

JOHN MCCAIN: WRONG ON KING HOLIDAY

As John McCain heads to Memphis on the anniversary of Dr. King's death, it's worth noting his record on the issue of a holiday in King's honor. When he was a Congressman in 1983, McCain voted against creating a federal Martin Luther King Holiday and his home state rescinded recognition of the holiday in 1987. While he has claimed his position has 'evolved' and that his original vote was 'wrong' his record of support for racist individuals, and his consistent votes against civil rights legislation belie that claim. And he has employed controversial individuals on his own campaign whose own nasty comments about Martin Luther King undermine McCain's claims of inclusivity and evolution.

McCain's Contorted Position on Federal King Holiday

McCain Voted Against Creating Martin Luther King Holiday. In 1983, McCain voted against a motion to suspend the rules and pass a bill to designate the third Monday of every January as a federal holiday in honor of the late civil rights leader, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The motion passed 89-77. [HR 3706, Vote 289, 8/2/83; CQ 1983]

McCain Sided With Senator Jesse Helms and Voted to Cut off Government Funds for a Martin Luther King Commission. McCain voted in favor of a Helms amendment "to prohibit federal financing for the Martin Luther King Jr. Federal Holiday Commission." [S Amdt 1738 Vote #127 5/24/94] [CQ Floor Votes # 127 5/24/94]

McCain Said His Position Has 'Evolved.' During a 2000 interview, McCain compared his evolution on this issue to former Arizona Sen. Barry Goldwater. "I believe that Barry Goldwater, to start with, regretted his vote on the 1964 Civil Rights Act," McCain said. "I think that Barry grew, like all of us grow and evolve. In 1983, when I was brand-new in the Congress, I voted against the recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King. That was a mistake, OK? And later I had the chance to ... help fight for ... the recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King as a holiday in my state." [www.salon.com 4/18/00; Accessed 4/2/08]

Arizona Governor Rescinded Martin Luther King Jr. Day. In 1987, One of newly elected Governor Evan Mecham's first acts in office was to rescind Arizona's recognition of the Martin Luther King Holiday. "Mecham strikes many voters as a simpleminded ideologue who is giving a bad name to the nation's second-fastest-growing state. After rescinding the Jan. 19 holiday honoring Martin Luther King Jr., Mecham defended the use of the term "pickaninnies" for blacks." [Time 11/9/87]

McCain Said He Thought Governor Was Correct in His Decision According to the Huffington Post, "In 1983, McCain voted against passing a bill to designate the third Monday of every January as a federal holiday in honor of King. Four years later, then-Arizona Governor Evan Mecham rescinded Martin Luther King Day as a state holiday, saying it had been established through an illegal executive order by his Democratic predecessor. McCain said he thought Mecham was correct in his decision." [Sam Stein, Huffington Post, 4/1/08]

McCain: Wrong on Key Issues for People of Color

McCain Consistently Voted Against The Civil Rights Act Of 1990. In 1990, McCain voted against a bill designed to address employer discrimination at least 4 times. According to the Washington Post, the "Civil Rights Act of 1990 is designed to overturn several recent Supreme Court rulings that made it much more difficult for individual employees to prove discrimination. The legislation, being fought by business, also would impose new penalties on employers convicted of job discrimination." [S 2104, [Vote #304](#), 10/24/90; [Vote #276](#), [Vote #275](#), 10/16/90; [Vote #161](#), 7/18/90; Washington Post, 7/9/90]

McCain Avoided Directly Answering Question on Affirmative Action, Finally Said He Opposed Quotas.

While appearing on *Hardball*, McCain was asked about his views on affirmative action. After criticizing teachers' unions, McCain said, "I want to test voucher programs. Cindy and I have chosen to send our 15-year-old daughter to a Catholic school, because we think that's the best." He added that he'd ensure that, "Every school and library in America is being wired to the Internet... But, no, I do not support quotas, and have seen the results of it." [NBC, "Hardball," 2/9/00]

McCain Would Not Support Affirmative Action for College Admissions. In a 2004 questionnaire, Senator McCain indicated he would not support affirmative action policies in public college admissions. [[2004 National Political Awareness Test- Senator McCain](#)]

McCain Voted Against Addressing The Disproportionate Number Of Minority Children In Prison. In 1999, McCain voted to table an amendment that required States to address juvenile delinquency prevention efforts and system improvement efforts designed to reduce, without numerical standards or quotas, disproportionate number of juvenile members of 'racial minority groups' who come in contact with juvenile justice system. The motion to table passed 52-48. [S 254, [Vote #130](#), 5/19/99]

McCain Strategist Opposed King Holiday

McCain Defended Controversial Spokesman Richard Quinn, McCain's who called the MLK Holiday

"Vitriolic and Profane." Richard Quinn, was a South Carolina "strategist" for McCain in the 2000 campaign. In a Partisan View column, Richard Quinn wrote, "King Day should have been rejected because its purpose is vitriolic and profane. By celebrating King as the incarnation of all they admire, they [black leaders] have chosen to glorify the histrionic rather than the heroic and by inference they spurned the brightest and the best among their own race. Ignoring the real heroes in our nation's life, the blacks have chosen a man who represents not their emancipation, not their sacrifices and bravery in service to their country; rather, they have chosen a man whose role in history was to lead his people into a perpetual dependence on the welfare state, a terrible bondage of body and soul." Quinn has also advocated electing David Duke, and sold T-Shirts through his magazine celebrating Abraham Lincoln's assassination. [Partisan View, Southern Partisan, Fall, 1983; Partisan View, Southern Partisan, Winter, 1989, PFAW Release, 2/17/00] [[Spartanburg Herald-Journal](#), 12/23/05; [Vanity Fair](#), 11/04]

McCain Defended Quinn as 'Respected' and a 'Fine Man.' Despite Mr. Quinn's writings and history of racial insensitivity, McCain defended him as a 'respected' and 'fine man' and refused to fire him. [[Associated Press](#), 2/18/00; [New York Times](#), 2/8/00]

McCain Is the Same As Bush: Wrong on Key Progressive Issues

McCain on Iraq: "I Don't Think Americans Are Concerned If We're There For 100 Years or 1,000 Years or 10,000 Years." In an interview on "Face the Nation," host Bob Scieffer asked McCain about staying in Iraq for 100 year. McCain responded, "We've got to get Americans off the front line, have the Iraqis as part of the strategy, take over more and more of the responsibilities. And then I don't think Americans are concerned if we're there for 100 years or 1,000 years or 10,000 years. [CBS, "Face the Nation," [1/06/08](#)]

McCain Housing Speech Blamed Americans Who "Bought Homes They Couldn't Afford" and Argued Against Vigorous Federal Intervention. On March 25th, John McCain delivered a speech on the housing crisis. According to the *New York Times*, "McCain appeared to be trying to confront questions about his dexterity in dealing with the economy, a subject that he has admitted is not his strongest suit." During the speech, McCain said, "Some Americans bought homes they couldn't afford, betting that rising prices would make it easier to refinance later at more affordable rates." The *New York Times* reported, "Mr. McCain argued this week against a vigorous federal intervention to address the crisis, saying Washington should not bail out banks and homeowners who in his view had knowingly taken on risky mortgages." [New York Times, 3/26/08; 3/28/08]

McCain's Plan: Tax Cuts To For Businesses. According to the *Associated Press*, John McCain proposed a long-term economic plan that would lower the corporate income tax rate and provide several other tax breaks for businesses. McCain proposed cutting the corporate tax rate to 25 percent from 35 percent. McCain said that his plan was “pro growth, less taxes and less spending” versus “the Democrats’ tired ideas of tax and spend.” [Associated Press, 1/17/08]

McCain Repeatedly Voted Against Raising The Minimum Wage. In the senate, John McCain voted at least eight times against measure to increase the minimum wage. [HR 2, [Vote #23](#), 1/24/07; S.Amdt. 44 to S. 256, [Vote #26](#), 3/07/05; S.Amdt. 128 to S. 256, [Vote #27](#), 3/07/05; S.Amdt. 3079 to S.Amdt. 2951 to S.Con.Res. 101, [Vote #76](#), 4/07/00; S.Amdt. 1383 to S. 1429, [Vote #239](#), 7/30/99; S. 96, [Vote #94](#), 4/28/99; S .Amdt. 3540 to S.Amdt. 3559 to S. 1301, [Vote #278](#), 9/22/98; S.Amdt. 4272 to H.R. 3448, [Vote #183](#), 7/06/96]

NOW: In A “Breathtaking Turnabout” McCain “Embraced” the Bush Tax Cuts. The *New York Times* reported, “But an equally breathtaking turnabout occurred earlier in the year, when Mr. McCain embraced the Bush tax cuts he had once denounced as an unaffordable giveaway to the rich. In an interview with National Review, Mr. McCain justified his reversal by saying, ‘Tax cuts, starting with Kennedy, as we all know, increase revenues.’” [New York Times, 10/9/07]

- **THEN: McCain Voted Against the Bush Tax Cut Citing Benefits For The Wealthy.** In 2001, John McCain voted against final passage of the Bush tax cut. McCain said, “I cannot in good conscience support a tax cut in which so many of the benefits go to the most fortunate among us at the expense of middle-class Americans who need tax relief.” [H.R. 1836, Roll Call Vote #170, [5/26/01](#); [Los Angeles Times](#), 5/27/01]