

What This Inauguration Means To Me...

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Dear Michelle –

Thank you for your special note. I only needed to ponder your question for a few moments to find my answer. What this Inauguration means to me is '*a new beginning for our Nation*' in so many ways. And it comes at a time when many of our people are in need of a fresh start, when America, as world leader, needs to explore innovative diplomatic efforts and when all of us, as collective caretakers of this troubled planet, need to step up to and embrace, both in word and deed, the global challenges that we face.



Barack says that this is about us, but I say that it is about him... and you. He is unique and you visibly complement him. Without the Obamas taking on the mantle of First Family next Tuesday, I'm reasonably convinced that there would not be any new beginnings for us. I heard the passion in his speech, I saw the caring in his eyes and I felt the love that you openly share. I think that it is wonderful – but it must be both exhilarating and frightening for you. Personally, I am so thankful that you have come into

all our lives at this time. You have renewed my basic values and given me something to live up to, along with a future to anticipate, a sense of participation in its creation and hope for my grandbabies and me... and I just turned 67 two weeks ago!

I was never involved in politics before nor had I thought of myself as a Democrat or a Republican or as someone with race, religion or gender biases... but your husband has changed all that; he alone inspired and energized me. In the wake of September 11th, I had become concerned with the blatant prejudice that began to grow and fester in this country toward people of Middle East origin and culture. I had worked for our Government in Iran in the 1970s and I had optimistic feelings about the Middle East that I knew. I disagreed with our unilateral hostilities and I was frustrated with the direction that our country was moving in. To voice my

objections, I began to write about these issues on the Internet in order to make others aware of the problems we had in our democracy. I was looking for change.

Barack Obama gave me that hope the first time that I heard him speak; I didn't even know who he was until only a few years ago. I actually wrote a letter to him in 2006 because the press had been giving him nothing but the highest praise for his views. I asked him to lead the way in the Senate to stop the politicizing of the war on terror. I also suggested that he set the example for Washington and put the Nation's focus on honesty and integrity once again. He exceeded my wildest expectations and he has already succeeded in doing this with a campaign of decency and honor. That letter had even suggested that he not run for the presidency in order to keep his integrity and to just continue as a world leader. I had never imagined that he would have the strength for doing both!

After working for more than 40 years within the DOD, the VA and the private sector, I am ready to personally contribute in whatever way I can to make this presidency and our Nation the best that it can be. Obviously, we cannot live without a stabilized economy and we cannot ignore the turmoil in the Middle East or forget our commitment to getting the troops home quickly and out of harms way. The Barack Obamas bring a new level of dignity to the White House and the Presidency, something that we have not seen before. Our new president will be someone who we can all take pride in. Like you, millions of us know that Barack is one of the few people that we have today with the intellect and vision to succeed in that capacity. Know that you both have my full support.

Sincere Best Wishes From My Family To Yours –

Bob Magnant
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