

Obama loves our servicemen, but not their voting rights



By Brad O'Leary

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Many assume that the presidential debates help the public discern where each candidate stands on the issues. If only this were true. It is a most unfortunate irony that, much of the time, these made-for-TV sparring matches accomplish little more than to enable a candidate to pull yet another layer of wool over the eyes of John Q. Public. A case-in-point from last Friday's showdown is Barack Obama's professed honor and concern for our men and women in the military. Me thinks he doth profess too much.

"[W]e honor all the service that [our troops have] provided. Our troops have performed brilliantly," Obama told the nation on Friday night. "The question is for the next president, are we making good judgments about how to keep America safe precisely because sending our military into battle is such an enormous step."

Obama may claim to care deeply about the welfare of our troops, and say that the decision over whether or not to send our servicemen and women into combat is one that will weigh heavy on his mind, but unfortunately these are just words and platitudes. The real Barack Obama, as his record shows, thinks so little of our men and women in the military that he would rather see their votes suppressed than counted. In fact, he would rather secure the voting rights of convicted felons than those of our troops serving overseas.

Specifically, Senator Obama is the proud cosponsor of the deceptively labeled "Count Every Vote Act," a bill introduced by Senator Hillary Clinton of New York. This legislation is designed to override existing state laws and extend voting rights to over five million convicted felons who have finished serving their sentences.

In addition, the bill would require all 50 state governments to spend their taxpayers' dollars notifying these convicted felons of their right to vote. This is little more than a publicly funded "get out the vote" drive for jailbirds. Of course, it's little wonder why Obama and his fellow hard-left partisans in the Senate want this bill.

As economist and best-selling author Dr. John Lott reminds us, "virtually all felons are Democrats." According to Lott, from 1972 to 1996, 80 percent of felons would have voted Democrat, 93 percent would have voted for Clinton in 1996, and felons in Washington State "voted exclusively for Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry" in 2004.

Not surprisingly, a clear majority of American voters oppose Clinton felon-voting bill that Obama supports. According to a Zogby America poll, 54 percent of likely voters oppose the bill, while only 36 percent favor it (the remaining 10 percent are undecided).

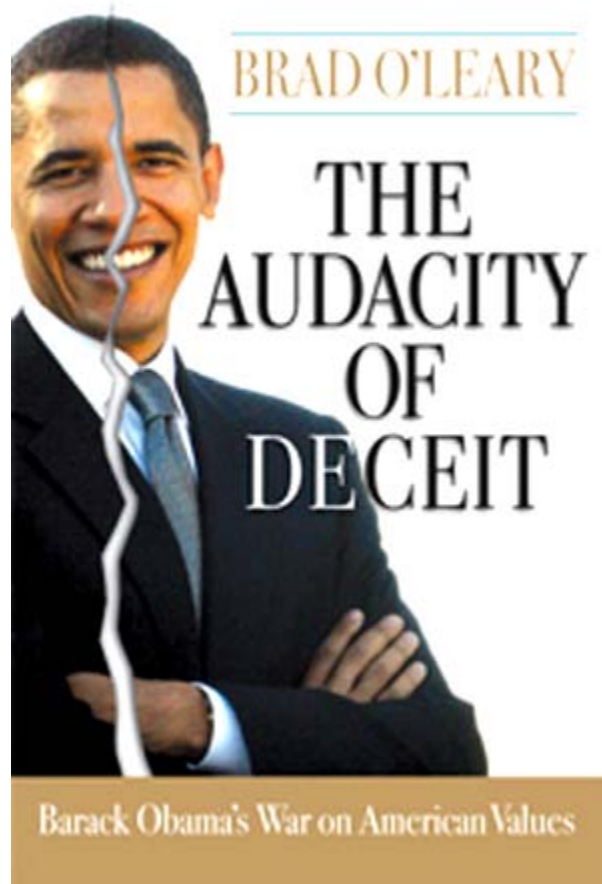
While Obama is busy fighting to get more felons in the voting booths, he refuses to cosponsor the "Military Voting Protection Act of 2008," which is also currently pending in the U.S. Senate. This bill was introduced based on congressional findings that "the ability of the members of the armed forces to vote while serving overseas has been hampered by numerous factors, including inadequate processes for ensuring their timely receipt of absentee ballots, delivery methods that are typically slow and antiquated, and a myriad of voting procedures that are often confusing."

In addition, Congress found that members of our armed forces, as well as other U.S. citizens overseas, requested nearly one million absentee ballots in 2006, but less than one-third of these ballots were received by local election officials. Clearly this is a problem and needs solving. But not in Obama's America.

In Obama's America, states would lose their ability to govern and all felons would have their voting "rights" restored and protected. States would also be forced to spend scarce taxpayer dollars driving felons to the polls. At the same time, America's bravest who are serving overseas would continue to have their voices suppressed, and many would continue to be denied an opportunity to help decide who *their* commander-in-chief will be.

Friday night showed once again that Obama is certainly capable of talking a good game, but as always, the devil is in the details – and the details hardly reflect Obama's carefully crafted sound bites.

It is not a little ironic that a man vying to be commander-in-chief would work to secure the voting "rights" of convicted felons, but turn a blind-eye to the voting rights of the servicemen who might one day be under his command.



About the author:

Brad O'Leary is the author of "The Audacity of Deceit: Barack Obama's War on American Values." To learn more about the book, and Obama's true positions on the issues, go to <http://www.barackobamate.com/>.

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