "they call this the Ownership Society. But in our past there has been another term for it, Social Darwinism, every man or woman for him or herself. It's a tempting idea, because it doesn't require much thought or ingenuity."

Obama Accuses the Bush Administration of Racism:

In September 2005, Obama spoke at a town hall meeting of the [Congressional Black Caucus](#). Nominally devoted to the subject of "eradicating poverty," [the meeting](#) was replete with condemnations of President George W. Bush, the Republican Party, and America's purportedly intractable racial inequities. Obama stopped short of suggesting that the allegedly slow federal response to the victims of Hurricane Katrina (which had devastated New Orleans and the Gulf Coast earlier that month) -- especially black victims -- was motivated by racism. But he nonetheless claimed that racism was the cause of what he perceived to be the Bush administration's indifference to the struggles of African Americans generally.

"The incompetence was colorblind," said Obama. "What wasn't colorblind was the indifference. Human efforts will always pale in comparison to nature's forces. But [the Bush administration] is a set of folks who simply don't recognize what's happening in large parts of the country." Blacks in hurricane-hit areas were poor, Obama further charged, because of the Bush administration's "decision to give tax breaks to Paris Hilton instead of providing child care and education ..."

Obama Endorses Dorothy Tillman, Proponent of Reparations and Admirer of Louis Farrakhan:

In 2006 Obama [endorsed](#) the aforementioned [Dorothy Tillman](#) in the Third Ward race for the Chicago City Council. A passionate admirer of [Louis Farrakhan](#), Tillman was a leading proponent of reparations for slavery. Claiming that America remains "one of the cruelest nations in the world when it comes to black folks," Tillman continues to declare that the U.S. "owes blacks a debt."

Support from George Soros:

In December of 2006, Obama, who by then was contemplating a run for the presidency, met in New York with billionaire financier [George Soros](#), who previously had hosted a fundraiser for

Obama during the latter's 2004 campaign for the U.S. Senate.

One of the most powerful men on earth, Soros is a hedge fund manager who has amassed a personal fortune estimated at about \$7.2 billion. His management company controls billions more in investor assets. Since 1979, Soros' foundation network -- whose flagship is the [Open Society Institute](#) (OSI) -- has dispensed more than \$5 billion to a multitude of organizations whose objectives can be summarized as follows:

- promoting the view that America is institutionally an oppressive nation
- promoting the election of leftist political candidates throughout the United States
- opposing virtually all post-9/11 national security measures enacted by U.S. government, particularly the Patriot Act
- depicting American military actions as unjust, unwarranted, and immoral
- promoting open borders, mass immigration, and a watering down of current immigration laws
- promoting a dramatic expansion of social welfare programs funded by ever-escalating taxes
- promoting social welfare benefits and amnesty for illegal aliens
- defending suspected anti-American terrorists and their abettors
- financing the recruitment and training of future activist leaders of the political Left
- advocating America's unilateral disarmament and/or a steep reduction in its military spending
- opposing the death penalty in all circumstances
- promoting socialized medicine in the United States
- promoting the tenets of radical environmentalism, whose ultimate goal, as writer Michael Berliner has [explained](#), is "not clean air and clean water, [but] rather ... the demolition of technological/industrial civilization"
- bringing American foreign policy under the control of the United Nations
- promoting racial and ethnic preferences in academia and the business world alike

Running for President:

On January 16, 2007, Obama announced the creation of a presidential exploratory committee, and within hours Soros sent the senator a contribution of \$2,100, the maximum amount allowable under campaign finance laws. Later that week the New York *Daily News* [reported](#) that Soros would back Obama over Senator Hillary Clinton, whom he had supported in the past.

At the time Obama announced the formation of his exploratory committee, he had logged a mere [143 days of experience](#) in the U.S. Senate (i.e., the number of days the Senate had been in session since his swearing in on January 4, 2005).

On February 10, 2007, Obama officially announced his candidacy for President. Having served for only two years as a U.S. Senator, and with no experience in an executive office, Obama [said](#): "I recognize that there is a certain presumptuousness in this, a certain audacity to this announcement. I know that I have not spent a long time learning the ways of Washington, but I have been there long enough to know that the ways of Washington have to change."

Michelle Obama Takes an Active Role in the Campaign:

Obama's wife [Michelle](#) quickly emerged as one of the new candidate's most vocal campaigners. In a February 2007 appearance with her husband on the television program *60 Minutes*, Mrs. Obama implied that America's allegedly rampant white racism posed a great physical threat to her husband. Said Mrs. Obama: "As a black man, you know, Barack can get shot going to the gas station." In a January 2008 speech, Mrs. Obama depicted the U.S. as a nation whose people are inclined to "hold on to [their] own stereotypes and misconceptions," and to thereby "feel justified in [their] own ignorance." During a February 18, 2008 speech in Milwaukee on behalf of her husband's campaign, she [declared](#), "For the first time in my adult lifetime, I am really proud of my country, and not just because Barack has done well, but because I think people are hungry for change." In March 2008 a [New Yorker profile](#) quoted Mrs. Obama saying, in a stump speech she had made in South Carolina, that the United States is "[just downright mean](#)" as a nation.

High-Profile Supporters:

Many notable individuals and organizations began to identify themselves publicly as Obama supporters. Among these were: [George Clooney](#); [Rob Reiner](#); [Ariana Huffington](#); [Jesse Jackson](#); [Michael Eric Dyson](#); [Manning Marable](#); [Cornel West](#); [Barbara Weinstein](#); [Laurence Tribe](#); [Jane Fonda](#); [Tom Hayden](#); [Michael Ratner](#); [Danny Glover](#); [Martin Sheen](#); [Susan Sarandon](#); [Spike Lee](#); [Michael Moore](#); [Bill Maher](#); [Bruce Springsteen](#); [Ted Kennedy](#); [John Kerry](#); [John Conyers](#); [Luis Gutierrez](#); [Barbara Lee](#); [Major Owens](#); [Jan Schakowsky](#); [Bobby Rush](#); [Pearl Jam](#); and [ACORN](#).

Al Sharpton:

In April 2007, Obama [addressed](#) the activist [Al Sharpton](#)'s National Action Network, telling an overflow crowd of listeners about his success as an Illinois lawmaker in making health insurance available to children and reducing the cost of prescription drugs for senior citizens. He also expressed his opposition to racial profiling in law enforcement, detailing how he had helped pass legislation against the practice. In addition, he asserted that society must help ex-convicts escape an "economic death sentence" by securing jobs for them when they leave prison.

Robert Malley and the Hamas Incident:

In 2007 Obama appointed [Robert Malley](#), the Middle East and North Africa Program Director for the [International Crisis Group](#), as a foreign policy advisor to his campaign. ICG receives funding from the [Open Society Institute](#) (whose founder, [George Soros](#), serves on the ICG Board and [Executive Committee](#)). Prior to joining ICG, Malley had served as President [Bill Clinton](#)'s Special Assistant for Arab-Israeli Affairs (1998-2001); National Security Advisor [Sandy Berger](#)'s Executive Assistant (1996-1998); and the National Security Council's Director for Democracy, Human Rights, and Humanitarian Affairs (1994-1996). Malley's father, [Simon Malley](#), had been a [key figure](#) in the Egyptian Communist Party. Rabidly anti-Israel, Simon Malley was a confidante of the late PLO leader [Yasser Arafat](#); an inveterate [critic of "Western imperialism"](#); a [supporter](#) of various leftist revolutionary "liberation movements," particularly the Palestinian cause; a beneficiary of [Soviet funding](#); and a supporter of the 1979 Soviet invasion of

Afghanistan.

Robert Malley [alleges](#) that Israeli -- not Palestinian -- inflexibility caused the 2000 Camp David peace talks (brokered by Bill Clinton) to fail. He has penned [several controversial articles](#) -- some he co-wrote with Hussein Agha, a former adviser to Arafat -- blaming Israel and [exonerating Arafat](#) for that failure. (In 2008, the Obama campaign would [sever its ties](#) with Malley after the latter told the *Times of London* that he -- Malley -- had been in regular contact with [Hamas](#) as part of his work for ICG.)

Planned Parenthood:

On July 17, 2007, Obama spoke before the [Planned Parenthood](#) Action Fund. [His comments included the following:](#)

"Thanks to all of you at Planned Parenthood for all the work that you are doing for women all across the country and for families all across the country—and for men, who have enough sense to realize you are helping them, all across the country....

"What kind of America will our daughters grow up in? Will our daughters grow up with the same opportunities as our sons? Will our daughters have the same rights, the same dreams, the same freedoms to pursue their own version of happiness? I wonder because there's a lot at stake in this country today. And there's a lot at stake in this election, especially for our daughters.... With one more vacancy on the [Supreme] Court, we could be looking at a majority hostile to a woman's fundamental right to choose for the first time since *Roe versus Wade*, and that is what is at stake in this election....

"We know that five men don't know better than women and their doctors what's best for a woman's health. We know that it's about whether or not women have equal rights under the law. We know that a woman's right to make a decision about how many children she wants to have and when—without government interference—is one of the most fundamental freedoms we have in this country....

"I have worked on these issues for decades now. I put *Roe* at the center of my lesson plan on reproductive freedom when I taught Constitutional Law. Not simply as a case about privacy but as part of the broader struggle for women's equality....

"We need more programs in our communities like the National Black Church Initiative which empowers our young people by teaching them about reproductive health, sex education and teen pregnancy within the context of the African-American faith tradition....

"Now the good news is that there has been a decline in the teen birth rate, in part due to the outstanding work of Planned Parenthood [i.e., the quarter-million abortions the organization performs each year]....

"When we have achieved as one voice a strong call for that kind of more fair and more just

America, then I am absolutely convinced that we're not just going to win an election but more importantly we're going to transform this nation...."

Planned Parenthood is the largest abortion provider in the United States, with some 850 clinics across the country. It purports to offer "a wide range of medical and counseling services and health care education," but its primary business is providing abortion services.

In 2004 Planned Parenthood completed 138 abortions for every adoption referral it made to an outside agency. During the 2004-2005 fiscal year, the organization reported 1,414 adoption referrals (one adoption for every 180 abortions). [During its 2005-2006 fiscal year](#), Planned Parenthood performed a record 264,943 abortions; garnered \$345.1 million in clinic income; took in \$212.2 million in donations; and received record taxpayer funding of \$305.3 million. Total income reached a record \$902.8 million.

Daily Kos:

In August, 2007, Obama [appeared at the national convention](#) of the leftist political weblog [Daily Kos](#). 's convention. According to a New York *Times* report: "Mr. Obama, who has built his candidacy upon the mantra of change, received booming applause when he was introduced to the audience of more than 1,500. When the moderator mentioned that the senator turned 46 years old on Saturday, several of those gathered in the ballroom began to serenade him with 'Happy Birthday.'"

Al Gore:

In October 2007 Obama [stated](#) that, if elected, he would offer a high-level position in his administration to former Vice President [Al Gore](#).

African American Religious Leadership Committee:

On December 4, 2007, Obama's campaign announced the creation of its [African American Religious Leadership Committee](#). Among the committee's more notable members were Rev. [Jeremiah Wright](#), Rev. [Otis Moss III](#), and Rev. Joseph E. Lowery.

Jeremiah Wright and Trinity United Church of Christ:

From March 1972 until February 2008, Jeremiah Wright -- whom Barack Obama described as his "spiritual advisor," his "mentor," and "one of the greatest preachers in America" -- was the pastor of Chicago's Trinity United Church of Christ (TUCC), where Obama had attended services since 1988, and where he (Obama) had been a member since 1992. Wright embraces the tenets of black liberation theology, which seeks to foment Marxist revolutionary fervor founded on racial rather than class solidarity. His writings, public statements, and sermons reflect his conviction that America is a nation infested with racism, prejudice, and injustice. Wright is also a strong supporter of Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan. Controversy erupted in early 2008 when news reports surfaced detailing Wright's incendiary comments. Obama initially [dismissed the audio/video clips](#) as mere "snippets," claiming that the media were highlighting only Wright's "most offensive words," and that his statements had been taken out of context. In May 2008,

Obama finally made a move to distance himself from Wright and to denounce aspects of his preachings. As a result of the controversy, Wright [stepped down](#) from his position with the Obama campaign's African American Religious Leadership Committee.

Long before the controversy over Wright erupted, Rev. [Jim Wallis](#), the founder of the [Sojourners](#) evangelical ministry, [told](#) an interviewer: "If you want to understand where Barack [Obama] gets his feeling and rhetoric from, just look at Jeremiah Wright."

During his years as a member of TUCC, Obama had given a great deal of money to the church. In 2005, for example, he gave \$5,000. The following year he gave \$22,500. Moreover, during his tenure as a board member of the Woods Fund, he helped steer \$6,000 to Trinity.

Otis Moss:

Rev. [Otis Moss III](#) -- whom Obama has extolled as a "[wonderful young pastor](#)" -- served as assistant pastor of TUCC from 2006-2008 and then succeeded Jeremiah Wright as pastor when the latter retired. In one notable [sermon](#), Moss [likened](#) the condition of contemporary black Americans to that of the hapless lepers referenced in biblical stories. He further implied that whites -- who, in his estimation, continue to segregate blacks both socially and economically -- are the "[enemy](#)" of African Americans. "Our society creates thugs," [Moss added](#). "Children are not born thugs. Thugs are made and not born."

Joseph Lowery:

Rev. Joseph Lowery is a prominent figure in the [Southern Christian Leadership Conference](#). Viewing the United States as a nation that is "[not committed](#) to serious efforts to address the issue of racism," he has warned that "white racism is gaining respectability again," and that "there's a resurgence of racism ... at almost every level of life." Lowery has expressed contempt for Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas, specifically because the black conservative Thomas opposes the use of affirmative action (i.e., race preferences) in business and academia. Says Lowery: "I have told [Thomas] I am ashamed of him, because he is becoming to the black community what Benedict Arnold was to the nation he deserted; and what Judas Iscariot was to Jesus: a *traitor*; and what Brutus was to Caesar: an *assassin*."

Michael Pflieger:

Another notable religious supporter of Barack Obama is Rev. [Michael Pflieger](#), a white Roman Catholic priest who has been the pastor of Saint Sabina Catholic Church in Chicago since 1981. A [great admirer](#) of Louis Farrakhan and Jeremiah Wright, Pflieger [views America](#) as a nation plagued by "classism and racism," and he identifies white racism as "the number one sin in this country." Pflieger has had a longstanding friendly relationship (since the late 1980s) with Obama and has played a [significant role](#) as a spiritual advisor who, Obama once said, had helped him maintain his "moral compass."

Between 1995 and 2001, Pflieger [contributed](#) a total of \$1,500 to Obama's various political campaigns -- including a \$200 donation in April 2001, approximately three months after Obama

(who was then an Illinois state senator) had announced that St. Sabina programs would be receiving \$225,000 in state grants. (After Obama's 2004 election to the U.S. Senate, he would earmark an additional [\\$100,000](#) in federal tax money for Pfleger's work.) Pfleger also has hosted a number of faith forums for Obama during his political campaigns.

In May 2008 Pfleger was a guest preacher at Trinity United Church of Christ (TUCC), where he condemned America as a racist nation that "has been raping people of color." He also declared that Hillary Clinton felt a sense of "white entitlement" in her quest to become President. When portions of this sermon were aired widely by the media, Obama denounced Pfleger's rhetoric as "divisive" and "backward-looking," and soon thereafter he announced that he was leaving Trinity church.

James Meeks:

Yet another religious figure affiliated with Obama is Rev. [James Meeks](#), a [Democratic](#) member of the Illinois state senate, where he served alongside Obama from 2002-2004 (prior to Obama's election to the U.S. Senate). Meeks also has been the pastor of Chicago's 22,000-member Salem Baptist Church since 1985, and he was once the [executive vice president](#) of [Jesse Jackson's Rainbow/PUSH](#) coalition. In July 2006, Meeks sparked controversy when he delivered a heated sermon excoriating Chicago mayor Richard Daley and others regarding public-school funding issues. "We don't have slave masters," Meeks [shouted](#). "We got mayors. But they still the same white people who are presiding over systems where black people are not able, or to be educated." Also among the targets of Meeks' wrath were African Americans who supported Daley. [Said](#) Meeks: "You got some preachers that are house niggers. You got some elected officials that are house niggers. And rather than them trying to break this up, they gonna fight you to protect this white man."

Meeks is a [longtime political ally](#) of Barack Obama, who in 2003 and 2004 frequently campaigned at Salem Baptist Church during his run for the U.S. Senate. Meeks, meanwhile, [appeared in television ads](#) supporting Obama's candidacy. Also in 2004, Obama personally selected Meeks to endorse him in a [radio ad](#). In a 2004 interview with the *Chicago Sun-Times*, Obama [described](#) Meeks as an adviser to whom he looked for "spiritual counsel." In 2007 Meeks served on Obama's exploratory committee for the presidency. The Obama campaign website listed Meeks as one of the candidate's "[influential black supporters](#)." A Meeks [endorsement](#) of Obama was featured on that same website in 2008. Also in 2008, Meeks was named as an Illinois superdelegate pledged to Obama for the Democratic convention in Denver, Colorado.

Black Advisory Council (Cornel West and Charles Ogletree):

For his 2008 presidential run, Obama formed a [Black Advisory Council](#) whose members included, most notably: (a) Marxist professor [Cornel West](#), a longtime member of the [Democratic Socialists of America](#) and a great [admirer](#) of Obama's former pastor, Rev. [Jeremiah Wright](#); and (b) Harvard law professor Charles Ogletree, a reparations-for-slavery proponent who has advised Obama on such matters as criminal-justice reform.

Accusing Republicans of Having Failed Minorities:

During a Democratic presidential debate on January 21, 2008, Obama expressed his belief that Republican politicians had failed to provide adequate opportunities for the social and economic advancement of minorities: "[I am absolutely convinced](#) that white, black, Latino, Asian, people want to move beyond our divisions, and they want to join together in order to create a movement for change in this country. The Republicans may have a different attitude.... The policies that they have promoted have not been good at providing ladders for upward mobility and opportunity for all people."

Tony Rezko, the Federally Indicted Real-Estate Developer:

Also in January 2008, Obama's relationship with a federally indicted real estate developer came to light when rival candidate Hillary Clinton [said](#), during a South Carolina Democratic Party presidential debate: "I was fighting against ... [Republican] ideas when you were practicing law and representing your contributor, Rezko, in his slum landlord business in inner city Chicago." Clinton's reference was to Tony Rezko, a Syrian-born, Chicago-based restaurateur and real estate developer who had been one of the first major financial contributors to Barack Obama's political campaigns in the 1990s. For a full explanation of Rezko's relationship with Obama, click on the footnote number here: [6]

Praise from Louis Farrakhan:

[In February 2008](#) Louis Farrakhan [called](#) Obama "a herald of the Messiah." "Barack has captured the youth," said the Nation Of Islam leader, referring to the passionate support Obama had drawn from young people in America. "And he has involved young people in a political process that they didn't care anything about. That's a sign. When the messiah speaks, the youth will hear. And the messiah is absolutely speaking."

Support from, and Praise for, Al Sharpton:

In March 2008 the controversial [Al Sharpton](#), a strong supporter of Obama's presidential candidacy, revealed publicly that he was in the habit of speaking to Obama on a regular basis -- "[two or three times a week](#)." Sharpton also [said](#) that he had told Obama four months earlier, "I won't either endorse you or not endorse you. But I will tell you I can be freer not endorsing you to help you and everybody else." [According to Sharpton](#), Obama then protested and asked for his public support: "No, no, no. I want you to endorse."

As he had done the year before, Obama in 2008 again addressed Sharpton's National Action Network to seek its support. Calling Sharpton "a voice for the voiceless and ... dispossessed," Obama [stated](#): "What National Action Network has done is so important to change America, and it must be changed from the bottom up."

Strengthening the Alliance with MoveOn.org:

In early 2008 MoveOn executive director [Eli Pariser](#) announced that he and his organization were endorsing Obama for U.S. President. "We've learned that the key to achieving change in

Washington without compromising core values is having a galvanized electorate to back you up," [said](#) Pariser, "and Barack Obama has our members 'fired up and ready to go' on that front."

[Said](#) Obama in response: "In just a few years, the members of MoveOn have once again demonstrated that real change comes not from the top-down, but from the bottom-up. From their principled opposition to the Iraq war -- a war I also opposed from the start -- to their strong support for a number of progressive causes, MoveOn shows what Americans can achieve when we come together in a grassroots movement for change.... I thank them for their support and look forward to working with their members in the weeks and months ahead."

Support from a Hamas Political Advisor:

[In April 2008](#) Ahmed Yousef, a political advisor for the terrorist group [Hamas](#), [told](#) interviewer Aaron Klein that his (Yousef's) organization was hopeful that Obama would win the [presidential election](#) and change America's foreign policy vis a vis the Arab-Israeli conflict. When reporters subsequently asked Obama what he thought of the Hamas leader's endorsement, Obama said: "My position on Hamas is indistinguishable from the position of Hillary Clinton or [Republican presidential candidate] John McCain. I said they are a terrorist organization, and I've repeatedly condemned them. I've repeatedly said, and I mean what I say: Since they are a terrorist organization, we should not be dealing with them until they recognize Israel, renounce terrorism, and abide by previous agreements."

"They Cling to Guns or Religion"

During an April 2008 campaign stop in San Francisco, Obama [said](#), "You go into some of these small towns in Pennsylvania, and like a lot of small towns in the Midwest, the jobs have been gone now for 25 years, and nothing's replaced them. And they fell through the Clinton administration and the Bush administration, and each successive administration has said that somehow these communities are gonna regenerate, and they have not. And it's not surprising then they get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren't like them or anti-immigrant sentiment or anti-trade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations."

Anthony Lake, Foreign Policy Advisor:

In June 2008, Obama named former [New Leftist Anthony Lake](#) as one of his leading foreign policy advisors. Lake served as a special assistant for national security affairs under President Nixon in 1969-70, but soon thereafter he stepped down from that post to protest the Nixon administration's bombing raids in Cambodia -- raids that were designed to support the existing government against the power-grabbing efforts of [Pol Pot](#) and his bloodthirsty Khmer Rouge. By 1972 Lake was an activist in Democrat George McGovern's presidential campaign, whose platform was founded on the axiom that the military conflicts of Southeast Asia were rooted in the "arrogance of American power" rather than in Communist aggression. He called for the newly installed Democrat Congress to cut off funding for the governments of South Vietnam and Cambodia in January 1975. When Republicans warned that a Pol Pot victory would inevitably result in a Cambodian "bloodbath," Lake and his fellow anti-war Democrats accused their critics of trying to stir up "anti-Communist hysteria."

After Congress followed Lake's course and cut the above-referenced funding, the governments of Cambodia and South Vietnam were quickly overrun by the Communists, who, during the next three years, slaughtered nearly 3 million Indo-Chinese peasants in one of the most horrific genocidal campaigns in the recorded history of mankind.

Lake's 2008 appointment to the Obama campaign was withdrawn after the revelation that in a 1996 television appearance, Lake had stated, erroneously and naively, that the recently deceased [Alger Hiss](#) may not actually have been a Soviet spy.

The Race Card:

At a June 2008 campaign stop in Jacksonville, Florida, Obama suggested that his political opponents were trying to exploit the issue of race to undermine his candidacy. "It is going to be very difficult for Republicans to run on their stewardship of the economy or their outstanding foreign policy," he [said](#). "We know what kind of campaign they're going to run. They're going to try to make you afraid. They're going to try to make you afraid of me. He's young and inexperienced and he's got a funny name. And did I mention he's black?"

The following month, Obama [told](#) his listeners at another campaign event: "They [Republicans] know that you're not real happy with them and so the only way they figure they're going to win this election is if they make you scared of me. What they're saying is 'Well, we know we're not very good but you can't risk electing Obama. You know, he's new, he doesn't look like the other presidents on the currency, he's got a funny name.'"

Speaking of America's Moral Failings:

Speaking at a July 2008 gathering of hundreds of minority journalists in Chicago, Obama [said](#) the United States should acknowledge its history of poor treatment of certain ethnic groups:

"There's no doubt that when it comes to our treatment of Native Americans as well as other persons of color in this country, we've got some very sad and difficult things to account for.... I personally would want to see our tragic history, or the tragic elements of our history, acknowledged.... I consistently believe that when it comes to whether it's Native Americans or African-American issues or reparations, the most important thing for the U.S. government to do is not just offer words, but offer deeds."

Joe Biden:

In August 2008, Obama named Senator [Joe Biden](#) to be his vice presidential running mate.

Mortgage Lending Crisis:

In the summer of 2008 a mortgage-lending crisis of immense proportions caused many U.S. banks to go out of business and led to the virtual collapse of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, America's two largest underwriters of home mortgages. The roots of the crisis were traceable, in

large measure, to the Community Reinvestment Act put in place by the [Carter](#) administration in 1977 and reinforced by the [Clinton](#) administration in the 1990s. As a September 30, 1999 *New York Times* [article](#) explains:

"Fannie Mae ... has been under increasing pressure from the Clinton Administration to expand mortgage loans among low and moderate income people and felt pressure from stock holders to maintain its phenomenal growth in profits.

"In addition, banks, thrift institutions and mortgage companies have been pressing Fannie Mae to help them make more loans to so-called subprime borrowers. These borrowers whose incomes, credit ratings and savings are not good enough to qualify for conventional loans, can only get [so-called 'subprime'] loans from finance companies that charge much higher interest rates -- anywhere from three to four percentage points higher than conventional loans....

"Demographic information on these borrowers is sketchy. But at least one study indicates that 18 percent of the loans in the subprime market went to black borrowers, compared to 5 per cent of loans in the conventional loan market.

"In moving, even tentatively, into this new area of lending, Fannie Mae is taking on significantly more risk, which may not pose any difficulties during flush economic times. But the government-subsidized corporation may run into trouble in an economic downturn, prompting a government rescue similar to that of the savings and loan industry in the 1980's."

The Editors of *National Review Online* [explain the connection](#) between the foregoing policies and Barack Obama:

"One of the reasons so many bad mortgage loans were made in the first place is that Barack Obama's celebrated community organizers make their careers out of forcing banks to do so. ACORN, for which Obama worked, is one of many left-wing organizations that spent decades pressuring banks and bank regulators to do more to make mortgages available to people without much in the way of income, assets, or credit. These campaigns often were couched in racially inflammatory terms. The result was the Community Reinvestment Act. The CRA empowers the FDIC and other banking regulators to punish those banks which do not lend to the poor and minorities at the level that Obama's fellow community organizers would like. Among other things, mergers and acquisitions can be blocked if CRA inquisitors are not satisfied that their demands — which are political demands — have been met. There is a name for loans made to people who do not have the credit, assets, income, or down payment to qualify for a normal mortgage: subprime."

Though ACORN played a large role in creating the climate that brought on the mortgage crisis, Obama in 2007 [told](#) a gathering of that organization's members: "I've been fighting alongside ACORN on issues you care about my entire career." Moreover, Obama's presidential campaign demonstrated its solidarity with ACORN by [giving the organization some \\$800,000](#) to fund its voter-registration efforts. (Technically, this money was given to "[Citizens' Services Inc.](#)," an ACORN-dominated subsidiary whose headquarters are located at precisely the same address as ACORN's national headquarters in New Orleans, Louisiana. In an effort to hide the

fact that it had earmarked these funds for ACORN and Citizens' Services, the Obama campaign misidentified the \$800,000 payment as money spent for "[election services](#)."")

Also in 2007, Obama [stated](#) that "subprime lending started off as a good idea -- helping Americans buy homes who couldn't previously afford to." When the crisis arrived in 2008, Obama not only blamed Republicans, but tacitly blamed the very institution of capitalism -- referencing it by the pejorative code name of "[trickle-down economics](#)."

In September 2008, it was learned that Obama, during his first three years in the Senate (2005-2008), had [received more political contribution money](#) (\$126,349) from those two sources than had any other legislator except Connecticut Senator Christopher Dodd, who had been in Congress continuously for 33 years.

Two of Fannie Mae's major players had noteworthy ties to Obama. James Johnson, a longtime aide to former Vice President Walter Mondale, headed Fannie Mae [from 1991 to 1998](#). While dutifully following the Clinton administration directive mandating that Fannie Mae make subprime loans to borrowers who were poor credit risks, and thereby helping to run the mortgage lender into the ground, Johnson himself earned tens of millions of dollars in his Fannie Mae post, including \$21 million in 1998 alone. In the summer of 2008, Obama tapped Johnson to chair his vice presidential selection committee; but soon thereafter, Johnson [had to resign in disgrace](#) from that position when it was revealed that he personally had taken at least five real estate loans (totaling more than \$7 million) at below-market rates from Countrywide Financial Corporation.

Johnson's successor as Fannie Mae's head, [Franklin Raines](#), had previously served as a budget director to Bill Clinton. During his years at Fannie's helm (1999-2005), Raines, while continuing to oversee the ill-advised policies that ultimately would bankrupt the company, pocketed nearly \$100 million in compensation before leaving under a cloud of scandal when it was learned that he had manipulated profit and loss reports so as to enable himself and other senior executives to earn gargantuan bonuses, even as the financial empire he oversaw was imploding. Notwithstanding Raines' poor track record, [the Obama campaign consulted him](#) in 2008 for his advice on housing matters.

Obama's Ties to ACORN:

In an October 15, 2008 presidential debate, Republican John McCain raised the issue of Obama's ties to ACORN. At the time, ACORN was in the news for two major reasons. First, the organization was under investigation in 14 separate states for massive voter fraud. Strongly pro-Democrat, ACORN claimed to have registered 4 million new voters (most of whom were Democrats) during the preceding four years. Many tens of thousands of these registrations already had been found to be fraudulent -- they bore phony names, fake or nonexistent addresses, inaccurate personal information, duplicate signatures, etc. The full extent of the fraud, however, was impossible to determine.

Second, ACORN was facing some criticism for the previously mentioned, decades-long role it had played in pressuring banks and bank regulators to make more mortgages available to

unqualified, undercapitalized borrowers -- a policy that precipitated the financial crisis of 2008 (which saw the collapse of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac). Obama [replied](#) to McCain as follows:

"The only involvement I've had with ACORN was I represented them alongside the U.S. Justice Department in making Illinois implement a motor voter law that helped people get registered at DMVs.... ACORN is a community organization. Apparently what they've done is they were paying people to go out and register folks, and apparently some of the people who were out there didn't really register people, they just filled out a bunch of names. It had nothing to do with us. We were not involved."

He said nothing about the years he had spent training ACORN activists; nothing about the laudatory statements he had made about ACORN in the recent past; and nothing about the [\\$800,000+](#) his campaign had given to the ACORN front group "[Citizens' Services Inc.](#)" for "election services" in 2008.

Foreign Contributions to Presidential Campaign:

Foreign campaign contributions are [illegal](#). In October 2008, Frank Gaffney of *The Washington Times* [reported](#) the following:

"A Federal Election Commission (FEC) employee has reportedly been warning for months about evidence that the Obama campaign has received as much as \$200 million, almost half of his total donations, in amounts less than \$200. That is below the threshold for donor information [which] Mr. Obama has chose[n] to report to the FEC -- unlike the Clinton and McCain campaigns, which have reported all donor information.

"Of the \$200 million, between \$30 million and \$100 million are from the Mideast, Africa and other places Islamists are active. It is unclear whether -- as seems likely -- these funds come not only from Wahhabis, [Muslim Brotherhood](#) types, and jihadists of other stripes, but from non-U.S. citizens. Such contributions would be not only worrying but illegal."

In August 2008, Pamela Geller [wrote](#), in the *American Thinker*, that among the myriad foreign donations Obama had received was a \$33,000 contribution from "Palestinian" brothers based in the Hamas-controlled Rafah refugee camp in Gaza, who had proudly declared their "love" for Obama. The Obama campaign claimed that it had returned that money, but the brother donors said they had never received such a return. Moreover, Geller catalogued several dozen of the foreign cities and nations from which illegal contributions to the Obama campaign had originated. In many caees, the donors' names and contact information were fraudulent -- sometimes consisting of nothing more than letters arranged in random, nonsensical sequence.

Obama's Positions and Voting Record as State Senator and U.S. Senator, and What He Proposes in the Event He Is Elected President:

During his eight-year career in the state senate, Obama avoided making controversial votes approximately 130 times -- which, according to other Illinois state senators, is much higher than average. Rather than vote "yea" or "nay" to the legislation in question, Obama on those occasions

simply voted "present." In the Illinois state senate, this was the equivalent of a "nay" vote when tallying up support or opposition to a given bill. But, as David Freddoso points out:

"[F]or rhetorical purposes, a 'present' vote is different in that critics and journalists must discuss it differently. For example, Barack Obama did not vote against a bill to prevent pornographic book and video stores and strip clubs from setting up within 1,000 feet of schools and churches -- he just voted 'present.' Obama voted 'present' on an almost unanimously passed bill to prosecute students as adults if they fire guns on school grounds. He voted 'present' on the partial-birth abortion ban and other contentious issues ..."[7]

Miscellaneous Issues (gun control, Cuba, affirmative action, pornography):

Barack Obama is a strong [supporter](#) of gun control, and an [advocate](#) of loosening restrictions on trade with -- and travel to -- Communist-controlled Cuba.

He favors racial preferences for minorities in university admissions, public employment, and state contracting. "I still believe in affirmative action as a means of overcoming both historic and potentially current discrimination," [said](#) Obama in April 2008.

In 2001 Obama voted "present" on a bill to restrict the location of buildings with "adult" uses (meaning pornographic video stores, strip clubs, etc.) within 1,000 feet of any school, public park, place of worship, preschool, day-care facility, or residential area. In 1999 he voted "No" on a bill requiring school boards to install software that would block sexually explicit material on public computers accessible to minors.

Same-Sex Marriage:

In the wake of a May 2008 California Supreme Court decision legalizing same-sex marriage in that state (similar to a 2003 decision by the high court of Massachusetts), Obama issued a call to "[fully repeal](#)" the Defense of Marriage Act (signed into law by President Clinton in 1996), a move that would have the effect of legalizing same-sex marriage nationwide. The Defense of Marriage Act currently protects states from having to recognize same-sex marriages contracted in other states. [Says](#) Obama's campaign website: "Obama also believes we need to fully repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and enact legislation that would ensure that the 1,100+ federal legal rights and benefits currently provided on the basis of marital status are extended to same-sex couples in civil unions and other legally recognized unions."

Notably, [no Congress or state legislature has ever voted](#) to define homosexual unions as marriages. And wherever proposals for same-sex marriage have been put up for popular vote, they have been rejected by the American people. In the 13 states where gay marriage was on the ballot in 2004, for example, it was defeated by majorities ranging in size from 58 percent to 85 percent of the voters.

Abortion:

Obama has consistently, without a single exception, voted in favor of expanding abortion rights

and the funding of abortion services with taxpayer dollars. In [July 2006](#) he voted "No" to requiring physicians to notify parents of minors who get out-of-state abortions. In [March 2008](#) he voted "No" on a bill prohibiting minors from crossing state lines to gain access to abortion services. [Also in March 2008](#), he voted "No" on defining unborn child as eligible for the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), which was designed to cover the medical-care costs of uninsured children in families whose incomes are modest but too high to qualify for Medicaid.

When Obama was a state senator, two separate partial-birth abortion bans came up for vote in 1997. Obama voted "present" on both occasions, the functional equivalent of a vote against the ban. He voted against a 2000 bill that would have ended state funding of partial-birth abortions. In *The Audacity of Hope*, Obama explained that his opposition to the ban on this procedure was rooted in the fact that the bill contained no exception for cases where a mother's "health" might require the procedure.[8]

As a state senator in 2001, he [voted](#) against the Induced Infant Liability Act, which was intended to protect babies that survived late-term abortions from being permitted to die from intentional neglect. He explained his vote as follows:

"[W]henever we define a pre-viable fetus as a person that is protected by the equal protection clause or other elements in the Constitution, what we're really saying is, in fact, that they are persons that are entitled to the kinds of protections that would be provided to a -- a child, a nine-month-old -- child that was delivered to term. That determination, then, essentially, if it was accepted by a court, would forbid abortions to take place.... For that reason, I think it would probably be found unconstitutional."

As David Freddoso observes, Obama's argument:

"implies that babies born prematurely without abortions might not be 'persons.' They might have to be 'nine months old' before they count.... [O]ne might even conclude from [his words] that he actually does think they are persons. But, he argues, we cannot legally recognize them as 'persons.' Because if we do, then somewhere down the road it might threaten someone's right to an abortion.... Barack Obama's actions indicate he thinks that before any other rights are granted to 'persons,' the Constitution exists to guarantee abortion rights." [9]

Though it did not in any way conflict with, or compromise, *Roe v. Wade*, [Obama voted against this same legislation in 2003](#), and as chair of the Health and Human Services Committee, he [blocked another attempt](#) to bring the bill to the floor of the Illinois Senate.

In 2006 Obama voted "Yes" on a Senate Budget [amendment](#) allocating \$100 million to: "increas[e] funding and access to family planning services"; "fun[d] legislation that requires equitable prescription coverage for contraceptives under health plans"; and "fun[d] legislation that would create and expand teen pregnancy prevention programs and education programs concerning emergency contraceptives." [10]

Obama's [voting record](#) in the foregoing matters earned him a 100% rating from [NARAL Pro-](#)

[Choice America](#) in 2005, 2006, and 2007. He also received a [100 percent rating](#) from [Planned Parenthood](#) in 2006, and a [zero percent rating](#) from the National Right-to-Life Committee (an anti-abortion group) in 2005 and 2006. Says Freddoso, "I could find no instance in his entire career in which he voted for any regulation or restriction on the practice of abortion." [11]

On July 17, 2007, Obama declared, "The first thing I'd do as President is sign the Freedom of Choice Act." This bill would effectively terminate all state restrictions on government funding for abortions. It would also invalidate state laws that currently protect medical personnel from losing their jobs if they refuse to participate in abortion procedures. [12]

In an August 17, 2008 [interview](#) with Pastor Rick Warren, Obama stated that abortion rates had not declined over the previous eight years. But [this was untrue](#). Abortion rates had actually decreased rather dramatically during that period, reaching a three-decade low.

Rev. Warren asked Obama directly: "Now, let's deal with abortion ... [A]t what point does a baby get human rights, in your view?" To this, Obama [replied](#):

"Well, you know, I think that whether you're looking at it from a theological perspective or a scientific perspective, answering that question with specificity, you know, is above my pay grade.

"... I am pro-choice. I believe in *Roe v. Wade*, and I come to that conclusion not because I'm pro-abortion, but because, ultimately, I don't think women make these decisions casually.... And so, for me, the goal right now should be -- and this is where I think we can find common ground. And by the way, I've now inserted this into the Democratic party platform, is how do we reduce the number of abortions? The fact is that although we have had a president who is opposed to abortion over the last eight years, abortions have not gone down and that is something we have to address....

"I am in favor, for example, of limits on late-term abortions, if there is an exception for the mother's health. From the perspective of those who are pro-life, I think they would consider that inadequate, and I respect their views....

"What I can do is say, are there ways that we can work together to reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies, so that we actually are reducing the sense that women are seeking out abortions. And as an example of that, one of the things that I've talked about is how do we provide the resources that allow women to make the choice to keep a child. You know, have we given them the health care that they need? Have we given them the support services that they need? Have we given them the options of adoption that are necessary? That can make a genuine difference."

Criminal Justice:

Obama as a lawmaker has opposed the death penalty and authored legislation requiring police to keep records of the race of everyone questioned, detained or arrested. [13]

Obama promises that as President, he will work to ban racial profiling and eliminate racial disparities in criminal sentencing. "The criminal justice system is not color blind," he [says](#). "It does not work for all people equally, and that is why it's critical to have a president who sends a signal that we are going to have a system of justice that is not just us, but is everybody."

According to Obama, "[W]e know that in our criminal justice system, African-Americans and whites, for the same crime ... are arrested at very different rates, are convicted at very different rates, receive very different sentences. That is something that we have to talk about. But that's a substantive issue and it has to do with how ... we pursue racial justice. If I am president, I will have a civil rights division that is working with local law enforcement so that they are enforcing laws fairly and justly." [14]

Obama contends that the much harsher penalties for crimes involving crack cocaine as opposed to powder-based cocaine -- the former disproportionately involve black offenders, whereas the latter involve mostly white offenders -- are wrong and should be completely eliminated. [15]

He also pledges to "provide job training, substance abuse and mental health counseling to ex-offenders, so that [ex-convicts] are successfully re-integrated into society." Moreover, he vows to create "a prison-to-work incentive program to improve ex-offender employment and job retention rates."

In Obama's calculus, many young black men engage in street-level drug dealing not because they seek to profit handsomely from it, but because they are unable to find legitimate jobs anywhere. [Says](#) Obama: "For many inner-city men, what prevents gainful employment is not simply the absence of motivation to get off the streets but the absence of a job history or any marketable skills -- and, increasingly, the stigma of a prison record. We can assume that with lawful work available for young men now in the drug trade, crime in any community would drop."

During his years as a legislator, Obama voted against a proposal to criminalize contact with gang members for any convicts who were free on probation or on bail. In 2001 he [opposed](#), for reasons of racial equity, making gang membership a consideration in determining whether or not a killer may be eligible for capital punishment. "There's a strong overlap between gang affiliation and young men of color," said Obama. "... I think it's problematic for them [nonwhites] to be singled out as more likely to receive the death penalty for carrying out certain acts than are others who do the same thing."

In 1999, Obama was the only state senator to oppose a bill prohibiting early prison release for offenders convicted of sex crimes.

Education:

Obama has occasionally attacked special interests in the [Democratic Party](#). In the past, for instance, he was prepared to help students escape from bad public schools by [considering school vouchers](#). But he now toes the anti-voucher party line and thus the special interest of the Democratic Party's biggest funding and activist base, the [National Education Association](#).

In his 2008 presidential campaign, Obama stressed the importance of increasing government expenditures on public education. "We're going to put more money into education than we have," he [said](#). "We have to invest in human capital."

Obama's education plan calls for "investing" \$10 billion annually in a comprehensive "Zero to Five" plan that "will provide critical supports to young children and their parents." These funds will be used to "create or expand high-quality early care and education programs for pregnant women and children from birth to age five"; to "quadruple the number of eligible children for Early Head Start"; to "ensure [that] all children have access to pre-school"; to "provide affordable and high-quality child care that will ... ease the burden on working families"; to allow "more money" to be funneled "into after-school programs"; and to fund "home visiting programs [by health-care personnel] to all low-income, first-time mothers."

In Obama's view, virtually all schooling-related problems can be ameliorated or solved with an infusion of additional cash. Consider, for instance, his [perspective](#) on the low graduation rate of nonwhite minorities:

"Latinos have such a high dropout rate. What you see consistently are children at a very early age are starting school already behind. That's why I've said that I'm going to put billions of dollars into early childhood education that makes sure that our African-American youth, Latino youth, poor youth of every race, are getting the kind of help that they need so that they know their numbers, their colors, their letters." [16]

Obama opposed the Supreme Court's 2007 split [decision](#) that invalidated programs in Seattle and Louisville (Kentucky) which sought to maintain "diversity" in local schools by factoring race into decisions about which students could be admitted to any particular school, or which students could be allowed to transfer from one school to another. Under these programs, parents were not free to send their children to the schools of their choice. Instead they were obliged to abide by the quotas preordained by bureaucrats who had never met any of the children whose educational lives they sought to micromanage. Both the Seattle and Louisville programs were representative of similar plans in hundreds of other school districts nationwide.

In Obama's [opinion](#), the Court's "wrong-headed" ruling was "but the latest in a string of decisions by this conservative bloc of Justices that turn back the clock on decades of advancement and progress in the struggle for equality." "The Supreme Court was wrong," Obama added. "These were local school districts that had voluntarily made a determination that all children would be better off if they learned together. The notion that this Supreme Court would equate that with the segregation as tasked would make Thurgood Marshall turn in his grave." [17]

Viewing racial mixing as an educational objective compelling enough to warrant the use of quotas and bussing for its attainment, Obama [stated](#) that "a racially diverse learning environment has a profoundly positive educational impact on all students," and thus he remains "devoted to working toward this goal." [18]

Welfare Reform:

In 1997 Obama opposed an Illinois welfare reform bill, proposed by Republican senator Dave Syverson, which sought to move as many people as possible off the state welfare rolls and into paying jobs. He tried to weaken the legislation by calling for exceptions not only to the requirement that welfare recipients make an effort to find employment, but also to the bill's proposed five-year limit on benefits.

Two months after Syverson's bill was first proposed, Obama added his name to it. The legislation ultimately would slash welfare rolls by some 80 percent. As David Freddoso points out, "It was a bill that the Senate had to pass in order to conform to the federal welfare-reform laws. It passed with only one senator voting against it." [19]

Health Insurance:

Obama [has said many times](#), "I am going to give health insurance to 47 million Americans who are now without coverage." But [as political analyst Dick Morris points out](#), the 47 million statistic includes at least 12 million illegal immigrants who are uninsured. Another 15 million uninsured are eligible for Medicaid but have not yet registered for it — primarily because they have not yet been ill. When they do enroll eventually, they will receive inexpensive health care, courtesy of the American taxpayers. Then there are uninsured children, almost all of whom are eligible for the State Children's Health Insurance Program — even if their parents have not yet enrolled them therein. That leaves fewer than 20 million uninsured adults who are either American citizens or legal immigrant non-citizens. To address this situation, Obama proposes to dramatically restructure the country's health-care system.

Gender Discrimination:

The Obama campaign asserts that gender-based "discrimination on the job" is a big problem in America. "For every \$1.00 earned by a man, the average woman receives only 77 cents," says the campaign website. "A recent study estimates it will take another 47 years for women to close the wage gap with men." To rectify this, Obama "believes the government needs to take steps to better enforce the Equal Pay Act, fight job discrimination, and improve child care options and family medical leave to give women equal footing in the workplace."

But Obama's claim that women are underpaid (in comparison to men) by American employers is untrue. As longtime employment lawyer William Farrell, who served as a board member of the [National Organization for Women](#) from 1970 to 1973, explains in his 2005 book *Why Men Earn More*, the gender pay gap is actually 20 cents per dollar, not 23 cents. And that gap can be explained entirely by the fact that women as a group tend, to a much greater degree than men, to make employment choices that involve certain tradeoffs; i.e., choices that suppress incomes but, by the same token, afford tangible lifestyle advantages that are highly valued.

For example, women tend to pursue careers in fields that are non-technical and do not involve the hard (as opposed to the social) sciences; fields that do not require a large amount of continuing education in order to keep pace with new developments or innovations; fields that offer a high level of physical safety; fields where the work is performed indoors as opposed to outdoors (where bad weather can make working conditions poor); fields that offer a pleasant and

socially dynamic working environment; fields typified by lower levels of emotional strife; fields that offer desirable shifts or flexible working hours; fields or jobs that require fewer working hours per week or fewer working days per year; and fields where employees can "check out" at the end of the day and not need to "take their jobs home with them."

Moreover, Farrell notes, women as a group tend to be less willing to commute long distances, to travel extensively for work-related duties, or to relocate geographically in order to take a job. In addition, they tend to have fewer years of uninterrupted experience in their current jobs, and they are far more likely to leave the work force for extended periods in order to attend to family-related matters such as raising children.

When all of the above variables are factored into the equation, the gender pay gap disappears entirely. When men and women work at jobs where their titles and their responsibilities are equivalent, they are paid exactly the same.

Energy:

Obama has [voted against](#) permitting the U.S. to drill for oil and natural gas in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). [Says](#) Obama:

"It is hard to overstate the degree to which our addiction to oil undermines our future.... A large portion of the \$800 million we spend on foreign oil every day goes to some of the world's most volatile regimes. And there are the environmental consequences. Just about every scientist outside the White House believes climate change is real. We cannot drill our way out of the problem. Instead of subsidizing the oil industry, we should end every single tax break the industry currently receives and demand that 1% of the revenues from oil companies with over \$1 billion in quarterly profits go toward financing alternative energy research and infrastructure."

At a July 30, 2008 campaign stop in Missouri, Obama [said](#): "There are things that you can do individually ... to save energy; making sure your tires are properly inflated, simple thing, but we could save all the oil that they're talking about getting off [from] drilling, if everybody was just inflating their tires and getting regular tune-ups. You could actually save just as much."

Obama is a staunch supporter of federal ethanol subsidies; in 2006 he himself inserted an ethanol subsidy into proposed tax legislation. In his book *The Audacity of Hope*, he characterized "alternative fuels like E85, a fuel formulated with 85 percent ethanol" as "the future of the auto industry." But as David Freddoso explains, by 2008 ethanol "was contributing to record-high food prices and causing food riots in the developing world ... exhausting water supplies, driving up gasoline prices, and exacerbating smog." Freddoso examines what he calls "the physics of ethanol" as follows:

"To produce five gallons of ethanol from corn, one must spend the energy equivalent of roughly four gallons of ethanol for farming, shipping, and processing. (In other words, ethanol has a 25 percent net energy yield.) ... America's entire 6.5 billion gallon ethanol production created the net energy equivalent of 2.2 *days' worth* of American gasoline consumption." [20] (Emphasis in original)

"In exchange for that miniscule output," adds Freddoso, "federal and state governments provide between \$6.3 billion and \$8.7 billion in annual direct and indirect subsidies.... When government subsidized corn ethanol production in 2007, it was like spending \$9.00 to create a gallon of gasoline, and doing it 853 million times." [21]

In January 2008 Obama [said](#) the following about the future of the coal industry, which currently accounts for [half of all the electricity](#) produced in America: "If somebody wants to build a coal-powered plant, they can, It's just that it will bankrupt them because they will be charged a huge sum for all that greenhouse gas that's being emitted." [Added](#) Obama:

"When I was asked earlier about the issue of coal, you know, under my plan of a cap and trade system, electricity rates would necessarily skyrocket. Even regardless of what I say about whether coal is good or bad. Because I'm capping greenhouse gases, coal power plants, you know, natural gas, you name it, whatever the plants were, whatever the industry was, uh, they would have to retrofit their operations. That will cost money. They will pass that money on to consumers."

Environment:

Obama's position on the issue of global warming is unambiguous. His campaign website [declares](#):

"Global warming is real, is happening now and is the result of human activities. The number of Category 4 and 5 hurricanes has almost doubled in the last 30 years. Glaciers are melting faster; the polar ice caps are shrinking; trees are blooming earlier; oceans are becoming more acidic, threatening marine life; people are dying in heat waves; species are migrating, and eventually many will become extinct. Scientists predict that absent major emission reductions, climate change will worsen famine and drought in some of the poorest places in the world and wreak havoc across the globe. In the U.S., sea-level rise threatens to cause massive economic and ecological damage to our populated coastal areas." [22]

During a 2008 campaign stop in Oregon, Obama called on the United States to "[lead by example](#)" on global warming. "We can't drive our SUVs and eat as much as we want and keep our homes on 72 degrees at all times ... and then just expect that other countries are going to say OK," he said. "That's not leadership. That's not going to happen."

Homeland Security / War on Terror:

Obama voted "No" on a bill to remove the need for a FISA [Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act] warrant before the government may proceed with wiretapping in terrorism-related investigations of suspects in other countries. "Warrantless surveillance of American citizens, in defiance of FISA, is unlawful and unconstitutional," says Obama. [23]

In Obama's view, "the creation of military commissions" to try terror suspects captured in the War on Terror was, from its inception, "a bad idea." [24]

Such commissions are designed to adjudicate the cases of so-called "unlawful combatants" -- as distinguished from "lawful combatants" -- who are captured in battle. The former are entitled to prisoner-of-war status and its accompanying Geneva Convention protections; the latter are entitled to none of that. Article IV of the Geneva Convention defines lawful combatants as those whose military organization meets [four very specific criteria](#): "(a) that of being commanded by a person responsible for his subordinates; (b) that of having a fixed distinctive sign [a uniform or emblem] recognizable at a distance; (c) that of carrying arms openly; [and] (d) that of conducting their operations in accordance with the laws and customs of war." Al Qaeda, for one, fails even to come close to satisfying these conditions. Obama opposes the distinction between lawful and unlawful combatants, and has called for the repeal of any separate standards regulating the treatment of each.[25]

Obama has also voted in favor of preserving *habeas corpus* -- the notion that the government may not detain a prisoner without filing specific charges that can expeditiously be brought before a court -- for the detainees at Guantanamo Bay. U.S. officials consider these prisoners -- captured mostly on the battlefields of the Middle East -- to be of the highest value for intelligence purposes, or to constitute, in their own persons, a great threat to the United States. Says Obama: "Why don't we close Guantanamo and restore the right of habeas corpus, because that's how we lead, not with the might of our military, but the power of our ideals and the power of our values. It's time to show the world we're not a country that ships prisoners in the dead of night to be tortured in far off countries."

On June 19, 2008, political analyst Dick Morris [described](#) Obama's prescription for dealing with terrorism as follows:

"[Obama has] urged us to go back to the era of criminal-justice prosecution of terror suspects, citing the successful efforts to imprison those who bombed the World Trade Center in 1993. [He said] 'It is my firm belief that we can crack down on threats against the United States, but we can do so within the constraints of our Constitution.... In previous terrorist attacks -- for example, the first attack against the World Trade Center, we were able to arrest those responsible, put them on trial. They are currently in US prisons, incapacitated.'

"This is big -- because that prosecution, and the ground rules for it, had more to do with our *inability* to avert 9/11 than any other single factor. Because we treated the 1993 WTC bombing as simply a crime, our investigation was slow, sluggish and constrained by the need to acquire admissible evidence to convict the terrorists.

"As a result, we didn't know that Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda were responsible for the attack until 1997 -- too late for us to grab Osama when Sudan offered to send him to us in 1996. Clinton and National Security Adviser Sandy Berger turned down the offer, saying we had no grounds on which to hold him or to order his kidnapping or death.

"Obama's embrace of the post-'93 approach shows a blindness to the key distinction that has kept us safe since 9/11 -- the difference between *prosecution* and *protection*."

The War in Afghanistan and the Iraq War:

In August 2007, Obama [suggested](#) that as a result of President Bush's poor military leadership, U.S. troops in Afghanistan had done a disservice to their mission by "just air raiding villages and killing civilians, which is causing enormous problems there."

Vis a vis the war in Iraq, Obama, as noted earlier, was an outspoken opponent of the Iraq War at the outset. Over time, however, he made a number of statements that seemed to indicate vacillation in terms of his views about the war. During the November 11, 2007 airing of *Meet The Press*, newsman Tim Russert reminded him of some of those statements:

"In July of '04 [you said]: 'I'm not privy to Senate intelligence reports. What would I have done? I don't know,' in terms of how you would have voted on the war [in 2002]. And then this: 'There's not much of a difference between my position on Iraq and George Bush's position at this stage.' That was July of '04. And this: 'I think' there's 'some room for disagreement in that initial decision to vote for authorization of the war.' It doesn't seem that you are firmly wedded against the war, and that you left some wiggle room that, if you had been in the Senate, you may have voted for it."

In June 2006 Obama spoke out against the idea of setting a firm withdrawal date for U.S. troops in Iraq. Immediately after the midterm election five months later, however, Obama declared that it was vital "to change our policy" and to bring home all American troops. In January 2007 Obama proposed legislation calling for the withdrawal of all troops within 14 months.

In early 2008, the Obama campaign website declared that Obama, as President:

"... would immediately begin to pull out troops engaged in combat operations at a pace of one or two brigades every month, to be completed by the end of [2009]. He would call for a new constitutional convention in Iraq, convened with the [United Nations](#), which would not adjourn until Iraq's leaders reach a new accord on reconciliation. He would use presidential leadership to surge our diplomacy with all of the nations of the region on behalf of a new regional security compact. And he would take immediate steps to confront the humanitarian disaster in Iraq, and to hold accountable any perpetrators of potential war crimes."

Claiming that the U.S. presence in Iraq was "illegal," Obama campaigned publicly in 2007 and 2008 for a speedy withdrawal of American troops from Iraq. But in a July 2008 discussion he held with Iraqi leaders in Baghdad, Obama [privately tried to persuade](#) them to delay an agreement on a timetable for such a withdrawal until after the November elections. According to Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshiyar Zebari, "He asked why we were not prepared to delay an agreement until after the U.S. elections and the formation of a new administration in Washington.... However, as an Iraqi, I prefer to have a security agreement that regulates the activities of foreign troops, rather than keeping the matter open." The political implications of delaying the troop withdrawal were clear: If Obama were to win the election and subsequently set the withdrawal in motion, he could claim credit for what President Bush allegedly had been unable or unwilling to do.

Obama also vowed to "fulfill America's obligation to accept refugees" from Iraq. "The State Department pledged to allow 7,000 Iraqi refugees into America," said the Obama campaign, "but has only let 190 into the United States. [President] Obama would expedite the Department of Homeland Security's review of Iraqi asylum applicants."

After President Bush announced in January 2007 that he would send a "surge" of some 21,500 additional troops to Iraq in an effort to quell the insurgency there. In response, Obama [said](#): "I am not persuaded that 20,000 additional troops in Iraq is going to solve the sectarian violence there. In fact, I think it will do the reverse." Throughout 2007, Obama continued to argue that the surge was ill-advised.

In July 2008, by which time the surge had proven to be extremely effective in reducing the violence in Iraq, newscaster [Katie Couric](#) asked Obama: "But yet you're saying ... given what you know now, you still wouldn't support [the surge] ... so I'm just trying to understand this." Obama [replied](#):

"Because ... it's pretty straightforward. By us putting \$10 billion to \$12 billion a month, \$200 billion, that's money that could have gone into Afghanistan. Those additional troops could have gone into Afghanistan. That money also could have been used to shore up a declining economic situation in the United States. That money could have been applied to having a serious energy security plan so that we were reducing our demand on oil, which is helping to fund the insurgents in many countries. So those are all factors that would be taken into consideration in my decision -- to deal with a specific tactic or strategy inside of Iraq."

Israel:

While running for Congress in 2000, Obama prepared a position paper on Israel in which he [stated](#), "Jerusalem should remain united and should be recognized as Israel's capital."

Along the same lines, in January 2008 Obama [wrote](#), in response to an American Jewish Committee Election Questionnaire's question about how he foresaw "the likely final status of Jerusalem," that "Jerusalem will remain Israel's capital, and no one should want or expect it to be re-divided."

Similarly, in a June 4, 2008 speech to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, Obama [said](#), "Let me be clear.... Jerusalem will remain the capital of Israel, and it must remain undivided."

The next day, after a number of Arab sources criticized Obama's comments, an unnamed Obama adviser tried to "clarify" the candidate's statement by suggesting that it left room for Palestinian sovereignty. Soon thereafter, Obama [said](#): "[T]he truth is that this was an example where we had some poor phrasing in the speech" and a reminder of the need to be "careful in terms of our syntax." He said his point had been "simply" that "we don't want barbed wire running through Jerusalem, similar to the way it was prior to the '67 war."

Military/Missile Defense/Weapons Systems:

Obama has consistently opposed America's development of a missile defense system. In a February 2008 [campaign ad](#), he [stated](#):

"I will cut tens of billions of dollars in wasteful spending. I will cut investments in unproven missile defense systems. I will not weaponize space. I will slow our development of future combat systems. I will institute an independent Defense Priorities Board to ensure that the Quadrennial Defense Review is not used to justify unnecessary defense spending.... I will set a goal of a world without nuclear weapons. To seek that goal, I will not develop new nuclear weapons. I will seek a global ban on the production of fissile material...."

Redistribution of Wealth:

During a call-in program on Chicago's WBEZ public radio in 2001, state senator Barack Obama [said the following](#) (click [here](#) for audio):

"You know, if you look at the victories and failures of the civil-rights movement, and its litigation strategy in the court, I think where it succeeded was to vest formal rights in previously dispossessed peoples. So that I would now have the right to vote, I would now be able to sit at a lunch counter and order and as long as I could pay for it, I'd be okay, but the Supreme Court never entered into the issues of redistribution of wealth, and sort of more basic issues of political and economic justice in this society.

"And uh, to that extent, as radical as I think people tried to characterize the Warren Court, it wasn't that radical. It didn't break free from the essential constraints that were placed by the Founding Fathers in the Constitution — at least as it's been interpreted, and Warren Court interpreted it in the same way, that generally the Constitution is a charter of negative liberties: [It] says what the states can't do to you, says what the federal government can't do to you, but it doesn't say what the federal government or the state government must do on your behalf.

"And that hasn't shifted, and one of the, I think, the tragedies of the civil-rights movement was because the civil-rights movement became so court-focused, uh, I think that there was a tendency to lose track of the political and community organizing and activities on the ground that are able to put together the actual coalitions of power through which you bring about redistributive change. And in some ways we still suffer from that."

A caller then asked: "The gentleman [Obama] made the point that the Warren Court wasn't terribly radical. My question is (with economic changes) ... my question is, is it too late for that kind of reparative work, economically, and is that the appropriate place for reparative economic work to change place?"

Obama replied:

"You know, I'm not optimistic about bringing about major redistributive change through the courts. The institution just isn't structured that way.... You start getting into all sorts of separation of powers issues, you know, in terms of the court monitoring or engaging in a process that

essentially is administrative and takes a lot of time. You know, the court is just not very good at it, and politically, it's just very hard to legitimize opinions from the court in that regard.

"So I think that, although you can craft theoretical justifications for it, legally, you know, I think any three of us sitting here could come up with a rationale for bringing about economic change through the courts."

Bill Whittle of *National Review Online* [analyzed](#) Obama's words as follows:

"There is nothing vague or ambiguous about this. Nothing.

"From the top: '...The Supreme Court never entered into the issues of *redistribution of wealth*, and sort of more basic issues of *political and economic justice* in this society. And uh, to that extent, as radical as I think people tried to characterize the Warren Court, it wasn't that radical.'

"If the second highlighted phrase had been there without the first, Obama's defenders would have bent over backwards trying to spin the meaning of 'political and economic justice.' We all know what *political and economic justice* means, because Barack Obama has already made it crystal clear a second earlier: It means *redistribution of wealth*. Not the creation of wealth and certainly not the creation of opportunity, but simply taking money from the successful and hard-working and distributing it to those whom the government decides 'deserve' it.

"This redistribution of wealth, he states, 'essentially is administrative and takes a lot of time.' It is an administrative task. Not suitable for the courts. More suitable for the chief executive.

"Now that's just garden-variety socialism ... [C]onsider this next statement with as much care as you can possibly bring to bear: 'And uh, to that extent, as radical as I think people tried to characterize the Warren Court, it wasn't that radical. It didn't *break free from the essential constraints that were placed by the Founding Fathers in the Constitution* — at least as it's been interpreted, and [the] Warren Court interpreted it in the same way, that generally the Constitution is a charter of negative liberties: [it] says what the states can't do to you, says what the federal government can't do to you, but it doesn't say what the federal government or the state government *must do on your behalf*.'

"The United States of America — five percent of the world's population — leads the world economically, militarily, scientifically, and culturally — and by a spectacular margin. Any *one* of these achievements, taken alone, would be cause for enormous pride. To dominate as we do in all four arenas has no historical precedent. That we have achieved so much in so many areas is due — due entirely — to the structure of our society as outlined in the Constitution of the United States.

"The entire purpose of the Constitution was to *limit government*. That limitation of powers is what has unlocked in America the vast human potential available in any population.

"Barack Obama sees that limiting of government not as a lynchpin but rather as a fatal flaw: "...One of the, I think, the *tragedies* of the Civil Rights movement was because the Civil

Rights movement became so court-focused, uh, I think that there was a tendency to lose track of the political and *community organizing* and activities on the ground that are able to put together the actual *coalitions of power* through which you bring about *redistributive change*. And in some ways we still *suffer* from that.'

"There is no room for wiggle or misunderstanding here. This is not edited copy. There is nothing out of context; for the *entire thing* is context — the context of what Barack Obama believes. You and I do not have to guess at what he believes or try to interpret what he believes. He says what he believes.

"We have, in our storied history, elected Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives and moderates. We have fought, and will continue to fight, pitched battles about how best to govern this nation. But we have never, *ever* in our 232-year history, elected a president who so completely and openly opposed the idea of limited government, the absolute cornerstone of makes the United States of America unique and exceptional."

Taxes:

Obama generally favors significant increases in the tax rates paid by Americans. In 2001 he said, "I consider the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy to be both fiscally irresponsible and morally troubling."

During a June 28, 2007 primary debate at Howard University, Obama was asked, "Do you agree that the rich aren't paying their fair share of taxes?" He [replied](#), "There's no doubt that the tax system has been skewed. And the Bush tax cuts -- people didn't need them, and they weren't even asking for them, and that's why they need to be less, so that we can pay for universal health care and other initiatives."

In 1999 Obama voted "No" on a bill to create an income tax credit for the families of all full-time K-12 pupils. In 2003 he voted "Yes" on a bill to retain the Illinois Estate Tax. He also supported raising taxes on insurance premiums and levying a new tax on businesses. In his keynote address at a 2006 "Building a Covenant for a New America" conference, he urged Americans of all faiths to convene on Capitol Hill and give it an "injection of morality" by opposing a repeal of the estate tax.

In the U.S. Senate, Obama has never once failed to support a tax hike, voting several dozen times in favor of such increases.

In June 2008, Rea Hederman and Patrick Tyrell of the Heritage Foundation summarized presidential candidate Obama's tax proposals as follows:

"His plan would boost the top marginal [income tax] rate to well over 55 percent—before the inclusion of state and local taxes—resulting in many individuals seeing their marginal tax rate double.... Senator Obama would end the Bush tax cuts and allow the top two tax rates to return to 36 and 39.6 percent. He also would allow personal exemptions and deductions to be phased out for those with income over \$250,000 ... [and] would end the Social Security payroll tax cap

for those over \$250,000 in earnings. (The cap is currently set at \$102,000.) These individuals will then face a tax rate of 15.65 percent from payroll taxes and the top income tax rate of 39.6 percent for a combined top rate of over 56 percent on each additional dollar earned.

"High-income individuals will be forced to pay even more if they live in cities or states with high taxes such as New York City, California, or Maryland. These unlucky people would pay over two-thirds of each new dollar in earnings to the federal government.... Senator Obama's new tax rate would give the United States one of the highest tax rates among developed countries. Currently only six of the top 30 industrial nations have a tax rate for all levels of government combined of over 55 percent. Under this tax plan, the United States would join this group and have a higher top rate than such high-tax nations as Sweden and Denmark. The top marginal rate would exceed 60 percent with the inclusion of state and local taxes, which means that only Hungary would exceed Senator Obama's new proposed top tax rate."

In an April 2008 Democratic primary debate, Obama was asked, by journalist Charlie Gibson, a question about his proposal to nearly double the capital gains tax (from 15 percent to 28 percent). [Said](#) Gibson: "... In each instance when the rate dropped [in the 1990s], revenues from the tax increased. The government took in more money. And in the 1980s, when the [capital gains] tax was increased to 28 percent, the revenues went down. So why raise it at all, especially given the fact that 100 million people in this country own stock and would be affected?"

Obama [replied](#) that he wished to raise the tax "for purposes of fairness." "We saw an article today," he explained, "which showed that the top 50 hedge fund managers made \$29 billion last year.... [T]hose who are able to work the stock market and amass huge fortunes on capital gains are paying a lower tax rate than their secretaries. That's not fair."

In a September 2008 Fox News Channel television [interview](#), Obama pledged to cut taxes for 95 percent of Americans, while raising taxes on those who earn more than \$250,000. Political commentator Bill O'Reilly objected, "That's class warfare. You're taking the wealthy in America, the big earners ... you're taking money away from them and you're giving it to people who don't. That's called income redistribution. It's a socialist tenet. Come on, you know that."

Obama replied, "Teddy Roosevelt supported a progressive income tax.... If I am sitting pretty and you've got a waitress who is making minimum wage plus tips, and I can afford it and she can't, what's the big deal for me to say, I'm going to pay a little bit more? That is neighborliness."

In October 2008, CNS News provided the following [analysis](#) of the Obama tax plan, which, according to Obama, would feature the aforementioned tax cut for all those earning less than \$250,000 per year, or 95 percent of American taxpayers:

"Democratic presidential candidate Barack Obama's plan to cut taxes on 95 percent of taxpayers would effectively increase government spending by an average of \$64.8 billion a year and effectively raise income tax rates for many Americans, even on some earning \$20-\$50,000 per year, according to the non-partisan Tax Policy Center.

"The heart of Obama's tax cut proposal is in his use of refundable tax credits, which the Center

describes as 'credits available to eligible households even if they have no income tax liability' -- in short, refunds available even to those who don't pay taxes. These refunds are claimed on tax returns and are paid to all taxpayers who qualify for them, regardless of whether they owe taxes or not. These refunds have the ability of reducing a taxpayer's liability below zero, meaning they can get a refund without actually paying taxes.

"In real numbers, 60.7 million people who have no tax burden at all will receive refunds from Obama, while only 33.8 million people, who pay approximately 40 percent of income taxes, will get any kind of refund. Twenty percent of taxpayers, who pay 87.5 percent of total income taxes, will actually see after-tax income decline under Obama by nearly two percent, according to the Center.

"By using these refunds, Obama is able to claim that he is giving a tax cut to 95 percent of households, although only 62 percent of households pay any income taxes at all. This means that Obama's tax plan calls for giving money to some households that do not pay taxes, including a plan to make community college 'essentially free' and pay 10 percent of the interest on all mortgages.

"The problem with Obama's characterization that his proposals are tax cuts is that refundable credits are calculated as outlays, or direct spending, not as reductions in tax rates, according to the Center. This means that, in budgetary terms, some of Obama's tax cuts are actually spending increases.

"The Tax Policy Center estimates that Obama's spending proposals will be so large that they effectively eliminate income taxes for 15 million households, increasing the percentage of households that pay no taxes from 37.8 percent to 48.1 percent....

"When compared with current law, people earning \$20,000-\$50,000 a year will see their effective tax rates -- the amount of money the taxpayer actually ends up paying the government -- increase on average under Obama's plan, according to Tax Policy Center figures.

"Most households making \$30,000-\$75,000 will not see a reduction in their taxes under Obama's plan relative to current law, according to the Center. In fact, the only strata that will see a majority of its effective tax burden reduced under Obama are those making less than \$30,000 per year and those making \$75,000-\$200,000 per year."

The net result of the tax plan, according to the figures above, will be to increase by more than 25 percent the number of households that pay no taxes at all, thereby effectively increasing the size of the welfare state.

At an October 2008 campaign appearance in Ohio, Obama was approached by man named Joe Wurzelbacher (who thereafter would become widely known in the media as "Joe the plumber"). Wurzelbacher told Obama that he was planning to purchase a business which was projected to earn in excess of \$250,000 per year, and that Obama's tax plan, which would raise taxes (by 8.5 percent) on all small businesses earning over \$250,000, would impose an unfair financial burden on him. Obama [replied](#) that the tax increase on businesses like his was justified because it would

enable the government to give tax breaks to people earning considerably less than \$250,000. "I think when you spread the wealth around, it's good for everybody," said Obama.

The National Taxpayers Union -- an organization that "[seeks](#) to reduce government spending, cut taxes, and protect the rights of taxpayers" -- [gave Obama ratings](#) of zero percent, 16 percent, and "F" in 2005, 2006, and 2007, respectively.

Americans for Tax Reform -- which "[believes](#) in a system in which taxes are simpler, fairer, flatter, more visible, and lower than they are today" -- [gave](#) Obama a zero percent rating in 2005 and a 15 percent rating in 2006.

The Small Business & Entrepreneurship Council -- which "[works](#) to influence legislation and policies that help to create a favorable and productive environment for small businesses and entrepreneurship" -- gave Obama a rating of [9 percent](#) in 2005.

The National Federation of Independent Business -- which [seeks](#) "to impact public policy at the state and federal level and be a key business resource for small and independent business in America" -- gave Obama a [rating](#) of 12 percent in 2005-2006.

The Business-Industry Political Action Committee -- which "[supports](#) pro-business candidates who have demonstrated the skill and leadership necessary to fuel a pro-business Congress" -- [rated](#) Obama 15 percent in 2005 and 10 percent in 2006.

Earmarks:

"Earmarking" refers to the commonplace congressional practice of directing federal tax dollars to local projects which are often frivolous and are of extremely limited utility. In fiscal year 2008, Obama was the sole Senate sponsor of 29 earmarks whose aggregate sum was \$10.7 million. Earmarks are often informal *quid pro quo* arrangements, where recipients show gratitude by giving money to the political official who steered the earmarks their way. For example, after Obama inserted earmarks into a 2008 defense appropriations bill, the recipients sent \$16,000 in contributions to Obama's presidential campaign.

Sometimes the *quid pro quo* works in the other direction, where the senator earmarks money for recipients *after* they have taken action that is in some way beneficial to the senator. For example, in 2007 Obama earmarked \$1 million for the University of Chicago Medical Center, where his wife, who served as vice president of the Center, had received a \$200,000 pay raise immediately after Obama took office as senator in early 2005.[26]

Price Controls:

In 1998 Obama proposed the creation of a study panel to examine the feasibility of having the government regulate and cap automobile insurance rates. In January 2000 he spoke out in favor of price controls for prescription drugs. A year later he called for the establishment of a five-person government "review board" to place a cap on drug prices in Illinois. To read economist Thomas Sowell's explanation of why price controls have historically failed to lower costs or

improve products and services, click [here](#). [27]

Voting Rights:

In September 2005, Obama sponsored "[Senate Concurrent Resolution 53](#)," which expressed "the sense of Congress that any effort to impose photo identification requirements for voting should be rejected."

Immigration:

Obama's voting record clearly reflects his desire to expand entitlements for illegal aliens.

Obama opposes immigration raids designed to identify illegal aliens in workplaces or housing units. He [says](#) the U.S. should "allow undocumented immigrants who are in good standing to pay a fine, learn English, and go to the back of the line for the opportunity to become citizens." "When I was a state senator in Illinois," Obama [says](#), "I voted to require that illegal aliens get trained, get a license, get insurance to protect public safety. That was my intention. The problem we have here is not driver's licenses. Undocumented workers do not come here to drive. They're here to work." His position remains unchanged: He is in favor of [permitting](#) illegal aliens to obtain driver's licenses.

Obama voted [in favor](#) of allowing former illegal aliens who had previously worked at jobs under phony or stolen Social Security numbers, to someday reap the benefits of whatever Social Security contributions they may have made while they were so employed.

He [voted in favor](#) of an amendment placing an expiration date on a point-based immigration system (i.e., a system that seeks to ensure that people with skills that society needs are given preference for entry into the United States). Obama instead advocates a system focusing on the reunification of family members, even if that means permitting the relatives of illegal aliens to join the latter in America.

Obama seeks to delineate a "path to citizenship" for illegal aliens, so as to "[bring people out of the shadows](#)" and allow them to "to fully embrace our values and become full members of our democracy." [Says](#) the Obama campaign, "America has always been a nation of immigrants.... For the millions living here illegally but otherwise playing by the rules, we must encourage them to come out of hiding and get right with the law."

As a U.S. senator, Obama has been a supporter of the DREAM Act, intended to allow illegal aliens to attend college at the reduced tuition rates normally reserved for in-state legal residents. He [helped to pass](#) a state version of such a law in Illinois during his years as a state senator. [Says](#) the Obama campaign, the DREAM Act "would allow undocumented children brought to the United States the opportunity to pursue higher education or serve in our military, and eventually becoming legalized citizens.... [I]nstead of driving thousands of children who were on the right path into the shadows, we need to give those who play by the rules the opportunity to succeed."

In September 2008, Obama told the North Carolina Public Radio station WUNC that the children

of illegal immigrants should be permitted to attend community colleges. "For us to deny them access to community college, even though they've never lived in Mexico, as least as far as they can tell, is to deny that this is how we've always built this country up," [said](#) Obama.

According to Dick Morris, the political strategist who formerly advised President Bill Clinton Obama's plan for universal health care would include [coverage for illegal immigrants](#).

In March 2008, Obama voted to table a Senate amendment calling for the withdrawal of federal assistance "to [sanctuary cities](#) that ignore the immigration laws of the United States and create safe havens for illegal aliens and potential terrorists."

In July 2007 Obama was a featured speaker at the annual convention of the [National Council of La Raza](#), an open-borders group that lobbies for racial preferences, mass immigration, and amnesty for illegal aliens. Among his remarks were [the following](#):

"I will never walk away from the 12 million undocumented immigrants who live, work, and contribute to our country every single day.

"There are few better examples of how broken, bitter, and divisive our politics has become than the immigration debate that played out in Washington a few weeks ago. So many of us -- Democrats and Republicans -- were willing to compromise in order to pass comprehensive reform that would secure our borders while giving the undocumented a chance to earn their citizenship....

"[W]e are a nation of immigrants -- a nation that has always been willing to give weary travelers from around the world the chance to come here and reach for the dream that so many of us have reached for. That's the America that answered my father's letters and his prayers and brought him here from Kenya so long ago. That's the America we believe in.

"But that's the America that the President and too many Republicans walked away from when the politics got tough.... [W]e saw parts of the immigration debate took a turn that was both ugly and racist in a way we haven't seen since the struggle for civil rights....

"We don't expect our government to guarantee success and happiness, but when millions of children start the race of life so far behind only because of race, only because of class, that's a betrayal of our ideals. That's not just a Latino problem or an African-American problem; that is an American problem that we have to solve....

"It's an American problem when one in four Latinos cannot communicate well with their doctor about what's wrong or fill out medical forms because there are language barriers we refuse to break down...."

In July 2008, Obama again spoke to NCLR. Among his remarks were [the following](#):

"The theme of this [La Raza] conference is the work of your lives: strengthening America together. It's been the work of this organization for four decades --lifting up families and

transforming communities across America. And for that, I honor you, I congratulate you, I thank you, and I wish you another forty years as extraordinary as your last....

"The system isn't working when a child in a crumbling school graduates without learning to read or doesn't graduate at all. Or when a young person at the top of her class -- a young person with so much to offer this country -- can't attend a public college.

"The system isn't working when Hispanics are losing their jobs faster than almost anybody else, or working jobs that pay less, and come with fewer benefits than almost anybody else.

"The system isn't working when 12 million people live in hiding, and hundreds of thousands cross our borders illegally each year; when companies hire undocumented immigrants instead of legal citizens to avoid paying overtime or to avoid a union; when communities are terrorized by ICE immigration raids -- when nursing mothers are torn from their babies, when children come home from school to find their parents missing, when people are detained without access to legal counsel....

"[W]e'll make the system work again for everyone. By living up to the ideals that this organization has always embodied the ideals reflected in your name, 'Raza,' the people. [Actually, a literal translation is "the race."] ... And together, we won't just win an election; we will transform this nation."

The U.S. Border Control (USBC), a nonprofit citizen's lobby dedicated to ending illegal immigration and securing America's borders, reports that Obama's immigration-related votes are consistent with USBC's values only [8 percent](#) of the time. By USBC's definition, Obama's stance on immigration qualifies him as an "open borders" advocate.

English Language:

Obama voted against a bill to declare English the official language of the U.S. government. Under this bill, no person would be entitled to have the government communicate with him (or provide materials for him) in any language other than English. Nothing in the bill, however, prohibited the use of a language other than English.

Constitution / Supreme Court:

In his 2006 book [The Audacity of Hope](#), Obama expresses his belief that the U.S. Constitution is a living document (subject to reinterpretation and change), and states that, as President, he would not appoint a strict constructionist (a Justice who seeks to apply the text as it is written and without further inference) to the Supreme Court:

"When we get in a tussle, we appeal to the Founding Fathers and the Constitution's ratifiers to give direction. Some, like Justice Scalia, conclude that the original understanding must be followed and if we obey this rule, democracy is respected. Others, like Justice Breyer, insist that sometimes the original understanding can take you only so far -- that on the truly big arguments, we have to take context, history, and the practical outcomes of a decision into account. I have to

side with Justice Breyer's view of the Constitution -- that it is not a static but rather a living document and must be read in the context of an ever-changing world."

When President Bush in 2005 nominated John Roberts to be Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Obama [stated](#) that few Supreme Court cases involve any controversy at all, "so that both a [conservative like] Scalia and a [leftist like] Ginsburg will arrive at the same place most of the time on those 95 percent of cases." In the other 5 percent, he said, "the critical ingredient" was neither the law nor the Constitution says, but rather "what is in the judge's heart."

"[W]hen I examined Judge Roberts' record and history of public service, it is my personal estimation that he has far more often used his formidable skills on behalf of the strong in opposition to the weak," Obama [said](#) in a floor speech on September 22, 2005. "In his work in the White House and the Solicitor General's Office, he seemed to have consistently sided with those who were dismissive of efforts to eradicate the remnants of racial discrimination in our political process. In these same positions, he seemed dismissive of concerns that it is harder to make it in this world and in this economy when you are a woman rather than a man."

Obama was also "deeply troubled" by "the philosophy, ideology and record" of yet another Bush nominee to the Supreme Court, Samuel Alito. "There is no indication that he is not a man of fine character," Obama [said](#) in a floor speech on January 26, 2006. "But when you look at his record, when it comes to his understanding of the Constitution, I found that in almost every case he consistently sides on behalf of the powerful against the powerless."

Columnist Terrence Jeffrey [observes](#):

"In contrast to his soaring campaign rhetoric about bringing America together, Obama's Senate speeches against Roberts and Alito revealed a polarizing vision of America. Minorities, women, employees and criminal defendants were among the weak; majorities, men, employers and prosecutors were among the strong."

In April 2007, newsman Wolf Blitzer asked Obama, "Are there ... Justices right now upon whom you would model [appointments to the Supreme Court]?" Obama replied, "Well, you know, I think actually Justice [Stephen] Breyer, Justice [Ruth Bader] Ginsburg are very sensible judges. I think that Justice [David] Souter ... is a sensible judge."

In an August 2008 symposium, Obama was asked which, if any, of the current Supreme Court Justices he would not have nominated if he had been President at the time. He [replied](#) that he would not have nominated Clarence Thomas, because "I don't think that he was a strong enough jurist or legal thinker at the time for that elevation. Setting aside the fact that I profoundly disagree with his interpretation of a lot of the Constitution."

On another occasion, Obama criticized Justice Antonin Scalia for believing "that the original understanding [of the Constitution] must be followed, and that if we strictly obey this rule, then Democracy is respected.... [I]t is unrealistic to believe that a judge, two hundred years later, can somehow discern the original intent of the Founders or ratifiers." [28]

Explaining the criteria by which he would appoint judges to the federal bench, Obama [declared](#):

"We need somebody who's got the heart, the empathy, to recognize what it's like to be a young teenage mom, the empathy to understand what it's like to be poor or African-American or gay or disabled or old--and that's the criterion by which I'll be selecting my judges."

Foreign Aid:

Obama supports an initiative known as the Global Poverty Act (GPA), which, if signed into law, [would compel](#) the U.S. President to develop "and implement" a policy to "cut extreme global poverty in half by 2015 through aid, trade, debt relief," and other means.

[Says](#) Obama:

"With billions of people living on just dollars a day around the world, global poverty remains one of the greatest challenges and tragedies the international community faces," . "It must be a priority of American foreign policy to commit to eliminating extreme poverty and ensuring every child has food, shelter, and clean drinking water. As we strive to rebuild America's standing in the world, this important bill will demonstrate our promise and commitment to those in the developing world.... Our commitment to the global economy must extend beyond trade agreements that are more about increasing profits than about helping workers and small farmers everywhere."

[According to a report](#) by [Accuracy in Media](#) editor Cliff Kincaid, the adoption of the GPA could "result in the imposition of a global tax on the United States" [and would make levels](#) "of U.S. foreign aid spending subservient to the dictates of the [United Nations](#)." Kincaid states that the legislation would earmark some 0.7 percent of the U.S. gross national product to foreign aid, which over a 13-year period would amount to roughly [\\$845 billion](#) "over and above what the U.S. already spends."

Foreign Policy:

During a July 2007 Democrat primary debate, Obama was asked: "[W]ould you be willing to meet separately, without preconditions, during the first year of your administration, with the leaders of Iran, Syria, Venezuela, Cuba and North Korea, in order to bridge the gap that divides our countries?"

He replied: "I would. And the reason is this, that the notion that somehow not talking to countries is punishment to them -- which has been the guiding diplomatic principle of this administration - - is ridiculous."

Notwithstanding subsequent criticisms from Hillary Clinton, [Joe Biden](#), and numerous other Democrats as well as political commentators -- all of whom contended that some preconditions were essential -- Obama initially did not change his position.

Since that time, however, he and his campaign staffers have sought to quietly, incrementally reframe Obama's position. For instance, his senior policy advisor Susan Rice in early 2008 said Obama would "meet with the appropriate ... leaders" of such countries, specifying Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. In May 2008, Obama further parsed his words of the previous year: "What I said was I would meet with our adversaries including Iran, including Venezuela, including Cuba, including North Korea, without preconditions but that does not mean without preparation." When he was asked to explain how preconditions differed from preparation, he replied: There's a huge difference ... There are a whole series of steps that need to be taken before you have a presidential meeting but that doesn't mean you expect the other side to agree to every item on your list."

During a May 18, 2008 campaign event, Obama [said](#): "Iran, Cuba, Venezuela -- these countries are tiny compared to the Soviet Union. They don't pose a serious threat to us.... Iran may spend one-one hundredth of what we spend on the military. If Iran ever tried to pose a serious threat to us, they wouldn't stand a chance." Two days later, he [told](#) another audience: "Iran is a grave threat. It has an illicit nuclear program. It supports terrorism across the regions and militias in Iraq. It threatens Israel's existence. It denies the holocaust...."

Obama's Overall Record:

In January 2008 the *National Journal* published its rankings of all U.S. senators -- based on how they had voted on a host of foreign and domestic policy bills -- and rated Barack Obama "[the most liberal Senator of 2007](#)." "Obama's [foreign policy] liberal score of 92 and conservative score of 7 indicate that he was more liberal in that issue area than 92 percent of the senators and more conservative than 7 percent," the researchers [explained](#). In the area of domestic policy voting, the study [found](#) that "Obama voted the liberal position on 65 of the 66 key votes on which he voted ... [and] garnered perfect liberal scores in both the economic and social categories."

The leftist organization Americans for Democratic Action (ADA) similarly rated Obama's Senate voting record at 97.5 percent. By contrast, the American Conservative Union (the ADA's ideological antithesis) gave Obama a rating of 8 percent.

After declaring his presidential candidacy in early 2007, Obama clearly became far more focused on campaigning for his White House run than on performing the legislative duties for which he had been elected to the U.S. Senate. From January 2007 through September 2008, he [missed 303 votes](#) (a total of 46 percent of all votes that came before the Senate).

President Barack Obama:

On November 4, 2008, Barack Obama was elected President of the United States. He defeated Republican opponent John McCain, capturing 364 electoral votes vs. McCain's 162. Obama received a total of 64,538,980 votes (52.5%), vs. McCain's 56,802,609 (46.2%). To view text and resources about Barack Obama's life and politics after this election, click [here](#).

Notes:

[1] David Freddoso, *The Case Against Barack Obama* (Washington DC: Regnery Publishing, 2008), p. 146.

[2] ACORN's mandate today includes all issues touching low-income and working-class people. The organization runs schools where children are trained in class consciousness; it oversees a network of "boot camps" where street activists are trained; and it conducts operations that extort contributions from banks and other businesses under threat of trumped-up civil rights charges.

[3] In the 2004 and 2006 election cycles, both Project Vote and ACORN [ran](#) nationwide voter-mobilization drives marred by allegations of fraudulent voter registration, vote-rigging, voter intimidation, and vote-for-pay scams.

[3] As one observer [noted](#) in May 2008, legal "successes" such as this were probably responsible for the sub-prime mortgage crisis of 2007. That is, banks were not loaning to blacks whose credit was poor. When the law forced them to lend money anyway, the inevitable happened.

[4] When Obama ran for the presidency in 2008, and his relationship with Ayers and Dohrn became a matter of public controversy, his campaign produced a "[fact sheet](#)" pronouncing the former terrorists now to be "respectable" members of the "mainstream" community.

[5] David Freddoso, *The Case Against Barack Obama*, p. 117.

[6] Rezko had initially met Obama in 1990, when the former was a low-income housing developer in Chicago and the latter was a Harvard Law School student. In fact, Rezko offered Obama a job with his company, Rezmar Corporation, but Obama turned it down.

Obama eventually found employment in 1993 with the aforementioned Chicago law firm Davis Miner Barnhill, which represented developers who built low-income housing with government funds. In 1995 one of the firm's clients -- the Woodlawn Preservation and Investment Corporation (WPIC) -- partnered with Rezmar Corporation in a project to convert an abandoned nursing home into low-income apartments. Obama was instrumental in helping Rezmar Corporation and WPIC strike their deal. Rezmar Corporation would also partner with WPIC clients in four later deals.

When Obama announced in 1995 that he was running for an Illinois Senate seat (which would be up for grabs in 1996), two of Tony Rezko's companies [donated](#) a total of \$2,000 to Obama's campaign. Over the course of the entire primary season, Rezko [raised](#) between \$10,000 and \$15,000 of the roughly \$100,000 Obama collected overall. Obama won the November 1996 election, and the district he represented included 11 of Rezko's 30 low-income housing projects.

Rezko [served](#) on the campaign committee for Obama's failed congressional run against U.S. Rep. Bobby Rush in 2000, raising between \$50,000 and \$75,000 of the estimated \$600,000 Obama collected for that race.

In 2001 Rezko's Rezmar Corporation stopped making its mortgage payments on the old nursing home it had converted into apartments, and the state of Illinois [foreclosed](#) on the building, which was located in Obama's Senate district.

In 2003 Obama announced that he would run for an Illinois seat in the U.S. Senate which would be open the following year. He again [named Rezko to his campaign finance committee](#). It is [estimated](#) that Rezko raised some \$160,000 for Obama during the Senate primary season.

In November 2004 Obama was elected U.S. Senator. A few months later, he and Rezko's wife, Rita, [purchased](#) adjacent pieces of property in Chicago's Kenwood neighborhood. Obama's portion of the deal involved a mansion for which he paid \$1.65 million -- \$300,000 below the seller's asking price. Meanwhile, Rezko's wife (who earned only \$37,000 per year and owned few assets) paid the full asking price -- \$625,000 -- for a vacant lot adjacent to

Obama's mansion.

At this time, Mr. Rezko was being [pursued by creditors](#) seeking more than \$10 million which Rezko owed on defaulted loans and failed business ventures. [At least 12 lawsuits](#) had been filed against Rezko and his businesses from November 2002 to January 2005, including one by the G.E. Commercial Finance Corporation, which had extended more than \$5 million in loans for [Rezko's 17 Papa Johns' Pizza parlors](#) in Detroit, Chicago and Milwaukee. In November 2004, G.E. obtained a court judgment against Mr. Rezko for the \$3.5 million that it said was outstanding on its loans.

Obama says he does not know why the Rezkos decided to purchase the vacant lot at that time. But the Rezkos' involvement was crucial because the owners of the house and the lot had [stipulated](#) that neither property could be sold unless a deal for the other also closed on the same day. Both deals indeed closed on the same day in June 2005.

At the time of the purchase, Mr. Rezko was ostensibly destitute; that is why his wife was named officially as the sole purchaser of the vacant lot.

In December 2005 Obama paid Rita Rezko \$104,500 for a strip that constituted one-sixth of her newly acquired lot, so that he could increase the width of his yard by ten feet. At the time of this deal, Tony Rezko was under federal investigation on charges that he had solicited kickbacks from companies seeking state pension business under his friend, Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich, for whom Rezko reportedly had [raised as much as \\$500,000](#). For more than two years before the property purchases, news articles also had raised [questions](#) about Mr. Rezko's influence over state appointments and contracts. Moreover, reports swirled that the FBI was investigating accusations of a shakedown scheme in which Mr. Rezko had suggested appointments to a state hospital board.

Obama [rejects any suggestion](#) that the Rezkos, by paying full price for the vacant lot, had enabled him to save \$300,000 on his home's purchase price and were perhaps seeking political favors in return. "Frankly, I don't think he [Mr. Rezko] was doing me a favor," [Obama has said](#).

In October 2006, Mr. Rezko [was indicted](#) on extortion charges. According to federal prosecutors, Rezko had funneled \$10,000 in kickback fees to Obama's 2004 Senate campaign.

Rezko remained free on bail until [January 28, 2008](#), when a U.S. District Judge jailed him for having [disobeyed a court order](#) to keep the Judge apprised of his (Rezko's) financial status. Most notably, Rezko had failed to tell the judge about [a \\$3.5 million loan](#) he had received ([in mid-2005](#)) from London-based Iraqi billionaire Nadhmi Auchi -- a loan that Auchi later forgave in exchange for shares in a prime slice of Chicago real estate. [According to](#) the Associated Press, Rezko "gave \$700,000 of the [\$3.5 million] to his wife [for the purchase of the vacant lot adjacent to Obama's mansion] and used the rest to pay legal bills and funnel cash to various supporters."

[7] David Freddoso, *The Case Against Barack Obama*, p. 116.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 203.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 197-200.

[10] Such an approach to "pregnancy prevention" had been tried before, with disastrous results. In the 1960s, leftists in politics and academia demanded that sex education be added to public-school curricula nationwide, and that government-funded "family planning" (abortion) services be made more widely available. By 1968, almost half of all U.S. schools—public and private, religious and secular—had instituted sex education programs for their students; these programs continued to spread widely throughout the American educational system in the 1970s.

"Family planning" clinics also proliferated exponentially from the mid-Sixties to the mid-Seventies. Between the late Sixties and 1978, federal expenditures for "family planning" and "population" legislation grew from \$16 million annually to \$279 million. Whereas in 1969 fewer than 250,000 teenagers used the services provided by abortion clinics, by 1976 their number had risen to 1.2 million. Between 1970 and 1980, the pregnancy rate among 15- to 19-year-olds rose by more than 40 percent. Among unmarried girls aged 15 to 17, birth rates rose 29 percent between 1970 and 1984—even as the number of abortions more than doubled during the same period.

[11] David Freddoso, *The Case Against Barack Obama*, p. 203.

[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 203-204.

[13] These rules to deter racial profiling, [say critics](#), lead to "de-policing." To avoid charges of racism if they question or arrest too many minority suspects, police find it easier to protect their careers by turning a blind eye and leaving minority criminals alone.

[14] Obama's premise of a discriminatory justice system is entirely mistaken, as Manhattan Institute scholar Heather MacDonald [points out](#):

"Let's start with the idea that cops over-arrest blacks and ignore white criminals. In fact, the race of criminals reported by crime victims matches arrest data. As long ago as 1978, a study of robbery and aggravated assault in eight cities found parity between the race of assailants in victim identifications and in arrests—a finding replicated many times since, across a range of crimes. No one has ever come up with a plausible argument as to why crime victims would be biased in their reports.

"Moving up the enforcement chain, the campaign against the criminal-justice system next claims that prosecutors overcharge and judges oversentence blacks.... In 1997, criminologists Robert Sampson and Janet Lauritsen reviewed the massive literature on charging and sentencing. They concluded that 'large racial differences in criminal offending,' not racism, explained why more blacks were in prison proportionately than whites and for longer terms. A 1987 analysis of Georgia felony convictions, for example, found that blacks frequently received disproportionately lenient punishment. A 1990 study of 11,000 California cases found that slight racial disparities in sentence length resulted from blacks' prior records and other legally relevant variables. A 1994 Justice Department survey of felony cases from the country's 75 largest urban areas discovered that blacks actually had a lower chance of prosecution following a felony than whites did, and that they [blacks] were less likely to be found guilty at trial. Following conviction, blacks were more likely to receive prison sentences, however—an outcome that reflected the gravity of their offenses as well as their criminal records.

"Another criminologist—easily as liberal as Sampson—reached the same conclusion in 1995: 'Racial differences in patterns of offending, not racial bias by police and other officials, are the principal reason that such greater proportions of blacks than whites are arrested, prosecuted, convicted and imprisoned,' Michael Tonry wrote in *Malign Neglect*.... The media's favorite criminologist, Alfred Blumstein, found in 1993 that blacks were significantly underrepresented in prison for homicide compared with their presence in arrest."

[15] The *Congressional Record* shows that the strict, federal anti-crack legislation dates back to 1986, when the [Congressional Black Caucus](#) (CBC) -- deeply concerned about the degree to which crack was decimating the black community -- strongly supported the legislation and actually pressed for even harsher penalties. In fact, a few years earlier CBC members had pushed President Reagan to create the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

[16] In their 1997 book *America in Black and White*, scholars Stephan and Abigail Thernstrom debunk the claim that big-city public schools attended mostly by blacks are under-funded in comparison to mostly white, suburban schools. Research actually shows that the higher the percentage of minority students in a school district, the higher the per-pupil expenditures. Mostly-minority school districts spend fully 15 percent more money on each student than districts where minority enrollment is below 5 percent. Moreover, per-pupil spending in the central cities of metropolitan areas—regardless of race—is identical to spending levels in the surrounding suburbs.

[17] Many critics of the Court's decision contended that it had undone the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling of 1954. But these charges were untrue. The *Brown* case addressed the issue of mandatory racial segregation in America's public schools, an issue which had become an international embarrassment for the United States. The case centered around a black third-grader named Linda Brown who had been denied admission to an all-white school located just a few blocks from her home in Topeka, Kansas, and was forced instead to take a bus to an all-black school in a more distant neighborhood. Because millions of other blacks nationwide faced the same dilemma, her case had far-reaching, monumental implications.

Miss Brown's father successfully sued the Topeka Board of Education on grounds that, contrary to a previous Supreme Court ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), segregated schools were separate but *not* equal and thus failed to fulfill the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantee of equal protection under the laws. On May 17, 1954, the Court handed down a 9-0 decision which [stated](#) unequivocally: "Where a State has undertaken to provide an opportunity for an education in its public schools, such an opportunity is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms."

In other words, *Brown* overturned the notion that it was permissible to use race as the basis for denying students the right to attend the schools they preferred. Like the 1964 Civil Rights Act that would become law ten years later, *Brown* was intended to remove barriers to integration by outlawing *de jure* segregation, but it issued no mandate for measures (like busing or racial quotas) to *forcibly* integrate America's schools or workplaces.

[18] Hoover Institution fellow and Stanford University sociologist Thomas Sowell, who has studied this matter in great depth, [explains](#) that the "'compelling' benefits of 'diversity' are 'as invisible as the proverbial emperor's new clothes'"; that "[n]ot only is there no hard evidence that mixing and matching black and white kids in school produces either educational or social benefits, there have been a number of studies of all-black schools whose educational performances equal or exceed the national average"; that "[s]ome black students -- in fact, whole schools of them -- have performed dramatically better than other black students and exceeded the norms in white schools," and that this phenomenon dates back as far as the late 19th century; that black students who have been bussed into white schools have seen no discernible rise in their standardized test scores -- "not even after decades of bussing"; and that "[n]ot only is there no hard evidence" for the dogma "that there needs to be a 'critical mass' of black students in a given school or college in order for them to perform up to standard," but that "such hard evidence as there is points in the opposite direction. Bright black kids have benefited from being in classes with other bright kids, regardless of the other kids' color."

[19] David Freddoso, *The Case Against Barack Obama*, p. 114.

[20] *Ibid.*, p, 90.

[21] *Ibid.*

[22] Contrary to Obama's claim, in May 2008 it was [announced](#) that more than 31,000 scientists across the U.S. -- including more than 9,000 Ph.D.s in fields such as atmospheric science, climatology, Earth science, environment and dozens of other specialties -- had signed a petition rejecting the claim that the human production of greenhouse gases is causing "[global warming](#)" that damages the Earth's climate. "There is no convincing scientific evidence that human release of [carbon dioxide](#), methane, or other greenhouse gases is causing or will, in the foreseeable future, cause catastrophic heating of the [Earth's atmosphere](#) and disruption of the Earth's climate," the petition stated. "Moreover, there is substantial scientific evidence that increases in atmospheric carbon dioxide produce many beneficial effects upon the natural plant and animal environments of the Earth."

[23] [Most legal scholars believe](#) the president has inherent constitutional authority to conduct warrantless wiretaps to collect foreign intelligence, and no statute -- including FISA -- can reverse that. Citing a [22-year-old precedent](#), the Federal Intelligence Surveillance Court of Review [ruled](#) in 2002 that "the president did have inherent authority to conduct warrantless searches to obtain foreign intelligence information.... We take for granted that the president does have that authority and, assuming that is so, FISA could not encroach on the president's constitutional power."

John Schmidt, President Clinton's associate attorney general from 1994-97, [wrote](#) that NSA [National Security Agency] surveillance against al-Qaeda "is consistent with court decisions and with the positions of the Justice Department under prior presidents"; FISA, he explained, "did not alter the constitutional situation." Schmidt quoted Clinton Deputy Attorney General Jamie Gorelick's 1994 testimony [before the Senate Intelligence Committee](#): "The Department of Justice believes, and the case law supports, that the president has inherent authority to conduct warrantless physical searches for foreign intelligence purposes."

[24] Obama and his fellow critics of military commissions accuse such tribunals of trampling on the civil rights and liberties of defendants who, the critics contend, should be entitled to all the rights and protections afforded by the American criminal court system -- where the standards that govern the admissibility of evidence are considerably

stricter than the counterpart standards in military tribunals.

In November 2006 Congress [passed](#) the Military Commissions Act of 2006, formally authorizing the adjudication of war crimes and terrorism cases in military courts. The House of Representatives vote was 253 to 168 (Republicans voted 219 to 7 in favor, Democrats 160 to 34 against); the overall Senate margin was 65 to 34 in favor.

[According to](#) the Defense Department, military tribunals, where military officers serve as the judges and jurors, are designed to deal with offenses committed in the context of warfare — including pillaging; terrorism; willfully killing or attacking civilians; taking hostages; employing poison or analogous weapons; using civilians as human shields; torture; mutilation or maiming; improperly using a flag of surrender; desecrating or abusing a dead body; rape; hijacking or hazarding a vessel or aircraft; aiding the enemy; spying; providing false testimony or perjury; soliciting others to commit offenses that are triable by military jurisprudence; and intending or conspiring to commit, or to aid in the commission of, such crimes.

The issue of whether it is appropriate to try someone accused of the aforementioned transgressions in a military court depends upon how one answers a single overriding question: Is terrorism a matter of war, or is it a legal issue where redress should be pursued via the criminal-justice system — like robbery, vandalism, or murder.

[25] "Our government, the Supreme Court [has ruled](#), "by thus defining lawful belligerents entitled to be treated as prisoners of war, has recognized that there is a class of unlawful belligerents not entitled to that privilege, including those who, though combatants, do not wear 'fixed and distinctive emblems.'"

Apart from the question of whether military tribunals are a good idea philosophically, trying terrorists and war criminals in civilian rather than military courts poses a number of serious problems from a practical standpoint. For one thing, the rules defining admissible and inadmissible evidence in each venue differ dramatically. In civilian trials, neither coerced testimony, nor confessions made in the absence of a Miranda warning, nor hearsay evidence can be presented to the court; in military tribunals the opposite is true, provided that the court determines such evidence to have "probative value to a reasonable person."

Attorneys Spencer J. Crona and Neal A. Richardson [explain](#) the profound significance of this:

"A relaxation of the hearsay rule might become critical in a prosecution for terrorism where it may be impossible to produce live witnesses to an event which occurred years earlier in a foreign country. For example, the indictment in the Pan Am Flight 103 case details the alleged purchase of clothing, by Libyan intelligence agent Abdel Bassett, for placement in the suitcase with the bomb. The clothing was used to disguise the contents of the suitcase containing the bomb, which was placed inside a radio-cassette player. Under the rules of evidence applicable in U.S. District Court, the prosecution would have to produce in person the Maltese shopkeeper to identify Abdel Bassett as the man who allegedly purchased the clothing back in 1988, as opposed to producing the investigator who tracked down the shopkeeper and showed him a photograph of Abdel Bassett. Even if we assume that the shopkeeper could be located six years or more after the fact, we recognize that it is nearly impossible to secure involuntary testimony from a witness who is a citizen of a foreign country, especially one that historically has been less than sympathetic to the United States. The reach of a federal court subpoena simply does not extend to Malta."

Another exceedingly significant weakness inherent in civilian trials for terrorists is the fact that in such proceedings, there exists a high likelihood that classified intelligence sources will be compromised. If the government wishes to present certain incriminating evidence in a civilian trial, which is open to the public, it must disclose its sources as well as the techniques it used for obtaining the information from them. This obviously would place those sources in grave danger and would quickly lead to the non-cooperation or disappearance of many of them — to say nothing of the future potential informants who would undoubtedly choose to avoid placing themselves in similar peril. Moreover, the effectiveness of any publicly disclosed information-gathering techniques would thereafter be permanently compromised. By contrast, military tribunals permit incriminating evidence to be presented to the judge and jury, while being kept secret from the public as well as from the defendant and his attorney.

For those who are concerned about legal precedent, it must be understood that the use of military tribunals for the adjudication of war crimes is in no way a departure from past practices. Military commissions were used commonly during the Civil War. Prior to that, General George Washington employed such tribunals during the American

Revolution in the late 18th century. In the era following the ratification of the U.S. Constitution, military tribunals were first convened by Major General Winfield Scott during the Mexican-American War of 1846-48, to adjudicate the alleged war crimes of American troops and Mexican guerrilla fighters alike. World War II also saw the use of military courts, the most famous case involving eight marines of the Third Reich (one of whom was an American citizen named *Herbert Haupt*) who rode a Nazi U-boat to the east coast of the United States, where, laden with explosives, they disembarked and set off toward various locations with the intent of bombing railroads, hydroelectric plants, factories, department stores, and defense facilities across the country. The saboteurs were wearing no military uniforms or identifying emblems when they were captured, meaning that they were, in the eyes of the law (as defined by the Supreme Court in *Ex parte Quirin*, quoted earlier in this article), "unlawful combatants." Refusing to grant the perpetrators civilian jury trials, President Franklin D. Roosevelt quickly created a secret military commission to hear their cases. All eight were convicted and sentenced to death, though two turncoats later had their sentences commuted to life in prison.

[26] David Freddoso, *The Case Against Barack Obama*, p. 96.

[27] Thomas Sowell, "[Price Controls](#)," *Capitalism* (November 16, 2005).
Dr. Sowell writes:

"It so happens there is a history of price controls and their consequences in countries around the world, going back literally thousands of years. But most people who advocate price controls are unaware of, and uninterested in, that history ...

"Prices are not just arbitrary numbers plucked out of the air or numbers dependent on whether sellers are 'greedy' or not. In the competition of the marketplace, prices are signals that convey underlying realities about relative scarcities and relative costs of production.

"Those underlying realities are not changed in the slightest by price controls.... Municipal transit used to be privately owned in many cities, until local politicians' control of fares kept those fares too low to buy and maintain buses and trolleys, and replace them as they wore out. The costs of doing these things were not reduced in the slightest by refusing to let the fares cover those costs.

"All that happened was that municipal transit services deteriorated and taxpayers ended up paying through the nose as city governments took over from transit companies that they had driven out of business -- and government usually did a worse job.

"Something similar has happened in rental housing markets, where rent control laws have kept the rents too low to build and maintain rental housing. Whether in Europe or America, rent-controlled housing is almost invariably older housing and more deteriorated housing.

"Costs don't go away because you refuse to pay them, any more than gravity goes away if you refuse to acknowledge it. You usually pay more in different ways, through taxes as well as prices, and by deterioration in quality when political processes replace economic process."

[28] David Freddoso, *The Case Against Barack Obama*, pp. 205-206.