

Stand Up and Be Counted

by Michele Rousseau

With the presidential election coming up soon, now is a great time for each of us to think about what is important to us in a candidate. Many of us hold very strong values with respect to the environment, planetary healing, world peace, women's issues, spirituality, holistic living, and more. Yet many of us also see ourselves as strongly individual, unwilling to align ourselves with any specific label.

So how does this impact the world in which we live, the world in which we so much want to effect change? One individual acting alone can certainly make a difference. However, there are at least 44 million of us who hold similar values. That is an incredible number (more than it took to elect President Clinton) and certainly a number that could effect dramatic change together. Perhaps it is time for us to stand up and be counted at the ballot box.

I am not suggesting that we all form ourselves in the same mold, only that we take the initiative to inform ourselves of the choices available to us. Then, we need to use what we learn to support the individual most aligned with our values and hold him (and I use "him" only because the roster of candidates to date is strikingly male) responsible for helping us facilitate the cultural and societal changes that will be for the greater good.

Ah, the greatest good...another important point in our decision-making process. What if we evaluate candidates not only on their "stated stand" on the various issues but also on the understanding of universal laws they exhibit in their deeds. After all, actions DO speak louder than words.

Does a candidate seem to grasp, for example, the Laws of Abundance and of Tenfold Return? Does he act as though he knows there will be greater prosperity worldwide (in terms of time, energy, money, and other valuable resources) if he helps others? Is he a role model for how to give and use resources effectively and consciously? Does he teach others these values? Does the term "public servant" suit him in that he devotes the majority of his time and energy to aiding humanity? Does he give freely and regularly, seeming to recognize that his giving will pay off with ever greater returns?

Does the candidate adhere to the Law of Proper Perspective? Is it obvious that he prioritizes his life based on what produces the greatest good and the most soul growth? Does he realize what his life means to him and how each of his individual goals or activities fits into the larger scheme of things?

Does the candidate have faith in the Universe to manifest that which he visualizes? Does he believe his actions will pay off in accordance with the Law of Believing and Knowing? If so, are his beliefs and actions consistent with your values so you will both be visualizing the same basic outcomes?

What about the Law of Cause and Effect? Does the candidate clearly recognize that he creates his own reality? Does he learn consciously by creating an idea of what he wants to see change? Is he true to himself?

And then there is the Law of Attraction (which is perhaps where we should all begin). In general, voter turnout is dismal because people view the selection process as picking the lesser of two (or more) evils. The mindset is such that the ideal candidate CANNOT materialize.

In order to manifest the right candidate, we must each create a clear and complete image of that person's qualities. We cannot just sit back and wonder if a worthy presidential candidate will ever appear. Instead, we must search with conviction for what we know is already out there somewhere.

If like attracts like, then the power of 44 million like-minded American MUST work to our advantage. When we acknowledge our numbers and visualize together, we will find a leader who can take us consciously and creatively into this new millennium.

INSET: The Internet is an ideal vehicle for informing yourself on the issues and candidates from the

comfort of your own space. A good place to begin might be at these sites, where you can complete a survey about the importance of several major factors to you (such as the environment, tax reform, Social Security, foreign policy, etc.) and how you rank them relative to each other. The sites then calculate how each of several candidates aligns with your beliefs:

- VoteMatch at <http://govote.speakout.com/votematch/index2.asp>
- SpeakOut.com at <http://www.speakout.com/SelectSmart/>

(Remember, these sites only help you focus on the issues. You need to also evaluate the candidates' honesty, leadership skills, and other qualities in order to make an informed vote.)

Sites that discuss various campaign issues with overviews of each candidate's view include:

- Campaign for America's Future at <http://www.ourfuture.org/readarticle.asp?ID=530>
- Project Vote Smart at <http://www.vote-smart.org/index.phtml>
- Campaign 2000 at <http://www.usis.hu/election.htm>

(Please note: MysticalPlanet.com does not endorse any particular site's opinion. Our goal is simply to offer you the resources to make an informed personal decision.)

CANDIDATE QUOTES

Ralph Nader, Green Party: *"Can we plan ahead as a society so we know our priorities and where we wish to go? Or do we continue to let global corporations remain astride the planet, corporatizing everything...in short planning our futures in their image? If a robust civic culture does not shape the future, corporatism surely will... This is the foundation of our campaign, to focus on active citizenship."*

George W. Bush, Republican: *"I want to be the president for a reason... I'm running for American to seize a moment, to take advantage of an opportunity. And we better take advantage of it now... We promise you our promise will be fulfilled."*

VP Al Gore, Democrat: *"I believe this election provides us with a basic choice: Will we use this extraordinary prosperity, unprecedented in all of American history, to meet our fundamental responsibilities? Will we do what's right for our country? Or, alternatively, will we waste this opportunity irresponsibly and surrender to short-terms gain and the narrow politics of the moment?"*