

## **Dream Ticket by Dan Jacoby**

There are a lot of people clamoring for what has been termed a “dream ticket” of Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton, in one order or the other. The problem, of course, is that after an increasingly vicious campaign the odds that these two people can work together are getting smaller every day. The same problem exists at all political levels; all over the country, at all levels of government, there are people who won't talk to each other after campaigning against one another.

There is something wrong with these people.

Sometimes, something is said during the campaign that is over the line. A candidate makes an accusation that is untrue or hideously exaggerated. Often, it isn't just one candidate, but both, trading accusations in a nasty, spiteful game of one-upsmanship. It is very hard for anyone to forgive an opponent after such a venomous election.

This problem doesn't arise out of a vacuum. It is usually the result of a candidate's feeling of inferiority, manifested outwardly as an attack. Unfortunately, far too many people run for office, from the lowest level up to the highest, who are not qualified for the job they seek. (Seriously, how many people who have run for President over the last, fifty years were truly ready to be President? Paul Tsongas? Phil Crane? Harold Stassen?) Most of these people know deep inside that they are unqualified; their defense mechanism is to take refuge in trying to bring their opponents down.

Even if the campaign doesn't get nasty and personal, it's still very difficult for many people to put the campaign behind them when it's over. For some reason, despite the fact that most campaign rhetoric is known to be just rhetoric, candidates, and their campaign staff, take that nonsense seriously and personally.

It's ridiculous.

What's worse, after the election is over the losers seem to take delight in thwarting the initiatives of the winners, just for the fun of it. Many of these initiatives are quite good (which explains why some of the winners won in the first place), so the “sour grapes” approach only serves to hurt us all. It's easier to be a back seat driver than to handle the wheel, so the losers often get the upper hand.

In the current situation, there is clearly another issue – pride. Senator Clinton seems unable to reconcile her self-image as brilliant and politically savvy with her inability to win the nomination. Before dropping out, she appears to need at least one major victory to salve her wounded pride.

The up side to that assessment, in the view of those who dream of a combined Obama-Clinton ticket, is that once Hillary Clinton concedes the nomination the possibility of her being willing to be on such a ticket rises. It puts her back in the middle of the presidential race even as she drops out of the race. It also grants her the potential to believe, assuming a Democratic victory in November, that she is the one who made it happen.

If it happens, her view on the victory may be just a pipe dream; even the 1980 Reagan-Bush alliance didn't make the difference, not since 1960 can a case be made that the running mate significantly helped (even Lloyd Bentsen couldn't help Michael Dukakis). Meanwhile, the dreamers will continue to dream.