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IT'S OBAMA

DECISIVE VICTORY MAKES HISTORY

In California, gay-marriage ban takes early lead



'CHANGE HAS COME': President-elect Barack Obama celebrates with his wife, Michelle, their daughters, Sasha and Malia, and more than 240,000 supporters gathered along Chicago's waterfront. Many wept at the landmark moment.

The first black president-elect wins a solid mandate and a fortified Democratic majority in Congress.

MARK Z. BARABAK

Barack Obama, the son of a father from Kenya and a white mother from Kansas, was elected the nation's 44th president Tuesday, breaking the ultimate racial barrier to become the first African American to claim the country's highest office.

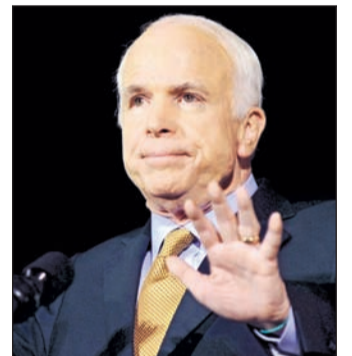
A nation founded by slave owners and seared by civil war and generations of racial strife delivered a smashing electoral college victory to the 47-year-old first-term senator from Illinois, who forged a broad, multi-racial, multiethnic coalition. His victory was a leap in the march toward equality: When Obama was born, people with his skin color could not even vote in parts of America, and many were killed for trying.

"If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible, who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time, who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer," Obama told more than 240,000 celebrants gathered along Chicago's waterfront. Many had tears streaking their faces.

"It's been a long time coming," said Obama, who strode on stage with his wife, Michelle, and their two daughters, Sasha and Malia. "But tonight, because of what we did on this day, in this election, at this defining moment, change has come to America."

Obama was beating Republican John McCain in every state Democrats carried four years ago, including Pennsylvania, which McCain had worked vigorously to pry away. Obama also made significant inroads into Republican turf, carrying Ohio, Colorado and Virginia; the latter voted Democratic for the first time in more than 40 years. He won the swing states of Florida, New Hampshire, Iowa and New Mexico, which backed President Bush in 2004.

In winning the White House, Obama to a large degree remade the electorate: About 1 in 10 of those casting ballots Tuesday were doing so for the first time. Though that number



MATTHEW CAVANAUGH EPA
"Whatever our differences, we are fellow Americans," John McCain conceded.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Now it's idealism versus realism

DOYLE MCMANUS
REPORTING FROM WASHINGTON

Barack Obama won the presidency Tuesday by persuading voters to embrace a seeming paradox: leadership based on contradictory principles of change and reassurance.

The Illinois senator combined ambitious goals and a cautious temperament. He promised tax cuts, better healthcare, new energy programs and fiscal discipline all at the same time, and all without the bitterness and stalemate that arose when those issues were tackled in the past.

Now, as Obama moves through his transition to the White House, this effort to square the political circle becomes the defining challenge in the months ahead. Which Barack Obama will dominate as he begins to govern?

Too much of the ambitious [See Analysis, Page A11]

Nation watches as state weighs ban

Prop. 8 battle drew money and attention from across the U.S.

JESSICA GARRISON, CARA MIA DiMASSA AND RICHARD PADDOCK

PROPOSITION 8 Eliminate gay marriage

YES 52.5% NO 47.5%

Results as of 11:33 p.m. Pacific time with 48% of precincts reporting

A measure to ban gay marriage in California led in early returns Tuesday although the final outcome remained in doubt, leaving advocates on both sides in suspense about the most divisive and emotionally fraught contest in the state this year.

Proposition 8 would amend the California Constitution to define marriage as being only between a man and a woman.

Proposition 8 was the most expensive proposition on any ballot in the nation this year, with more than \$74 million spent by both sides.

The measure's most fervent

proponents believed that nothing less than the future of traditional families was at stake, while opponents believed that they were fighting for the fundamental right of gay people to be treated equally under the law.

In San Francisco, supporters of gay marriage packed a ballroom at the Westin St. Francis Hotel on Tuesday night.

"You decided to live your life out loud. You fell in love and you said 'I do.' Tonight, we await a verdict," San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom said to a [See Prop. 8, Page A21]

ELECTORAL VOTES

270 needed to win

OBAMA	McCAIN	UNDECIDED
349	144	45

111TH CONGRESS

The House of Representatives

218 seats to control the House

DEMOCRATS	REPUBLICANS	UNDECIDED
242	160	33

The Senate

51 seats to control the Senate

DEMOCRATS	REPUBLICANS	UNDECIDED
56*	40	4

* Includes 2 independents. All results as of 11:10 p.m. Pacific time

Analysis: Erasing race assumptions

Even in Virginia, heart of the Confederacy, Obama prevails. **A11**

They wouldn't miss this for the world

Voters turn out in droves to take their part in history. **A15**

Roundup of state propositions

Measures on redistricting and farm animals are ahead. **A20**

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Where hope has wrestled with fear

SANDY BANKS
REPORTING FROM CLEVELAND

I could not have imagined that less than four years later, he would be elected president.

His name was so unfamiliar, I kept stumbling over it during our 45-minute interview about the role of race in his life and in his politics. Was it Barack Obama or Obama Barack?

The next morning, unbidden, he called me back. "Hey Sandy," he said. "This is Barack. I've been thinking about what we talked about, and I wanted to add some thoughts."

By the time we finished our second chat, there were two things I thought I knew: Barack Obama was determined to force this country to confront its "legacy of slavery."



And what he was asking — and offering — was too much for a nation still bitterly divided by skin color.

"His candidacy would make this country squirm and shudder and maybe even come unglued," I wrote back then.

Clearly, I underestimated him — and us.

How could I have been so wrong? Last week, as Obama closed in on the presidency, I went back to my hometown to look for answers.

Cleveland was a step up for my parents. My father's family fled Georgia in the 1920s, one step ahead of a lynch mob set on tearing my uncle a lesson for daring to sash a white man. Twenty years later, my mother led her siblings north from a farm in Alabama. She met my father in Cleveland. They married, and I was the oldest [See Banks, Page A12]

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Sports, Calendar and Food

