

The Problem is Politics...

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Because I noted last week that Iran was in the headlines once again, one person said that my Iran focus was *'as bad as that of Lou Dobbs on immigration'* but another person said that I seemed to be *'a voice of reason and optimism...'*

Okay, I've been warned. I will address the real issue - **dysfunctional politics!**

Solving the problems of Wall Street, healthcare, Social Security, tax reform and foreign policy requires compromise and support from both sides of the aisle, a highly unlikely possibility under the current system. Advocates of sensible, compromise legislation often find themselves marginalized by their party's leadership and continually under attack by special interests and sensationalist media like FOX and ideological attack groups. Both parties have been captured by money, the PACs and the special interests and have become useless. We have created over 200 Congressional caucuses, dedicated to particular countries, regions, races and ethnicities, specific issues or special interests, where 50 years ago we had a mere four. Now we end up with trivia, endless debate with little substance and a system that has become partisan to the point of ineffectiveness.

Today's 'crisis on Wall Street' was not a surprise. Everyone involved was making money and knew that the market had problems. "Since when is our Government supposed to protect people and companies from their own financial recklessness?" ask my friends. This might be the wave of the future, no matter who gets elected, unless both sides agree to begin changing the way that things get done right now. Without grassroots support, real change won't happen. In his book, [The Post-American World](#), Fareed Zakaria offers some very interesting perspectives on the history of empires.

I believe that Senator Obama is the only person attempting to bring a new level of dignity to the election process – and ultimately to the Office of the President - something that we haven't seen before, something that we could all look up to and take pride in. I also believe that he is one of the few people that we have today with the intellect and the vision to succeed in that capacity, if he can win the election. And I say if because, like it or not, there are still plenty of apathetic people not taking responsibility for themselves and waiting for others to solve their problems. There are also enough others that oppose this man and mask their bigotry with lies and innuendo to the disservice of us all. If he wins, he'll have earned it.

I have never thought of myself as a Democrat or a Republican or as having race, religion or gender biases but we all have opinions that pull us together. The six years of the Iraq War helped create some of the problems that are in our future, have [clearly focused my outrage](#) and have helped me to identify what is important. I have nothing against hockey moms or Harvard-educated moms or just plain moms; I love them all. Governor Palin is supposed to make you forget that Senator McCain represents four more years of Bush politics and nothing more. Just because I'm a veteran doesn't mean that I'm in favor of putting my loved ones in harm's way, in support of fabricated lies and political agendas, or that I'm biased toward war heroes.

A movement that was started in April called [Change Congress](#) lets candidates and citizens use technological and Internet tools to pledge support for basic changes to reduce the distorting influence that money has in Washington. While it may take years to purge and change the system, this is a move in the right direction for good reason that builds upon the success of several others reform groups in order [to return the power over Congress to the people](#). I believe such an effort can eventually make a difference. However, I shall hedge that bet and I will vote for Obama. It's time for a change...