

# Tell Obama his shifting may cost votes



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Recently I was in a comedy club. "It looks like Obama might be the next president," the comedian on stage told the audience. "How do you feel about that?"

There was weak, scattered applause. I go to lots of comedy clubs, and over the last several months, I have heard many comedians ask some variant of this question. The audience's reply, before this, was always a loud, whooping cheer.

It wasn't that this audience consisted of McCain supporters. This was, after all, an art district

of downtown Los Angeles. I surmised that what accounted for the audience's subdued reaction was that the idea had dawned on them that Obama wasn't the man they thought he'd be — and not because of Jesse Jackson's supposedly off-mike comments.

On the liberal Mike Malloy radio show, with Sam Seder filling in as host, a caller recently said that a vote for Obama now would be like voting for Bush's third term. Seder asked the man if he was going to vote for McCain; the man wouldn't answer. Seder continued with the logical fallacy that it will either be Obama or McCain, and, if you don't vote for Obama, you're voting for McCain.

What Seder and most liberals fail to understand is that, when they try to convince themselves that they have no choice but to vote for Obama, even if he runs

to the right, then that very act of reasoning is what empowers Obama to run to the right.

There is a logical puzzle known to mathematicians, one version of which is called the "Paradox of the Unexpected Tiger." The king of a semibarbaric land ordered a young man to be sentenced to death in a semibarbaric way. The young man must walk down a corridor with five doors, each of which he must open, one at a time. Behind exactly one of the doors is a tiger.

"Only," says the semibarbaric king, "when you open the door with the tiger behind it, it will be unexpected." The king is known to be always true to his word.

The young man reasons thus: "If I open the first four doors, and there is no tiger, then I'll know the tiger is behind the fifth door. But then it would not be unexpected, so the tiger can't be

behind the fifth door.

"But then, if I open the first three doors and there is no tiger, I'll know the tiger must be behind the fourth door. So it can't be behind the fourth door, either."

The young man continues the argument to its logical conclusion, and declares, "So, there can't be a tiger behind any of the doors." With confidence, he opens up the first door. No tiger. He opens up the second door. No tiger. He opens up the third door. The tiger tears him apart.

If liberals want Obama to represent them, they need to let Obama know that defection is an option. Otherwise the political consequences, for them, may be unexpected. □

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