

The all important election year is upon us. This has got to be one of the most critical elections in recent history.

The middle class (what's left of it) is under such an attack that it has turned into an economic bloodbath not seen since the Great Depression. Our politicians have forsaken the working men and women and cling to their corporate lobbyist friends as their last best hope to stay in power.

Eight years of George Bush's economic policies have seen a transfer of wealth from the middle class to the wealthiest 5 % of our nation and the results of this bizarre economic policy are being seen in every neighborhood across the land. Even stranger, he proposes and McCain now endorses continuing what brought us here in the first place giving the rich more tax cuts and throwing crumbs to the middle class.

Why on earth would anyone endorse continuing disastrous economic policies and expect different results unless they are impaired or out of touch.

Does anyone still remember the last Bush and why he lost? "It's the economy stupid" That was the slogan and we remember the results. Has Junior and McCain forgotten soon quickly?

Daddy Senior (George Herbert Walker Bush) became unemployed because he forgot that it was the economy. Can a McCain who voted over 95% of the time with the current president understand the economic problems and be capable of fixing them? Can a Candidate who doesn't even know how many homes he owns, relate to the 100,000 Floridians who have lost theirs? Can a Candidate who has National Health Care as a Senator understand what 50 million Americans without Health Care live through every day?

We need to wake up, toss out our fears and finally vote for the middle class agenda or will we continue to subsidize the Corporations and the millionaires who pay less of their income in taxes than us.

If we support a man who proclaims that he is the biggest "free trader" around, how many more jobs do we need to lose to prove that these trade policies will leave us with little more than burger flipper opportunities for the future?

Does anyone think that our roads and bridges and **our** schools should be built and rebuilt before we build Iraqi roads and schools. ? Why can George (with McCain's support) find money for **their** infrastructure but none for **ours**.

The Iraqi government is making billions on **their** oil production while we foot the bill for rebuilding their country.

Is this an epidemic of madness or doesn't Washington have anyone with any sense left?

We all have dreams for our children; that they can go to college without bankrupting the family, that they will have well paying jobs, that they will have health care so that they can go to the doctor or take their children to one without sitting in the emergency room like the almost 50 million without insurance. When you vote , keep their future in mind.

Is it GOD, Guns and Gays or Jobs, Inflation, Health care and the Economy? Will you vote because they scare you into worrying who's at the altar or because there is a terrorist under the bed?

Tell the fear mongers " I will not be afraid, I will not live in fear, I will not wrap my house in plastic and duct tape and hide in the closet because you shout "Al Queda " in every other speech. I am an American, I will use my brain and you and your cronies don't frighten me and my family.

We know the world is a scary place at times. It **always** has been . I know my Country has enemies, we always have had them. But the politician who uses them to scare us to gain votes , to detract us from the true issues that effect my family, that person is a low life worthless piece of cow dung and the true enemy of my country. They are the worst kind of unpatriotic trash that litters the political scene. They pose in front of soldiers and police and fire fighters to use them for personal election gain and then they veto legislation to improve care for our veterans or improve funding for our police and fire fighters. We have enough fair weather friends out there. We don't need our political leaders to join in as well.

Does your candidate just talk the talk or has he walked the walk? Does he or she despise Unions? The current president does. Have they supported collective bargaining for law enforcement across the nation? The current president **does not** nor does McCain. Why on Gods earth do the bad guys in the back seat of the police car have more rights to Unionize than the officer driving. Why would any Candidate have a problem with fixing that? Why Mr. McCain?

Before you cast your vote become informed on the issues. The real issues. Understand that many candidates running for office don't want you to know where they stand on the issues. They want you to be afraid ,be very afraid and vote how they tell you or support them because; an invasion is imminent, your children will be harmed, immigrants are moving in next door, your church will be closed, and your guns will be taken and someone will kill God. Tell that politician to "take a powder".

I have lived with both Democrats and Republicans in power, I still pray, my church is still open, there is no abortion clinic next door, I have my gun, my kids are fine and except for the foreclosures the neighborhoods are doing just fine.

What has changed? Gas is a Joke, Home values have wiped out the new wealth Bush had bragged about just a couple years ago, inflation is crazy, jobs are vanishing, the rich are getting richer and the middle class is getting poorer, pension are almost gone, the stock market is lower than when Bush took office and 401ks are taking a beating. Not to mention the debt of the people and our country any soon be un-payable.

Is it still GOD, GUNS and Gays or is it our families and whether we can provide for them and give them the very best this nation has to offer?

Who is the patriot? The man who poses in a military jet plane for a photo-op or the person who works every day to put food on the table, educate their children, and keeps a roof over their head?

We need to take our country back, VOTE, VOTE, VOTE. Vote with your head not your gut. This is not a third world republic of the haves and those that work for them. This is our Country and we want it back.

I appreciate the great members of this Local, the hard work you do and how you represent what is the very best of this Nation. I also appreciate that you are grown adult men and women and that you have your own opinions and will vote accordingly. I only ask that you understand the attack that the Union movement is under and that the Union Movement is not an individual but an incredible collection of diverse working men and women and when the Union is attacked it is really an attack upon the working people.

I want to thank you for allowing me to divert from the more typical editorial to a more politically oriented rant but the importance and timing of the election calls for it. With many members laid-off and the huge challenges in contract negotiations because of a collapsed economy, I am required to lobby as strongly as I can to effect change that will best help our fellow brothers and sisters during these times.