

Proud to be an American!

By Betty Holland

I am proud to be an American! I am proud to be from a country of so many different races, religions and ethnic backgrounds. Proud because we live together in harmony—not perfect harmony—but harmony that we continue to work on and to achieve. And now I am proud because the world has chosen us and our President, Barack Obama, to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. Many have scoffed at this honor. They say he didn't deserve it, or at least that it was premature. But you have to remember that if Barack Obama said that the "sun will rise tomorrow", these skeptics would say "no it won't". Some forget that the world looks to America for leadership. They look to us for hope. And over the past few years that leadership and hope have been lacking. We refused to join the quest to prepare for climate change. We would not recognize the need to change our energy consumption and find alternative ways to produce energy. We began torturing captives—saying it was legal and necessary. We started a war in the wrong country and ignored the conflict in Afghanistan where the designers of 9/11 were hiding. We neglected human rights in our own country by ignoring the fact that 50 million people couldn't get health care. We deregulated all our bank and financial institutions and led the world into the worst recession since the great depression. The greatest country in the world—but something had changed.

Then Barack Obama came along and campaigned on the idea of "hope". He promised to take action on all the things I just mentioned. Many thought there was no way he would be elected. But his campaign reached the hearts and minds of the majority of the people in America and people around the world. And so, when my friend of 20 years in Ireland called the morning he was elected and said this was a wonderful day—one the world would always remember—she was expressing the feelings of the world community. This is why he received the Nobel Peace Prize. He brought hope not just for America but for the whole world! He has many things to tackle and it can't all be done in 9 months. In fact, much will not be completed even during his administration. But he is unwavering and he will continue to work to make America the leader it once was. This is a great place to live—the greatest country in the world—and now it will be even greater!

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