

By William Blum

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Is anyone keeping count?

I am. Libya makes six.

Six countries that Barack H. Obama has waged war against in his 26 months in office. (To anyone who disputes that dropping bombs on a populated land is act of war, I would ask what they think of the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor.)

America's first black president now invades Africa.

Is there anyone left who still thinks that Barack Obama is some kind of improvement over George W. Bush?

Probably two types still think so. 1) Those to whom color matters a lot; 2) Those who are very impressed by the ability to put together grammatically correct sentences.

It certainly can't have much otherwise to do with intellect or intelligence. Obama has said numerous things, which if uttered by Bush would have inspired lots of rolled eyeballs, snickers, and chuckling reports in the columns and broadcasts of mainstream media. Like the one the president has repeated on a number of occasions when pressed to investigate Bush and Cheney for war crimes, along the lines of "I prefer to look forward rather than backwards". Picture a defendant before a judge asking to be found innocent on such grounds. It simply makes laws, law enforcement, crime, justice, and facts irrelevant.

There's also the excuse given by Obama to not prosecute those engaged in torture: because they were following orders. Has this "educated" man never heard of the Nuremberg Trials, where this defense was summarily rejected? Forever, it was assumed.

Just 18 days before the Gulf oil spill Obama said: "It turns out, by the way, that oil rigs today generally don't cause spills. They are technologically very advanced." (*Washington Post*, May 27, 2010) Picture George W. having said this, and the later reaction.

"All the forces that we're seeing at work in Egypt are forces that naturally should be aligned with us, should be aligned with Israel," Obama said in early March. [2](#) Imagine if Bush had implied this — that the Arab protesters in Egypt against a man receiving billions in US aid including the means to repress and torture them, should "naturally" be aligned with the United States and — God help us — Israel.

A week later, on March 10, State Department spokesman P.J. Crowley told a forum in Cambridge, Mass. that Wikileaks hero Bradley Manning's treatment by the Defense Department in a Marine prison was "ridiculous, counterproductive and stupid." The next day our "brainy" president was asked about Crowley's comment. Replied the Great Black Hope: "I have actually asked the Pentagon whether or not the procedures that have been taken in terms of his confinement are appropriate and are meeting our basic standards. They assure me that they are."

Right, George. I mean Barack. Bush should have asked Donald Rumsfeld whether anyone in US custody was being tortured anywhere in the world. He could then have held a news conference like Obama did to announce the happy news — "No torture by America!" We would still be chortling at that one.

Obama closed his remark with: "I can't go into details about some of their concerns, but some of this has to do with Pvt. Manning's safety as well." [3](#)

Ah yes, of course, Manning is being tortured for his own good. Someone please remind me — Did Georgieboy ever stoop to using that particular absurdity to excuse prisoner hell at

Guantanamo?

Is it that Barack Obama is not bothered by the insult to Bradley Manning's human rights, the daily wearing away of this brave young man's mental stability?

The answer to the question is No. The president is not bothered by these things.

How do I know? Because Barack Obama is not bothered by anything as long as he can exult in being the president of the United States, eat his hamburgers, and play his basketball. Let me repeat once again what I first wrote in May 2009:

The problem, I'm increasingly afraid, is that the man doesn't really believe strongly in anything, certainly not in controversial areas. He learned a long time ago how to take positions that avoid controversy, how to express opinions without clearly taking sides, how to talk eloquently without actually saying anything, how to leave his listeners' heads filled with stirring clichés, platitudes, and slogans. And it worked. Oh how it worked! What could happen now, having reached the presidency of the United States, to induce him to change his style?

Remember that in his own book, "The Audacity of Hope", Obama wrote: "I serve as a blank screen on which people of vastly different political stripes project their own views."

Obama is a product of marketing. He is the prime example of the product "As seen on TV".

Writer Sam Smith recently wrote that Obama is the most conservative Democratic president we've ever had. "In an earlier time, there would have been a name for him: Republican."

Indeed, if John McCain had won the 2008 election, and then done everything that Obama has done in exactly the same way, liberals would be raging about such awful policies.

I believe that Barack Obama is one of the worst things that has ever happened to the American left. The millions of young people who jubilantly supported him in 2008, and numerous older supporters, will need a long recovery period before they're ready to once again offer their idealism and their passion on the alter of political activism.

If you don't like how things have turned out, next time find out exactly what your candidate means when he talks of "change".

Notes:

2. March 4, 2011, Democratic Party function, Miami, FL, CQ Transcriptions

3. *Los Angeles Times*, March 11, 2011