



A Lack Of Enthusiasm At The DNC

As Democrats Gather In Charlotte, The Obama Team Must Deal With A Notable Loss Of Enthusiasm Since Denver

"JUBILATION HAS COOLED" AMONG DEMOCRATS SINCE 2008

"President Obama Is Battling An Enthusiasm Gap At His Convention This Week -- It Doesn't Seem Like Democrats Are As Excited About Him Now As They Were Four Years Ago In Denver." (David Jackson, "Obama Battles Enthusiasm Gap In Charlotte," [USA Today](#), 9/2/12)

Charlotte Has "An Atmosphere Far Removed From The Denver Convention In 2008, Driven By A Different Kind Of Urgency And With New Questions About Their Party's Direction." "Four years ago, Barack Obama accepted the presidential nomination of a Democratic Party that was as unified and energized as at any moment in its past: Clintons and Kennedys, labor and Wall Street, centrists and leftists, old and young, blacks, whites and Hispanics. It bristled with the excitement of history and the expectations of a new era. But Democrats are arriving here to nominate President Obama for a second term in an atmosphere far removed from the Denver convention in 2008, driven by a different kind of urgency and with new questions about their party's direction." (Adam Nagourney, "Spirit Of '08 Gone, Democrats Reunite Against G.O.P. Threat," [The New York Times](#), 9/3/12)

Democrat "Jubilation Has Cooled" Since 2008. "Four years after the party in Denver, that jubilation has cooled. As nearly 6,000 delegates gathered in Charlotte, N.C., this week to back Barack Obama's second bid for the White House, Democrats insisted their faith in him was not shaken. But a bittersweet nostalgia peeked through — memories of the wave of excitement that lifted their last national convention, an inevitable contrast to the hard-edged struggle Democrats confront this time." (Matea Gold and Alana Semuels, "For Democrats, Jubilant Days Of 2008 Are Distant Memory," [Los Angeles Times](#), 9/3/12)

Keith Grandberry, President Of The Winston-Salem Urban League: The Euphoria From 2008 Has Largely Dissipated. "Keith Grandberry remembers standing under an overcast sky in Denver cheering, crying and celebrating with thousands of others as Obama accepted the nomination in 2008. 'It was electric,' he said. 'Everybody was pumped up, full of hope and joy. That euphoria, he said, has largely dissipated.'" (Matea Gold and Alana Semuels, "For Democrats, Jubilant Days Of 2008 Are Distant Memory," [Los Angeles Times](#), 9/3/12)

- **Grandberry: "The Atmosphere Is Different."** "'The atmosphere is different,' Grandberry, president of the Winston-Salem Urban League, said at a reception for delegates from the South. 'Then, the atmosphere was full of optimism.'" (Matea Gold and Alana Semuels, "For Democrats, Jubilant Days Of 2008 Are Distant Memory," [Los Angeles Times](#), 9/3/12)

Caroline Kennedy: Democrats Are Not “As Exhilarated As They Were Last Time” Heading Into The Democrat National Convention. “Caroline Kennedy, whose endorsement, along with that of her uncle Senator Edward M. Kennedy, of Mr. Obama in 2008 signaled the generational excitement that marked the last campaign, said Democrats were approaching 2012 in ‘a more serious sober way, given the conditions.’ ‘They may not be as exhilarated as they were last time,’ Ms. Kennedy said. ‘But I think they are just as committed.’” (Adam Nagourney, “Spirit Of ’08 Gone, Democrats Reunite Against G.O.P. Threat,” [The New York Times](#), 9/3/12)

Former Nebraska Senator Bob Kerrey: Voters Will Not Have “The Naïve Enthusiasm Of Four Years Ago.” “Mr. Kerrey said the enthusiasm was ‘quite high,’ but added, ‘It’s not going to be the naïve enthusiasm of four years ago.’” (Adam Nagourney, “Spirit Of ’08 Gone, Democrats Reunite Against G.O.P. Threat,” [The New York Times](#), 9/3/12)

CONVENTION ATTENDEES EXPRESS FRUSTRATION WITH OBAMA’S FIRST TERM

“Added Delaware Gov. Jack Markell, Who Has Served As A Business-Savvy Surrogate For The President’s Re-Election Campaign: ‘This Is A Less Romantic Time, A Less Romantic Campaign.’” (Sam Stein and Ryan Grim, Op-Ed, “Barack Obama Promised A New Kind Of Politics, But Played The Same Old Game,” [The Huffington Post](#), 9/2/12)

Phil Wheeler, A Connecticut Convention Delegate: “I Know People On The Left Who Are Criticizing The President. I Understand Their Frustration.” “Phil Wheeler, 70, came to Charlotte from Connecticut to serve as a convention delegate but marched in solidarity with other union members. He wiped the sweat from his forehead a few times. It was hot and humid, but Wheeler said he was going to stay with the march. ‘I know people on the left who are criticizing the president. I understand their frustration. You can’t accomplish a lot when people are working against you.’” (“Marchers Lament NC Union Stance But Support Obama,” [The Associated Press](#), 9/3/12)

Florida Delegate Jonathan Kendall: Focusing On Healthcare Before The Economy Was A “Major Flaw.” “‘I think probably the Affordable Care Act could have been placed behind the job creation effort; I think that was a major flaw,’ said Jonathan Kendall, a Jewish rabbi and an elected delegate from Stuart, Fla. ‘It doesn’t diminish the importance of the Affordable Care Act, but it was two years that was devoted in the midst of a terrible recession.’” (Lois Romano and Manu Raju, “Democratic Delegates Not Disappointed,” [Politico](#), 9/3/12)

Illinois State Sen. Kwame Raoul: “You Are The President Of The United States And You End Up Wearing The Shirt Of It [Poor Economic Conditions].” “Asked how the mood among delegates has changed since 2008, Illinois State Sen. Kwame Raoul, who holds Obama’s old Senate seat, said the president is viewed as bearing some responsibility for the country’s situation even if congressional Republicans won’t cooperate. ‘Now we have the reality of a president that has to unfortunately wear the shirt of all of the conditions of the country today — notwithstanding the fact that many of the conditions, there’s not much he can do about,’ Raoul said. ‘Nonetheless, you are the president of the United States and you end up wearing the shirt of it.’” (Lois Romano and Manu Raju, “Democratic Delegates Not Disappointed,” [Politico](#), 9/3/12)

Wisconsin Delegate Jeff Johnson: “When You Promise Big Change, Do Big Things.” “‘Given the circumstances — and you have to qualify it given the circumstances — I think, I’d give him a B+ I’d be honest with you....What would have changed it from B+ to an A? If he’d had the guts to put a single-payer health care on the table,’ said Jeff Johnson of Wausau, Wis., a retired parole officer. ‘I understand the powerful forces that were lined up against it, but still, when you promise big change, do big things.’” (Lois Romano and Manu Raju, “Democratic Delegates Not Disappointed,” [Politico](#), 9/3/12)

Bert Scott, A Charlotte Resident Who Attended A Delegate Party: “Any Time The President Attacks Big Business, I Have A Bad Feeling In My Stomach.” “‘Any time the president attacks big business, I have a bad feeling in my stomach,’ said Charlotte resident Bert Scott, 60, who works in finance, as he

sipped wine at a delegate party Sunday night at the NASCAR Hall of Fame. That's one reason Scott said he planned to donate more to the Obama campaign this year than he did in 2008. 'Last time, I was running on adrenaline,' he said. 'This time, I'm running on fear.'" (Matea Gold and Alana Semuels, "For Democrats, Jubilant Days Of 2008 Are Distant Memory," [Los Angeles Times](#), 9/3/12)

Jackie Ortiz Of Rochester, N.Y.: "I Know It's A Very Close Race." "Jackie Ortiz of Rochester, N.Y., said she was just as excited as she was in 2008, but added that she's 'not in denial — I know it's a very close race.'" (Lois Romano and Manu Raju, "Democratic Delegates Not Disappointed," [Politico](#), 9/3/12)

Billy Halstead, Peoria County Democrats Chairman: "I Don't Think He Was Aggressive Enough." "Billy Halstead, chairman of the Peoria County Democrats from Peoria, Ill., said the president has done a 'fantastic job' but faulted him for being too accommodating to Republicans. 'I don't think he was aggressive enough to start off,' said Halstead. 'He tried to compromise [and say], 'Let's all be friends. It didn't work, did it?'" (Lois Romano and Manu Raju, "Democratic Delegates Not Disappointed," [Politico](#), 9/3/12)

Former Colorado Senator Gary Hart: Obama Should "Rise Above" Opposition. "'The principles are still here, but it's a whole new world out there,' said Gary Hart, the two-time presidential candidate and former senator from Colorado. Mr. Hart faulted Mr. Obama for some of this. 'He's had stronger opposition than any president in my lifetime,' he said. 'But there's still this feeling out in the country that he should rise above it. He's the president.'" (Adam Nagourney, "Spirit Of '08 Gone, Democrats Reunite Against G.O.P. Threat," [The New York Times](#), 9/3/12)

LACK OF ENTHUSIASM HAS CONVENTION ORGANIZERS WORRIED THAT BANK OF AMERICA STADIUM WON'T BE FILLED FOR OBAMA'S SPEECH

Low Enthusiasm For Obama In 2012 Has Democrats Worried That Obama Won't Be Able To Fill Bank Of America Stadium For His Convention Speech. "Democrats have been fretting for months over whether the president can draw a capacity crowd at Bank of America Stadium. Polls show voter enthusiasm is down, as are Obama's crowds for his battleground state campaign rallies." (Julie Pace, "Dems Cobble Convention Crowd Together Bit By Bit," [The Associated Press](#), 9/3/12)

- **In An Attempt To Fill Bank Of America Stadium, The Democrat National Convention Has Planned To Bus In People From Across North Carolina And South Carolina.** "College students from across North Carolina will arrive in Charlotte by the busload. Same with members of predominantly black churches in neighboring South Carolina. Their goal: help fill a 74,000-seat outdoor stadium to capacity when President Barack Obama accepts the Democratic nomination Thursday night." (Julie Pace, "Dems Cobble Convention Crowd Together Bit By Bit," [The Associated Press](#), 9/3/12)
- **In A Sign They Are Worried, Obama For America Is Giving Away Free Tickets To Obama's Convention Speech.** "The president's team is working hard to do just that by distributing free tickets at campaign offices in Charlotte, North Carolina, where the convention is being held, and throughout the state. Residents of neighboring states such as Virginia and South Carolina will travel to Charlotte as well to fill up spots at the Bank of America stadium, the home of the National Football League's Carolina Panthers." (Jeff Mason, "How To Fill A Stadium: Obama Team Seeks Crowd For Big Speech," [Reuters](#), 8/31/12)