

**McCain or Obama, the system remains the same**  
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**Pak Sako**

The third, lesser-known candidate in the 2008 American presidential elections was Ralph Nader, a man who was named by

Time magazine as one of the '100 Most Influential Americans in the Twentieth Century'.

Having compared the policies of all three candidates including Barack Obama and John McCain, it can be arguably concluded that Ralph Nader stands out for having the most honest, socially just and humane, public-centred and Earth-friendly proposals.

These include, among others, reversing the unjust US policy in the Middle East, aggressively cracking down on corporate crime and corporate welfare and taxing securities speculators (who triggered the current global financial crisis) so that they are made to pay for their mistakes, not the public).

He also advocated defending, restoring and strengthening the civil justice system, prioritising the creation of a solar energy economy and saying no to nuclear power and cutting the US's bloated and wasteful US\$600 billion-a-year military budget.

None of which are on Barack Obama's agenda.

If the Malaysian opposition coalition comprising PKR, DAP and PAS wish to gain extra policy edge over the ruling coalition led by Umno, they may do well by studying the character and drive of Nader's socio-economic and environmental policies.

If one takes the time to examine the full suite of policies and ideas that Nader has espoused during his career as an attorney, political activist and independent political candidate, the shine of Barack Obama suddenly turns somewhat dull.

We come to realise how Obama, for all his rhetoric and celebrity and gloss is still part of the old guard. The Democrats' and the Republicans' scope for bringing about change is bounded so long as they are beholden to the very powerful interest groups.

The system - Obama or McCain - remains essentially the same.

And so if I were an American, 'Citizen Nader' is the man for whom my vote would have been cast.

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