

Swing the Pendulum. Make History. Vote.

**A DailyKos.com Dairy Entry, a My.BarackObama.com Blog Entry, and
An E-Mail to Progressive Activists**

November 4, 2008

Fellow Citizens:

This is indeed a historic election, and for reasons more significant than its being the longest and costliest in U.S. history. Underlying it all is the almost palpable sense that after decades of abuse, we—the people of the United States—are reasserting our fundamental right to power. The pendulum, which swung to the Right—and shifted the balance of wealth and power to the top—with the election of Ronald Reagan, has begun to swing in a more liberating direction.

For the first time in our history, after centuries of hard work and personal sacrifice by countless civil rights activists—from the abolitionists through Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. to people of every race in every corner of society today—we the people are finally poised to elect as our chief executive and commander in chief an American of color, other than white. Are we finally sensible enough as individuals and as a people to not fear those who are harmlessly different from ourselves, to not be divided and then conquered along such lines, and to entrust power to one of "those people"—any of us—if he, or she, proves worthy?

For the first time since the Great Depression, we the people are confronting economic turmoil

powerful enough to wipe out our livelihoods, life savings, and national treasury—a crisis worldwide that has humbled the mighty who had defied regulation and has prompted the taxpaying masses, bailing out interests "too big to fail," to demand more control. Will our governments again govern—keeping too much money and too much power out of the hands of too few all-too-human beings—for the prudent, longterm benefit of us all?

For only the second time in history, we the people have the power to render our world as uninhabitable as our neighboring planets—the first time, by the threat of nuclear war; the second, a combustion product of fossil fuels. But we also have it within our power not only to survive but also to thrive, by remaking our commerce and industry more friendly to our one and only home. Will we realize that there is ultimately no profit in being shortsighted?

For the second time since the end of the Cold War—Mister Bush squandered our international good will by misleading our nation and world post-9/11—we the people of the United States have the opportunity to refocus our unequalled, yet currently overstretched military power as well as our much-maligned, yet considerable diplomatic prowess to isolate, undercut, and

ultimately defeat those who pose us actual harm and to build and rebuild alliances that prevent conflict and, thus, spare us and others the loss of priceless lives and limbs as well as billions or trillions of dollars. Will we re-stabilize our all-too-dangerous world and restore the good name of our good nation?

For the first time in U.S. history, we the people are confronted with the vile necessity of re-condemning torture, rejecting trials without due process of law, restoring the charge-me-or-let-me-go right of habeas corpus, stopping the spying and other invasions of privacy upon our fellow citizens without establishing probable cause in at least some court of law, and otherwise reigning in the powers and rewriting the horrid precedents of a president who has defied virtually any constitutional limits on his power. Didn't America revolt once before against an abusive, incompetent, self-righteous King George?

And of course, like no other time in U.S. history, the citizenry has been informed (and misinformed) and energized to turn out in record numbers and to contribute in record amounts, from record numbers of small donors, by means of the Internet and other new technologies, sweeping the globe and bringing into play states whose voters were once thought unreachable by Democrats. The Red and Blue divisions of the nation are beginning to dissolve, as the United States at least somewhat re-unite.

The history of the nation and world will surely record the Internet as one of the most democratizing forces ever, for good or otherwise;

dictatorships know that full well, as they viciously censor the free flow of ideas over the Web. Knowledge is indeed power. As Thomas Jefferson said, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be." But with power comes responsibility.

All too many of the powers-that-be have abused their power. Now, we the people of the United States have a truly historic opportunity to demonstrate to ourselves and to the world, watching closely as stakeholders in our intertwined fate, that we have the maturity—the sense of duty to ourselves and to others—to govern ourselves wisely and well.

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