

"Writing the truth
as I see it;
trying not to
offend
those who will
disagree."

The truth as I see it™

Idaho Common Sense™



Craig L. Bosley, MD

What really happened on November 4th?

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What really happened on November 4th? Whom did we elect as President? Did we elect a liberal, leftist, socialist President; a gun control President or a welfare President?

Maybe we elected an African-American President, a hyphenated President that Theodore Roosevelt expressed displeasure with in a speech in 1915 saying, "There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism ... This is just as true of the man who puts 'native' before the hyphen as of the man who puts German or Irish or English or French before the hyphen. Americanism is a matter of the spirit and of the soul. Our allegiance must be purely to the United States."

We hear all these descriptions of our new President, but on November 4th we did not elect any of these men. We simply elected an American President, the 44th President of the United States. Nothing more. Moreover, I believe President-elect Obama would agree.

But how did he get elected? He should not have been the candidate nor should he have won the election. No one knew him. He had little experience and minimal national exposure. But, he got people excited. He got people to donate money. He got people to register. He got people to vote. He was elected because he touched the most people. He ran what historians may view as the finest campaign for the Presidency in the history of our country. Both candidates had messages. Both made their case. Both did their best. One message won and one message lost.

The voters were unhappy with the past eight years and followed the advice of Thomas Jefferson when he

wrote, "Should things go wrong at any time, the people will set them to rights by the peaceable exercise of their elective rights."

And these same voters elected a new President. Now what? What should those who did not vote for Barack Obama do now? Is it time to get even? Is it time to treat him the way President Bush was treated? Why not? There is plenty of ammunition, plenty of questions, plenty of innuendos. Fair's fair. Shouldn't Obama face the same assaults, the same outrageous claims, and the same character assassinations that Bush received? Or, can we do better?

Is it right to offer character assassinations of the man in the most powerful office in the world? If we refuse reasoned debate and instead assault the President's character, does that damage his character, or does that more accurately reveal our own lack of character? It is certainly easier to attack the character of the President than intelligently debate the issues. Perhaps the assaults suggest those making the statements actually have nothing intelligent to offer to the discussion.

Perhaps, if not the man, at least the office of the President deserves to be treated with respect. When President Reagan walked into the Oval Office on the day of his first Inaugural, he got goose bumps and wasn't ashamed to say so. Don't we owe the office of the President of the United States some goose bumps? Doesn't the President, deserve our respect, even in the face of our disagreement?

So, what do we do? How do we move forward? We do what we always have done. We make our

feelings known. We make our opinions known. We compliment. We complain. We criticize. We disagree. We challenge. We protest.

We may not like the President. We may not agree with the President. We may even be working to get someone elected to replace him in four years. Nevertheless, he is our President, and he represents the Constitution of the United States of America and the office of the Presidency. He has earned our respect and he deserves our respect.

Was this Presidential campaign and election what our Founding Fathers designed and envisioned? Did our democracy work? Did our Constitution work? Would the Founding Fathers be pleased? I think so. I think we paid our respects to them, honoring that amazing experiment of their design; a government created and selected by the people.

What really happened on November 4th? On November 4th we witnessed the greatest system of government in the history of the world select a new President without armies, without wars, without a *coup d'état*.

And on January 20th we will once again witness the marvel of our government as Barack Obama, the 44th President of the United States says, "I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

Over 200 years later, our Constitution still works. We owe our Founding Fathers a thank you.