

Electoral resolution  
(Intended as a discussion piece)

Thinking Strategically in 2008:  
The Perfect Must Not Be the Enemy of the Good

The 2008 elections mark a historic end to the illegitimate Bush-Cheney regime. As we meet in Atlanta, it seems inconceivable that the American electorate will vote for the Republican party (although it also looked that way in 2004). It seems likely that Democrats will strengthen their majorities in both houses of Congress as well, and continue to recapture state and local governments. The question then is: Which Democrats.

For a generation, the Democrats have followed a neoliberal, procorporate path which has led to the outsourcing of key components of the economy, suppression of the right to organize, and growing stratification between the rich and the remaining 80-90% of American, accompanying by a xenophobic anti-immigrant backlash and no progress on human rights issues including demilitarization, racism, health care, education, affordable housing and the environment.

A year before the election, but only a few months before the primaries and caucuses which may pick the Democratic nominee (there hasn't been an open convention since 1972), DSA believes that progressives must cooperate to do everything possible to prevent Hillary Clinton -- the epitome of neoliberal cynical opportunism -- from being the Democratic nominee. We take this position not only because Clinton is a flawed candidate who could actually lose to someone like Rudolf Giuliani, but because a second Clinton administration would repeat the history of status quo triangulation which marked the first Clinton administration (1993-2001).

We do not pretend to be wise or prescient enough to know at this early date which of the Democratic candidates stands the best chance to become the viable alternative to Clinton. Barack Obama has run a populist campaign which has generated excitement across the country. John Edwards has identified with the labor movement, running an anticorporate campaign which challenges Americans to be patriotic about something other than war, and to decide if they stand for the status quo or fundamental change, "because you can't be for both." It may be that Edwards is better positioned to win an overwhelming majority of electoral votes by winning in the South and West as well as the coast and industrial Midwest which will support any Democrat. Perhaps Edwards-Obama would be the ticket, but other scenarios are possible.

2000 President-elect Al Gore's Nobel prize has generated a draft Gore movement which might draw additional progressives into the campaign. Dennis Kucinich continues to elevate the debate, when he is allowed to participate, but about half the members of Progressive Democrats of America (PDA), the outgrowth of Kucinich's 2004 bid, support Edwards. Howard Dean and his followers have established an inside/outside presence through Dean's popular 50 state strategy for the Democratic national committee, and [moveon.org](http://moveon.org) continuing to advance the progressive agenda of Dean's 2004 campaign.

The elements to active victory in November 2008 are out there, but for the most part they are not working together on a common strategy, and the risk is great that the choice will once again be neoliberalism or neoconservatism. The perfect must not be the enemy of the good. DSA supports all progressives and will do what we can to encourage a strategic alliance.

Submitted by Kenny Schaeffer