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on issues affecting African Americans
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Cover Story
Down to the Wire
The African World
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Ok folks, it is time to decide. Do we feel that there is nothing particularly different between Obama and McCain such that it does not matter who wins, or, in the alternative, have we concluded that there is enough that is different that we MUST cast our vote for Senator Obama?

In case you have not noticed, i would suggest that we vote for Obama.

I do not want to repeat some of the very strong arguments made as to why to support Obama--even with reservations--that have been offered by others, including in the pages of **BlackCommentator.com**. I believe that it is completely legitimate to hold reservations, including significant reservations, regarding an Obama presidency while at the same time recognizing that it is essential for us to vote for him.

The piece that i do wish to focus on, however, is the McCain/Palin ticket and the question of "irrationalism." I did not think much about the political Right and its tendency toward the irrational until, many years ago, watching a documentary about human evolution where it became clear that those who were attacking the theory of evolution were not just attacking evolution, but were guided by a theory that was irrational. The attack on human evolution was guided by fear, emotion, mysticism and demagoguery, and was not seeking concrete and scientific answers to the question of the development of humanity. It became further clear that the attack on evolution was linked to a larger *irrationalist* approach to politics and society that was representative of the extreme political Right.

The McCain/Palin ticket is an interesting coalition between what can be described as the "corporate Right" [McCain] and the "right-wing populists" [Palin]. While McCain is no enemy of opportunism and demagoguery, Palin is driven by an ideological view that

is probably quasi-fascist in nature, and certainly is irrationalist. She is a proponent of the myth of the small town (read: white, no minorities, reactionary); an opponent of choice; has been aligned with white Alaskan separatists; focuses the white working person on their "cultural" antagonism with the so-called Eastern Elite; knows next to nothing about international affairs but is prepared to bring us to the brink of war with Russia and is a fanatically uncritical supporter of Israel.

It is important to understand that McCain and Palin are not the same. This is not to let McCain off the hook. To the contrary, for reasons of crude political opportunism he made a decision that he had to ally with Palin both to energize his base but also in a calculated appeal to women and independent voters. Yet, his political objectives are not the same as Palin's.

What Palin represents is very dangerous, which is not to say that McCain is a pussy cat. Palin represents the voice of a segment of white small business and working people. It is the voice of those who believe that they have been betrayed by a society that led them to believe that as long as they were loyal to their whiteness and were oblivious to what the USA did/does overseas (a perverse interpretation of patriotism) that their lives and the lives of their children would improve. While this was certainly true in a great many respects, since the mid 1970s there has been a downhill slide for the average working person in the USA in terms of living standard. Many white people have interpreted this downhill slide as being the result of a betrayal by the elite in favor of Jews, people of color, immigrants, gays and lesbians, and women. These individuals have refused to accept that there could be something toxic about the system and so they go in search of enemies.

Palin speaks for these individuals and she does so with a vengeance. For whatever weaknesses she has, she is no idiot and neither are those who constitute her mass base. Given this, progressives must pay serious attention to not only defeating McCain/Palin but also neutralizing this base (winning over who we can win over).

In that context, while an Obama victory would not represent the fundamental defeat of the political Right, it would represent a major setback for them. They will quickly maneuver to recoup, but despite this there will be some breathing room in which we can raise issues about economic justice, racial justice, gender justice, the environment and war. We can work at a feverish pace to further destabilize the political Right and work towards the ACTUAL development of a progressive bloc that goes well beyond the objectives and realities of an Obama presidency.

That said, we have to start Tuesday by voting the right way. There is too much at stake to do a protest vote. Yes, an oppressive system will remain irrespective of who is elected on November 4th, but i would much rather have some of our most dangerous enemies thrown off balance, if even for a few moments, than have them sharpening their knives in glee.

Vote Obama!

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BlackCommentator.com Executive Editor, Bill Fletcher, Jr., is the Executive Editor of BlackCommentator.com, a Senior Scholar with the [Institute for Policy Studies](#), the immediate past president of [TransAfrica Forum](#) and co-author of the book, [Solidarity Divided: The Crisis in Organized Labor and a New Path toward Social Justice](#)


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