



## A TRIBUTE TO CHANGE

The incessant leap of faith that one can do, a heart thrilling experience worth to embrace when someone makes his triumphal decision to CHANGE.

When the spirit for change once again clings in my mind, I envisioned a much bigger view in AUSCI, of what an upscale alums network such as ours could and would become..

Through our own alumni network, we can evolve into a powerful network of people who interactively connect and benefit one another. A vehicle that can broaden our links, and brings the golden opportunity of being social entrepreneurs.. Then again, commitment is the key. Real commitment pledged from you, me, and all of us Trojans to join hands and work our way up ..

What we have now is just a beginning, I sincerely thank members of the committee board Kenny, Robby, Vanessa, Andru, Rudyan, Hendra, Harun, Winarto, Djoko, Jefry, Holip and every one of us who has participated in our ongoing programs since second semester last year .until now. Hope to see more continuous support and new join hands in the next quarter this year and in many years to come..

Also on this special occasion I would like to thank one of our founding board members, Dr. Anugerah Pekerti for sharing his inspiring contemplation that presenting once again as A Tribute to Change.

**Husodo Angkosubroto**  
**President**

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What Obama Means to Me, in My Encounter  
with  
**FREEDOM, DEMOCRACY AND HUMANITY**  
by  
**Dr. Anugerah Pekerti**

**I**t is indeed a special privilege for me to share the overflowing jubilation of the people who celebrated the inauguration of Barack Obama as the 44<sup>th</sup> president of the USA from California. It is special to me because I used to know Barry when Ann Soetoro, his mother, taught English in a graduate school of management in Jakarta in 1967–1971. I was a faculty member in the school and retired as its president.

Barack's inauguration also touched me personally because 45 years ago I was involved in the civil rights movement through the Witherspoon church, the black Presbyterian congregation in Princeton, NJ.

Those two events are highlights in my personal journey encountering freedom, democracy and humanity.

My journey started in Wonosobo, a small town at the foot of the Dieng Mountains in Central Java. I was ten years old and mesmerized

by a rousing oration of Bung Tomo, a young charismatic freedom fighter. He spoke to rally people to fight against the reoccupation of Indonesia by the Dutch.

When Indonesia proclaimed its independence in 1945, I was seven and had no idea what it meant. The significance of a free Indonesia began to dawn on me when I moved to Jakarta in 1951. To me, Indonesia's freedom was epitomized in the celebration of Independence Day on August 17, and Bung Karno's (Indonesia's first president) inspiring orations. In middle and high school I went to Merdeka Square (Freedom Square) on every Independence Day to listen to Bung Karno with thousands of other people. His speeches inspired and encouraged me to aim



high, to set my ideal as high as the stars in the sky. His inspiration made me a perpetual learner. To me, the opportunity to have an education is the prime fruit of independence. My mother, who was very smart, never had any formal schooling because of colonial oppression. Independence also provided me an opportunity to participate in a democracy. In 1955, just five years after the

end of the War of Independence, Indonesia successfully conducted a peaceful general election. As a first-time voter, I actively campaigned for one of the political parties in a fair competition.

In 1957, I cried when a rival republic was proclaimed from one of the provinces, undermining the unity of free Indonesia. I was enraged when it was subsequently

revealed that the USA, the beacon of freedom and democracy, was involved in undermining the new democratic republic. Consequently, Indonesia's journey to democracy was derailed for 40 years until 1998.

In the early sixties, within a growing authoritarian environment, I found liberation in Christ and the meaning of life in the Word. This spiritual transformation prepared me to accept the opportunity to participate in the International Study Fellowship of the World Student Christian Federation. This program gathered 22 leaders of Student Christian Movement from 18 different countries to spend a semester of study in Princeton, NJ, USA and a semester of internship in different countries.

I took courses in theology and social ethics at the seminary and university. One of the first things I did when I arrived in Princeton was to find a congregation where I could worship and be part of a community of faith.



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I looked for a Presbyterian church with similar teachings to my church in Indonesia.

I found out that there were three Presbyterian churches in Princeton. The First Presbyterian Church was an upper class white congregation, the Second Presbyterian Church, a middle class white congregation, and Witherspoon Street Presbyterian Church was mostly black, with a sprinkle of white civil rights activists. I chose the Witherspoon church.

This choice got me involved in the civil rights movement. One of the things we did was organize peaceful marches into towns and cities. I still vividly remember the march on Trenton, NJ with Mahalia Jackson, a famous gospel singer, singing up front. I sang along **“We Shall Overcome”** with the depth of my heart.

In southern states, such marches were still confronted with police and National Guard violence. They were

attacked with police dogs and water cannons. Many participants were beaten with batons and rifle butts, arrested and jailed. Some of the leaders were tortured and killed. Churches regarded as bases of the civil rights movement

were bombed and set on fire.

This reality totally contradicted the theology and ethics that I learned in my courses. The complete incongruence between the Word proclaiming love and the reality of hate and violence did not shake my newly found faith. On the contrary, it convinced me that practicing love demands strong commitment and faithfulness to Christ.

I thought I needed to challenge the in-

congruence between what was taught on campus and the reality outside. The assassination of President Kennedy provided the opportunity.

When Kennedy was assassinated, the U.S. was hysterical, as was the

interest in the fight against the communists' enemies in South East Asia. I sense a similar attitude towards civilian victims in Iraq and Gaza who are regarded as collateral victims for the sake of American interest.

I contrasted the response to the death of these two human beings in a poem, challenging the asymmetrical appreciation of human life in a seminary. I closed my poem with the question: Is this a seminary or cemetery?

A few days after the poem was published in Viewpoint, the campus bulletin, a group of students confronted me. They found my poem offensive. We argued and parted as friends. If it had happened in Indonesia, I could have been physically beaten.

After Princeton, I did my internship in Germany, assisting two student pastors who serve foreign students in Karlsruhe. As an Indonesian student I could freely go back and forth to Eastern European countries.





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I could experientially compare democratic and communist societies, particularly West and East Germany. I was convinced that democracy, with all its blemishes that I experienced in the U.S., was better than communism. When I visited Moscow, I was told that racist treatment against African students were as bad as in the U.S.

In July 1964, I returned to Indonesia to a tense and explosive situation. Unity in diversity, one of the bedrocks of Indonesia, had turned into hateful animosity among conflicting parties. The power holders were becoming more authoritarian and manipulated the conflicting parties to maintain their hold on power. Consequently, all parties tried to build up mass-based strengths--even training militias for an eventual confrontation. The explosion happened in September 1965. It ended Bung Karno's rule and caused the largest blood bath in Indonesia's history as a free nation.

Initially, I took part in the student

demonstrations that tried to end Soekarno's authoritarian rule. However, when the fight turned into a revenge rage of violence destroying human lives, I decided to withdraw.

Morally, I also could not join fellow student leaders who shared the benefits of the victors who won by allowing the destruction of hundreds of thousands of human lives. And who ruled by violating the human rights of many more.

Guided by my theological and ethical learning in Princeton, I reconfirmed my choice to become a teacher. I also decided to quit my job as a government officer at the University of Indonesia and went to work for a private graduate school of management, I thought 45 years

founded in 1967. This choice led me to meet Barry (Barack) Obama. His mother, Ann Soetoro taught English language classes in the school. Through this choice, I was per-

was too short a time span to overcome prejudice and animosity imbedded by violent denial of human rights. In the Balkans, for example, people are still killing each other as a revenge of what happened 600 hundred years ago.

I closely followed Barack's meteoric political emergence since his keynote speech at the Democratic Party convention in 2004. His performances during the primary and presidential elections were impressive indeed. He never lost his poise. Attacks and pressure never rattled him. He is focused and treated his opponents gracefully with respect.

He is also strong in facing personal tragedies. His family is clearly a priority to him. During a critical moment in the presidential campaign, he gave priority to expressing his love to his grandmother who raised him. He decided to go to Hawaii to visit his critically sick grandmother. She died one day before he was elected the 44<sup>th</sup> president of the U.S.





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His personal life is full of tragedy but guided by an independent and courageous mother. His father and mother split and both died young. He hardly knew his father. His mother Ann, whom I knew personally, was an exceptionally strong person. She married a Kenyan student when she was 18 and gave birth to Barack in 1961. In the U.S., in the early 60s her acts defied social norms. Subsequently she married an Indonesian student and moved to Jakarta. They too were separated. Ann moved back to Hawaii and earned her Ph.D. returning to Indonesia as a micro finance consultant.

Broken homes are often cited as the cause of wayward children and adults. But in the case of Barack, his complex and tragic family background seemed to shape him to become a strong and high achieving person who cares for the common people. He undoubtedly is on the side of the common people who work hard every day to sustain their family. His choice to work as a

community organizer in Chicago after graduating from Columbia University demonstrated his commitment to the disadvantaged. Likewise, were his statements during his presidential campaign.

Barack's intellectual and social-political intelligence shined at Harvard Law School. He was the first African



American elected as president of the Harvard Law Review, the number one law journal in the U.S. According to one of his classmates, he could easily get a job at the most prestigious institution, law firm and corporation in the U.S. Instead he chose to go back to the community that he had served in Chicago and got involved in local politics.

Michelle Robin-

son, his fiancée, was probably the main reason why he went back to Chicago. He met her when he did his internship in the law firm where she worked. Michelle too is an exceptional person. She is a graduate of two Ivy League universities- Princeton and Harvard. Barack called her "the rock of our family and the love

people because they care.

Barack's family, with their two daughters, Melia and Sasha is a refreshing inspiration for the young and across generations in the U.S. and perhaps in the world.

Two million people from all over the U.S. and world converged in Washington D.C. They waited for hours in the freezing cold to witness the historic inauguration of the first African American president of the U.S. Thirty seven million viewers watched the event on U.S. television and probably hundreds of millions around the world did too. I hope all are inspired by his message and invitation to partner with the U.S. to build together a peaceful, free, democratic and humane world.  
**Yes We Can !**

California,  
January 20, 2009  
anugerah.pekeri@gmail.com



## Husodo Angkosubroto

Day Chair :

2009 ENTREPRENEURS LUNCHEON  
JAN 15TH 2009



“ Entrepreneurs are innovators. they make something out of nothing”



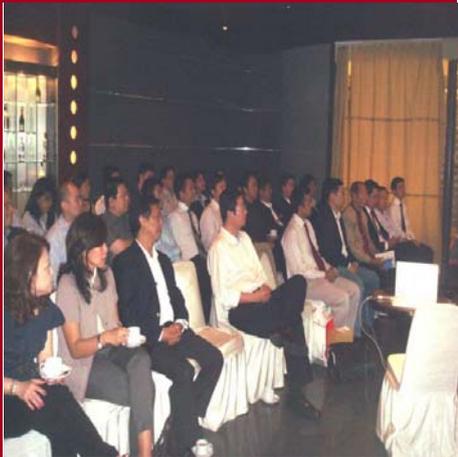
“ Our success has really been based on partnerships from the very beginning.”  
-Bill Gates



**Husodo Angkosubroto**

Day Chair

**2009 ENTREPRENEURS LUNCHEON  
JAN 15TH 2009**



Entrepreneurs are risk takers, willing to roll the dice with their money or reputation on the line in support of an idea or enterprise. They willingly assume responsibility for the success or failure of a venture and are answerable for all its facets."

**- Victor Kiam**

"We were young, but we had good advice and good ideas and lots of enthusiasm."  
- **Bill Gates**



**Hendri, Honey, Husodo, Manicki, Asih**



**Robbyanto Budiman**

Day Chair :

**CHANGE TO SURVIVE**

FEB, 2ND 2009



**“ It is your believe that  
empowers you to Change “**



**Rico Setiawan, ,Bhakti Sadeli, Christina Lim, Tjahjono Soerjodibroto**



**Robbyanto Budiman**

Day Chair :

## CHANGE TO SURVIVE

FEB, 2ND 2009



Left-right : Asih Eka Putri, Tjahjono Soerjodibroto, Herman Susanto, Holip Soekawan, Rhenald Khasali, Robbyanto Budiman, Christina Lim, & Triadi Suparta



Bhakti Sadeli, Tjahjono S. Setiawan Aluwi, Rico Setiawan, Patrick Christian



Vanessa Hendriadi & Patricia Susanto  
Duo Chairs

## NEXT EVENT

APRIL 2009

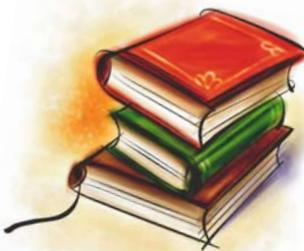
## USC CHARITY BALL

CHARITY FOUNDATION



*The World is Just a Book Away*

*“ The theme of this USC event is to help the less fortunate children of Sidoarjo. Our ultimate goal is to build schools in the Porong area. Currently we have received report that school aged children in the area are in dire need of proper learning material such as books. Some children are actually learning to read by picking up manual books of electronic equipment ! “*



**We need your help**

Please let us know if you would like to be involved in making this the biggest and most memorable event in 2009.



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