

# THE HUFFINGTON POST

## If Fighting for the Majority Is 'Radical,' Call Me Radical

By: Richard (RJ) Eskow – November 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012

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An extremist Web site called WorldNetDaily says that the Campaign For America's Future, where I am a Senior Fellow, is "radical." They're worked up about our Wage Class War Web site, which documents 2012's successful class-based political campaigns and promotes this winning strategy in future elections.

In the hallucinogenic haze that is today's far right, apparently it's "radical" to promote ideas and policies supported by most American voters -- including, in many cases, most *Republicans*.

Agreeing with Republican voters isn't *really* radical, of course. So who, exactly, thinks "Wage Class War" is unreasonable?

### **Conspiracy Central**

WorldNetDaily is a leading source for those tinfoil-hat "birther" theories about President Obama. It also says that he's "fomenting civil unrest" so that he can implement "martial law." Founder Joseph Farah thinks Americans are approaching the same apocalyptic fate as the ancient Israelites who were "destroyed by God," adding that we're in "full apostasy boogie." (That must be something like Janis Joplin's "Full Tilt Boogie" -- but with lousier music.)

Still, there's a method to the Daily's madness. When it published a piece claiming that Social Security promotes homosexuality and wages war on the family, for example, it was executing a strategy other right-wingers have accurately (and approvingly) described as "Leninist." The same is true of its attacks on public schools, which it calls "brainwashing hubs."

It's tempting to write them off as kooks, but they have lots of readers. No wonder so many Americans think Obama's a Muslim. A Daily contributor says he has a "secret Muslim ring" that he uses to signal his Jihadist pals.

They're the comic-book ravings of well-funded - and surprisingly influential - extremists.

### **Don't You Know There's a War On?**

The lead paragraph in the Daily's piece says the Campaign For America's Future (CAF) is a "radical think tank" whose new site is "urging politicians and activists to wage class warfare while hailing what it calls a new era in politics -- the use of class warfare to win elections."

I don't know where the writer gets some of his weirder conspiratorial ideas, but I do know this: a class war has been raging for decades, and it wasn't the American majority who started it. But it's on. That war is an all-out economic assault on anyone who isn't at the very pinnacle of wealth, power, and privilege.

That war's been remarkably successful, too. The US now has more economic inequality than most developed nations -- even more than *Egypt* -- as the wealthiest among us have seized an ever-growing share of our national income. A CBO study shows that the wealthiest 1 percent of households increased their share of our national income from 20 percent in 1979 to 40 percent in 2007. And after 2008's financial crisis, the wealthy enjoyed all the economic growth that followed.

All of it.

The American majority didn't start this class war. But we deserve to win it.

### **Winning the War**

And make no mistake: The "class war" argument is a winning one. This year's election proves it. So do the polls. Our own polling shows that voters overwhelmingly reject the WorldNetDaily/John Boehner agenda.

Very large majorities -- including most Republicans -- want higher taxes for millionaires and reject tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy. They'd rather invest in growing the economy than focus on deficit reduction. They (including a resounding 71% of Republicans) want to tax corporations' overseas profits. They (including 72 percent of Republicans) reject Medicare cuts and reject lower "cost of living adjustments" (including 61% of Republicans) as a way to cut Social Security.

Sorry, conservatives: They're just not that into you.

These findings are consistent with earlier polls showing that 75 percent of Republicans -- including 76 percent of Tea Party members -- oppose Social Security deficit-reduction

cuts. A slim majority of Republicans even supported the "public option," the right's *bête noire*. That plan would let all Americans buy into Medicare, rather than rely on the flailing and overpriced private health insurance system.

The verdict is in: The American people know there's a class war waging - and they support a strong defense.

### **Red (State) Dawn**

Some say the right-wing class war began with Lewis F. Powell's infamous 1971 memo, which urged corporate America to attack the free expression of ideas in universities, monitor and bully the press, and inundate the public with misleading propaganda. (See Thom Hartmann and Dave Johnson for more.) That memo's reflected in "Discover the Networks," which attacks anyone whose opinion it dislikes by claiming they knew somebody who knew somebody who knew somebody else ... who *also* held opinions it dislikes.

Think of it as "Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon" for McCarthyites.

WorldNetDaily's Aaron Klein approvingly quotes Discover the Networks in his attack on CAF. He also thinks it's quite damning that at some time or another CAF was connected with an organization that was connected to <gasp> ... George Soros. But then, Klein's written a book called *The Manchurian President: Barack Obama's Ties to Communists, Socialists and Other Anti-American Extremists*. Enough said.

Where does WorldNetDaily get *its* money? Farah got extremely nasty with a reporter who dared to ask that question -- and refused to answer. So we don't know who financed and set up this operation.

C'mon, guys: Let's see your *birth certificate*.

### ~~Lennon & McCartney~~ Lenin & McCarthy

McCarthyism is one right-wing strategy. Another 's laid out in a paper published by the right-wing Cato Institute. It advised fellow travellers to undermine Social Security with a "Leninist strategy" of "neutralizing" its elderly supporters, while misleading younger ones into thinking it won't be there when they retire -- a strategy we're saying played out today in the "fiscal cliff" and deficit-reduction talks. (See Michael Hiltzik or the original paper.)

But the public's smarter and more vigilant than they thought, and it still strongly supports Social Security. That's bad news for Vladimir Ilyich Cato.

It's also bad news for WorldNetDaily, whose approach could be called "Leninism squared": neutralize *anybody* with different opinions, while arguing that the government itself is an illusion ... or a conspiracy.

## **I, Radical**

If it's radical to support the American majority, consider me a proud radical. If it's radical to defend important and successful social programs, and to work to make them even stronger, count me in.

And if it's class war to defend ordinary Americans from Wall Street greed and corporate criminality, or to fight for a society where everyone has a fair chance to get ahead, then call me a class warrior.

I've got friends, too -- and *they've* got friends, and *they've* got friends, and *they've* got friends ... enough to cause a computer meltdown at Discover The Networks. That's why we're winning elections. And we don't plan to stop until this war is won ... for the good guys.

Here's a news flash for the folks at WorldNetDaily: If they think it's "radical" to defend Social Security, fight for Medicare, and make sure that the wealthy pay their fair share of taxes, then stick around. You ain't seen nothin' yet.