

47 Days That Changed America

Bob Krouchick

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When historians study the broad reach of US presidential elections, they will undoubtedly look at the 2008 election with particular interest and not just because Barack Obama became the first African-American president. Indeed, they will also study the chaotic economic events leading up to his win, the bailouts and bankruptcies of Lehman Brothers, AIG, et al., and other factors that profoundly impacted all Americans.

With these unprecedented circumstances in mind, Bob Krouchick, an employee at AIG, began documenting his views on what was happening in the political and financial world around him. At one point, Krouchick, who writes mainly while commuting into New York each day, considers casting aside his writing, but instead continues, saying, "... too often, we rely on the professionals in the media to gain an understanding of how particular issues should be viewed. We allow these individuals to feed our minds and too often influence our perception of reality...My goal is to present an everyday person's view of this election, to comment on what I see and how I see things..."

In *47 Days That Changed America*, Krouchick documents the news, political events, financial markets and telling snippets from his own life between September 18 (a few days after the collapse of Lehman Brothers) and Election Day 2008. As the race heats up between McCain and Obama, and the financial news grows increasingly sour, he comments on what he thinks the future may hold.

While Krouchick identifies himself as a Republican—he admits to wavering on voting with the party after the bloated economic choices the Bush administration made—his views are refreshing because he strives to have an honest dialogue about the election. There's none of the us-versus-them vitriol that has pockmarked the conservative and liberal debate; Krouchick seeks to offer real solutions to all Americans.

Although Krouchick does make excellent points, most of this discussion stems from his own observations of events. He doesn't choose to cite sources. For credibility, he relies on his AIG credentials, yet rarely discusses what's going on there. While this is consistent with an everyday person's view of this election, certain readers would appreciate if Krouchick included some references.

Nonetheless, *47 Days That Changed America* serves as an accurate snapshot of a moment in history; preserving the mindset of a populace and capturing the everyday details of an American life about to change. One hopes that after the books written by loud-mouthed pundits are in the remainder bins of bookstores, *47 Days That Changed America* remains a historical source, as well as a reminder of the events that changed a nation.

KATERIE PRIOR (November 1, 2010)

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