Back ing Obama

by Janet Jagan

The American scene deserves the greatest attention, particularly at this stage when the Democratic Party's presidential nominations have come to a close and with Barack Obama now the official candidate for the November elections. Despite some half-hearted shuffling around major issues, like the Iraq war, the Republican Presidential candidate John McCain, still reflects, more or less, the outgoing President George Bush's position on most issues. Therein lies the strength of candidate Obama. Most non-Republican Party voters want a change - not a mild change, but a significant change.

In the final analysis, leaving aside Obama's charisma and promises of vital changes, I believe Hillary Clinton lost because of the vagueness of some of her positions and the perception that she would carry the presidential candidate's weight of responsibility. The American system, generally bristling with aggressive tendencies and the old US habit of being the world's policeman, is about to turn the real evils of the American system, resulting in the deaths of over 4000 US soldiers, 1/2 million Iraqis, more than 30,000 severely injured US soldiers and an astounding $600 billion spent on the war with a considerable amount, in the billions, lost in corruption.

The false entry of the US into Iraq, satisfying nothing more than the blood-lust of Bush and his aides, has resulted in the deaths of over 4000 US soldiers, 1/2 million Iraqis, some 30,000 severely injured US soldiers and an astounding $600 billion spent on the war with a considerable amount, in the billions, lost in corruption.

I saw on television recently a report of a medical team, freely providing services for all medical problems plus dentistry and eyeglasses to American citizens who could not afford the service. Some stood in line overnight to get a chance for these services that they were denied. I wonder why voluntary medical teams from the US visit Guyana when they should be taking care of their own people!

We have to hope that Obama, if he wins the Presidency in much the same way as previous Democratic Presidents, i.e., progressive and probably clear governance, but not attacking, and over-turning the real evils of the American system, would have the courage and the right advisers to help guide him to bring about the changes necessary in US domestic and foreign policy. As to foreign policy, he will have to end the US militarism that has dominated America for too long. Iraq has become a second Vietnam, just as dangerous, just as wasteful, useless and harmful to so many who do not deserve what they are suffering, and this includes US troops.

The present Bush administration, even at the end of its term, is still warmongering - threatening Middle East states with reprisals and trying to manipulate the area to fit its own misguided beliefs. McCain would surely continue in the same path.

The irony is that in the Middle East situation, it's okay for Israel to have nuclear weapons (Former President Jimmy Carter says they have 150) but Iran cannot even have nuclear equipment to produce cheaper electricity. Even if Iran has the intention of producing nuclear weapons, who is to say that Israel has that right but Iran does not have the same? It's a lopsided world we live in, made so by the misguided manipulations of a USA, now controlled by persons who push wars for particular reasons - power and profit.

The pressure on Barack Obama to win the November elections will be intense, but when he wins, the pressure to carry out fundamental changes will be enormous. We can only hope that he will have the strength of character to fulfill his pledges.