



The Change We Need... The Strength to Lead

PRIMARY ELECTION NIGHT SPEECH

August 4, 2009

Westin Book Cadillac Hotel

Hello Detroit!

(Loudly) Do you want your city back?

(Loudly) Are you ready for the next step?

Before I begin, let me thank the other candidates tonight who also sought to lead our great city. Although not successful, their offer to serve was sincere and gracious and we thank them from our heart (*acknowledge any present*).

Today is a momentous day. For the first time in decades, the citizens of Detroit had varied intelligent choices from among many fine earnest Detroiters who offered themselves for public service.

We now have two candidates seeking to lead our great city, David Bing and me, Tom Barrow.

Two distinct choices....One born in the city's old Black Bottom and who never left and has lived his entire life on the city's east side with his wife of 16 years raising their two young children.

The other who, after 42 years in Southfield and Franklin, moved to Detroit 10 months ago to rent an apartment on Jefferson to "save us folk" down here in Detroit.

The contrast could not be starker. A Detroiters who attended Wayne State University in 1967 and finished four years later with a degree in accounting in 1971, who continued and received his Masters Degree in Business Finance from Wayne in 1979 and who would later go on to build arguably the largest black public accounting firm in the United States.

The other, who finished high school in 1961, began college at Syracuse University and received his degree 33 years later in 1995 and who for decades boasted of a Masters degree which he now admits he never had.

Yes Detroit, the choices are clear... and those of us who would be your mayor must now face you and answer your tough questions face-to-face. They shouldn't be permitted to hide rather be among you seeking your vote.

For the last three months, I crisscrossed our great city, stopping in fields, going to churches, bars, night clubs and family picnics on Belle Isle.

I submitted myself to a barrage of wrongful attacks and withstood those personal attacks.

For 15 years, I fought quietly to restore my family's good name...never whining and never complaining. While many of you may have asked whatever happened to Tom Barrow....well he never left.... Detroit, he was fighting for his good name and last November, I won.

Yes, I have faced adversity with a strength gained from the words of Galatians 6:9, which tells us that he who labors mightily for good shall be rewarded richly, if he does not faint. Detroit, I did not faint... I am a fighter!

Our time is now...and our great city needs a fighter...one who is of us... tested in adversity and one who does not hide and will not faint!

At these crucial times, our City screams for a strong man to be our Mayor.... a man who will kick up the dust ... and blaze a trail for others to follow, not a weak man who will cough and choke because he follows other's dusty trails. Detroit we need a mayor who does not faint.

A Mayor who is out front....A Mayor who is clearly in charge... and when tragedy strikes is "Johnny-on-the-spot," not a weak man waiting until the dust settles to peek out days later.

Detroit, you need to meet the men who would be **YOUR** mayor. Do not permit them to cower and hide with choreographed media events. Because a Detroit mayor does not hide.... he stands proud... as proud as the people and the tradition he represents!

Today, I challenge David Bing to a series of three dignified debates befitting the dignity of the office of the Mayor of the City Detroit. Not sessions capping and one upping one another but dignified events discussing the issues confronting our great city.

Debates sponsored by independent, non-partisan and credible groups such as the League of Women Voters in conjunction with the Detroit NAACP; Detroit's Wayne State University and the renown and respected Economic Club of Detroit.

Detroit, you need to see and hear from the men who want to be your Mayor... you need to see the difference between passion and apathy.

Mr. Bing, if you choose not to come out and discuss the issues then you are not fit to be Detroit's Mayor.... But then send Charlie Beckham, he's the one running things anyway.

Detroit you need to decide which man is a real Detroiter, which man do you believe will fight for you and which man represents real change and has the strength and passion to lead.

Why... because Detroit, we have to make the right choice.... It will determine the destiny of our city for decades to come. Detroit, we must now choose between "Action" or "Apathy" between "Growing Our City" or "Shrinking it" and turning off the lights.

We must now take matters into our own hands, be better informed, more engaged and intimately concerned about our direction and who we choose to lead us.

Our great city has not been inspired since 1973 when Coleman Alexander Young called us to action and was elected our mayor. He inspired us! He caused us to hold the office of Mayor in high esteem.

When Mayor Young called our city to action, we roared to life, we rallied when he needed us to rally... this region respected us....sadly... no more!

But since our Mayor Young, some of our leadership has disappointed us. Detroit, it's clear, we need a strong leader.... One born of the age....one who can inspire us again and take our city to new levels and to greater accomplishments. Detroit, I am that man!

We love our City and we want our Mayor to be one of us... we want him to walk among us, be one of us... understand our challenges, and yes, comfort us when we hurt or when we are in crisis.

When our leaders promise CHANGE to get our votes, we do not expect them to defeat that promise by appointing the same political cronies of past administrations who have already failed us... who have already disappointed us and ... yes, who are clearly incompetent!

My dear dead mama used to say... "you fool me once shame on you....you fool me twice shame on me....and baby...don't fatten no frogs for snakes."

Detroit, my opponent is not running our city... it is clear to all of us. He lacks the drive and passion we need.

The old political hacks are making the same mistakes they did before because they want that paycheck. They tell us its ok, trust them, we'll get a different result this time. Detroit, that's a mental illness, not governing.... We must reject that if we are ever to recover!

Our city is in a crisis and I promise you this...I will **NOT** appoint the old leaders from the past, the old bureaucrats and the old hangers-on seeking to just get a pay check! Their time is done. It is your time **NOW!** Take back your Detroit.

We need *new* blood.... We need a *new* perspective... We need to go in a *new* direction.... And we can't do that with *old blood!*

Detroit, we need a Coleman Young-style mandate for real change!

That is the action we have been lacking. That is what has bred this apathy throughout our city.

You see people who are weak and apathetic, concede control and give away our city's jewels.

People who are apathetic and lack energy will let others determine our future.

Detroit.... We have to take our city back and we have to do it now!

Mr. Bing has promised loud and clear that he and his outsider friends intend to make our Great Detroit a shell of a city.

Mr. Bing has promised to SHRINK Detroit and he asks you to ALLOW him to continue depopulating our great city.

Tell him No Detroit!Tell his cronies No Detroit!..... and tell that Executive from Oakland County NO!!!! A thousand times No! Tell him we will be sending his man back to Franklin in a minute. He'll tell you YES.

Mr. Executive, you can't have our Detroit and you know what, we are proud of that Fist on East Jefferson... it stays, it represents our history! Detroit, Action will defeat Apathy.

As your next full-time Mayor, I will GROW our Detroit, not shrink it.

I will efficiently manage our array of departments, not shutter them and drive city employees to the unemployment line and into homeless shelters.

For years, I was forced to watch as our population moved to Warren, Clinton Township, Taylor, Westland, Sterling Heights and Southfield.

I know why you left...you felt unsafe...you hated cops taking 4-5 hours to come. You didn't want to send your kids to our public schools...You didn't like dirty streets or late busses. Detroit, I know why they left and I understand it... and Detroit, I AM GOING TO FIX IT!!!!

I will not shrink our city, I will grow it. I will attract back our former brothers and sisters. I know they love this town... My fellow Detroiters North of 8 Mile, West of Telegraph and East of Alter, we love you ...we want you back....we will take back our city and fix the things that drove you away.

All of you watching tonight are still Detroiters and I know you care deeply and your heart hurts everytime our city falters or our leaders fall in shame.

We will again make our CITY the hub of the economic wheel of Southeast Michigan. Folks, action will defeat apathy everytime.

Detroit, the leadership of this region must remain with the people of the City of Detroit, not a myriad of amorphous regional commissions that dilute our City's historic role. They will take our investment in city assets paid for by generations of Detroiters in dollars, blood, sweat and tears and then use it for their own.

As your next Mayor, I will improve the quality-of-life here for the benefit of the hundreds of thousands of us who stuck it out, who stayed here and who raised our children here.

Why? Because we are the true believers who love our city with such intensity that we feel compelled to promote it, to defend it and because action defeats apathy!

We need more police officers on our neighborhood streets... Not downtown. I will **re-allocate** our city resources and bring another 350 police officers on line. I will direct my police chief to make 250 of them into one man "safe cars" specifically for non-emergency calls and have them patrol our neighborhoods... not just DOWNTOWN!

Detroit, I'll get you a cop in minutes...not hours. It will be just like the service he gets in Franklin!

Within my first term, I will solve those problems in the police department and get rid of that multi-million dollar federal monitor. Why... because action beats apathy!

I will grow small businesses and stimulate a working capital pool of money by giving a part of my salary to create a Small Business Investment working capital fund... and I'll call upon our

churches to join me to help viable small businesses in Detroit. Why? Because Action beats Apathy!

I will tap the pools of young and experienced talent right to help us create new media companies, green and energy efficient jobs and better and different means to deliver traditional services like grocery shopping, cleaners and personal services in the age of Obama-- the Internet, Facebook, Twitter and instant messaging.

Detroit will be ahead of the economic curve, not careening off of it into a ditch as my opponent suggests. Why? Because Action beats apathy.

We need to make a total commitment to our schools. Not just the parents and the teachers but every citizen whether you work fulltime, are retired, or unemployed, you have an obligation to serve the schools and the kids.... and if you vote for it, I gladly take our Detroit Public Schools and make them excellent schools that will compete with the Charters!

Just as I would have competed with the Rock Financial Center in Novi with our Cobo Hall.... but they took it from us last Saturday!

Detroit, if we do not accept the responsibility for the future, then we will have failed our ancestors who struggled to get us to where we are today.

A Detroit Mayor leads... he does not follow. Action will defeat apathy every time.

I choose to be a Mayor of Action, full of passion and dedicated to the "Change We Need and Governing with the Strength to Lead."

The last time a Barrow made you proud was when Joe Louis Barrow knocked out Max Schmeling in 1938... Detroiters danced in the streets of Black-Bottom.

The next time a Barrow will make you proud.... is when Tom Joe Barrow becomes your Mayor and leads our city back to its position of respect and pride.

Detroit... My name is Tom Barrow..... and I want to be your mayor!

END

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