

Obama Has No Future for the People. *THE REVOLUTION DOES.*



August 2011, Afghanistan: Children play in the debris of a damaged house after a U.S. drone crash.



2008, Alberta, Canada. Aerial photo of massive open pit mines to get to oil sands and the production of a tar-like form of petroleum. The petroleum requires either strip mining or using large amounts of steam and solvents to force it to flow to wells. Tar-sands oil extraction produces three times more greenhouse gas than conventional oil production, causing vast destruction of forests and spoiling ecosystems.

Photo: AP

Predatory Wars Around the World

Obama has sustained and developed wars and military occupations in Iraq and Afghanistan, has initiated drone bombings in Pakistan, Yemen, and Somalia, is currently threatening war against Iran, and is developing or reestablishing a military presence in many other parts of the world.

- In 2009, the first year of Obama's administration, there were 51 reported drone bombings in Pakistan—there were 45 during the entire George W. Bush administration. Obama's use of drones has increased since. Obama has unleashed 284 drone attacks on Pakistan alone. Between 2,532 and 3,251 people have been killed by drone bombings in Pakistan since 2004, most of them in the Obama years. At least 175 of them have been children.
- The U.S. maintains a massive military occupation in Iraq, despite claims of a "withdrawal." The U.S. has left about 16,000 "embassy personnel"—mercenary contractors, spies, and military personnel—in Iraq. The U.S. is also carrying out \$12 billion worth of arms and training contracts in Iraq, with the first batch of 36 F-16 fighter jets set to be delivered in September 2014.
- In May 2012, the Obama administration announced a highly publicized agreement with Afghanistan's President Karzai to have U.S. military forces "leave" Afghanistan. In his speech announcing this agreement, Obama pledged to "finish the job" in Afghanistan. The agreement states the U.S. can maintain a military presence in Afghanistan until 2024.
- In June 2011, Obama ordered the U.S. to extend its drone bomb attacks to include Somalia.
- In the name of the "war on drugs," the U.S. military under Obama has established three bases in Honduras, in regions largely populated by Miskito Indians. On May 11, 2012, helicopters carrying U.S. personnel launched an air assault on a boat that killed two pregnant women and two youths, and severely wounded four other people.
- U.S.-led sanctions on Iran have resulted in severe shortages of medicine needed to treat people with life-threatening illnesses such as hemophilia, kidney disease, multiple sclerosis (MS), cancer, and thalassemia—putting in jeopardy the lives of an estimated six million Iranians who suffer from these diseases.

Crimes Against the Environment

Obama promised in 2008 that his administration would mark the "moment when the rise of the oceans began to slow and our planet began to heal." In reality, the devastation of our planet's ecosystems by the U.S. and this whole imperialist system has continued and even heightened under Obama.

- Under Obama the U.S. has continued to sabotage and undermine any international agreements that would enforce actual cuts in carbon and other greenhouse gases that are driving the warming of the earth and climate change. This is nothing short of criminal given that the future of our planet hangs in the balance, as the polar ice caps melt, seas rise, and more devastating droughts, storms, wildfires, and heat waves are becoming the new "normal."
- In the face of anti-scientific denial of the reality of climate change by right-wing lunatics, Obama has refused to make a fight of it, has downplayed the danger of climate change, and has counseled people to be patient while doing nothing of real substance to stop it.
- Like previous administrations, including Bush's, Obama continued the lack of drilling safety and environmental standards that led to the massive BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010 that dumped tens of millions of gallons of oil. The devastation to the ecosystem was then increased in ways yet untold with the spraying of unprecedented quantities of toxic chemical dispersants into the water. The government orchestrated the criminal act of covering up the extent of the spill and the damage it was doing to people and the gulf, and then attempted to sweep this under the rug, declaring the crisis over and past.
- After a short moratorium on offshore drilling, and with meaningless new "safety measures" put through, Obama opened up vast new areas of the eastern Gulf of Mexico, the Atlantic coastline, and the fragile north coast of Alaska to oil and natural gas drilling for the first time.
- Obama has bragged that under his watch the number of operating oil rigs has reached a record high and that the U.S. has added enough new oil and gas pipelines to "circle the earth and then some."
- After briefly withholding approval for the Keystone XL pipeline that is aimed to vastly increase the amount of dirty tar-sands oil pumped from the increasingly devastated forests of Alberta, Canada, into the U.S., Obama approved the southern leg of the pipeline. Now his State Department is studying a new pipeline route—with a decision put off until after the U.S. elections.
- The Obama administration has opened up huge new areas of the Powder River basin in Wyoming to allow the extraction of 2.35 billion tons of coal. Coal is the most carbon-polluting fuel there is. The coal now available to be mined and burned is the equivalent of the annual carbon emissions from 300 coal-fired power plants. This coal from Powder River alone represents 30 times more "dirty energy" development than Obama's development of "clean energy."
- On Obama's watch, there has been an expansion of hydraulic fracturing for natural gas (fracking). Fracking is wrecking groundwater and people's health and lives in increasingly large areas of the rural "heartland" of the U.S., spreading environmental destruction into previously untouched areas.

In a world marked by profound class divisions and social inequality, to talk about "democracy"—without talking about the *class nature* of that democracy and which class it serves—is meaningless, and worse. So long as society is divided into classes, there can be no "democracy for all": one class or another will rule, and it will uphold and promote that kind of democracy which serves its interests and goals. The question is: *which class* will rule and whether its rule, and its system of democracy, will serve the *continuation*, or the eventual *abolition*, of class divisions and the corresponding relations of exploitation, oppression and inequality.

Bob Avakian
BASics 1:22

Attacks on Fundamental Rights

Obama has taken for himself and future presidents unprecedented and sweeping power to arrest, detain indefinitely, and even assassinate people without judicial review or oversight. He has undermined and repudiated longstanding Constitutional rights such as habeas corpus and the right to a trial. He has presided over a pervasive government spy apparatus that monitors all forms of communication.

- Bradley Manning, a 24-year-old U.S. Army private, has been the victim of unjust and outrageous persecution by the military and the Obama administration for allegedly leaking hundreds of thousands of classified documents later published by WikiLeaks. The leaks include the *Collateral Damage* video, which shows a 2007 U.S. Apache helicopter attack in Iraq that gunned down civilians on a street, including journalists and a man who came onto the scene to help the victims. Manning has been imprisoned for over two years, often in extreme isolation that amounts to torture. He is now facing trial on heavy charges with a possible life sentence.
- At the end of 2011, Obama signed the National Defense Authorization Act. This ominous and highly repressive piece of legislation allows, among other things, a measure that allows the U.S. military to detain "terror suspects" indefinitely without charging them—including American citizens arrested in the United States.
- Obama has begun a program of "targeted killings," including of U.S. citizens, supposedly based upon a Department of Justice memo that his administration has refused to release. As journalist Glenn Greenwald wrote, with this law "not only does the President have the right to sentence Americans to death with no due process or charges of any kind, but his decisions as to who will be killed and why he wants them dead are 'state secrets' and thus no court may adjudicate their legality. *The due-process-free assassination of U.S. citizens is*

now reality." In other words, the president can order people killed without the targeted persons ever having a "day in court," or even being aware that they are under a death sentence. Every Tuesday morning, Obama and his "national security team" go over material described as being like "baseball cards" of alleged "terrorists" and decide who will be targeted for assassination by the U.S.

- Obama has upheld and taken further the program of torture and rendition begun by George W. Bush, and overturned the centuries-old legal principal of habeas corpus. Obama's administration submitted a two-sentence argument saying that people the U.S. takes into custody in Afghanistan have no legal standing to challenge their imprisonment there, embracing a key argument of former President Bush's legal team. Greenwald pointed out, "these are **not** prisoners captured in Afghanistan on a battlefield. Many of them have nothing to do with Afghanistan and were captured far, far away from that country—abducted from their homes and workplaces—and then flown to Bagram [a U.S. base] to be imprisoned."
- Massive electronic spying on U.S. citizens and people from and in other countries began under Bush but has accelerated under Obama. National Security Administration (NSA) whistleblower William Binney estimated in April of this year that since September 11, 2001, the NSA has intercepted "between 15 and 20 trillion" electronic messages. The NSA under the Obama presidency is building a \$2 billion center in Utah that will store "near-bottomless databases ... [of] all forms of communication, including the complete contents of private emails, cell phone calls, and Google searches, as well as all sorts of personal data trails—parking receipts, travel itineraries, bookstore purchases, and other digital 'pocket litter.' It is, in some measure, the realization of the 'total information awareness' program created during the first term of the Bush administration—an effort that was killed by Congress in 2003 after it caused an outcry over its potential for invading Americans' privacy."

If you try to make the Democrats be what they are not and never will be, you will end up being more like what the Democrats actually are.

Bob Avakian
BASics 3:12



Bradley Manning