

## Obama has the makings of a Gandhi: Maya Angelou

Maya Angelou, one of America's foremost living poet, says Barack Obama can be a great leader, just like Mahatma Gandhi and Nelson Mandela.

Angelou, a veteran of the civil rights movement who worked with Martin Luther King Jr., said she was 'thrilled' that 'now we may grow beyond the ignorance of racism, sexism, ageism, the ignorance that keeps us from being the great country we are.'

'I see parallels in lots of things. I think now of Rev King's dream and the Kennedys' dream; Malcolm X's dream ... I see parallels all over the world. I think of Gandhi and Mandela. I do think he could be a great man like those other men, I do indeed,' she told The Times newspaper in comments published Tuesday.

'If I could say there's an American mantra, it's three simple words: Yes I Can. Senator Obama went to Harvard and could have got any job anywhere for \$100,000 a year; instead he went back to Chicago to try to help people in the poorest areas.'

Angelou was invited by former US president Bill Clinton to read out a poem at his inauguration in 1993.

In the poem she famously spoke about yearnings of 'the Asian, the Hispanic, the Jew, the African and Native American, the Sioux, the Catholic, the Muslim, the French, the Greek, the Irish, the Rabbi, the priest, the Sheikh, the gay, the straight, the preacher, the privileged, the homeless, the teacher'.

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