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**The Hard-Working White Americans  
Color of Law  
By David A. Love, JD  
BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board**

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In desperation, those who cling to the old paradigm of gutter racial politics will do or say anything to get elected. We were told that this is the way the game is played, that we cannot nor should not expect anything more. If it works, it is fair game, and if you can't take the heat, then stay out of the kitchen.

And certainly, the race card is a time-tested strategy for dividing people down the middle, ensuring that they are at each other's throats, responding to fear rather than reason or self interest, and in tune with their reptilian brain. The clarion call that Whites are all in this together, against people of color - that they must hide their women from the Black boogeyman, protect their jobs from Mexican "illegals," ensure that the unqualified affirmative action student does not steal their child's seat in college, and defend their nation against the Yellow Peril, or Islamofascists, or the enemy du jour - has precipitated lynchings and riots, and won elections. Bereft of vision, of ideas, and often of charisma, these race-baiting politicians have stoked the fires of hate for generations, all to make a name for themselves and build their careers. Since the days of President Lyndon Johnson and the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Voting Rights Act of 1965, race-baiting has been the crack pipe of the Republican Party.

In a recent [USA Today interview](#), Senator Hillary Clinton, that failed and bitter presidential candidate, decided to go for broke. She said that when compared to her rival Senator Barack Obama, "I have a much broader base to build a winning coalition on." To prove her point, Clinton cited an Associated Press article "that found how Sen.

Obama's support among working, hard-working Americans, white Americans, is weakening again, and how whites in both states who had not completed college were supporting me."

"There's a pattern emerging here," Senator Clinton said. A pattern, indeed, but not the one the senator had in mind. While some would give Clinton the benefit of the doubt and attribute her statement to a misstep, or perhaps lack of sleep from answering all of those 3 A.M. calls, I am willing to give her more credit than that. As a skilled lawyer and a cold, calculating politician, she, like Bill, chooses her words carefully; she knows that which she speaks. Plus, she has a track record.

As **BlackCommentator.com** has reported in recent months, since Bill Clinton's race-based mischief during the South Carolina primary, in which he attempted to marginalize Obama as the Black candidate with limited appeal, the Clintons have exhibited a disturbing pattern of race-baiting against Barack Obama.

Hillary Clinton has offended millions of voters with her cynical appeal to White racial solidarity. Of course, she offended those members of the electorate who are not White, and presumably not hard-working Americans, including Latino Americans, the nation's largest minority group, African Americans, Asian Americans and Native Americans.

But Clinton also insulted a multitude of White Americans as well, those who have voted for her not out of a visceral sense of whiteness, nor out of a fear of a Black planet in the form of Obama, but out of what they perceived as a legitimate reason, be it nostalgia for the 1990s, Clinton's positions on the issues, the possibility of electing the first woman president, etc.

Furthermore, she offended the multiracial, multiethnic and multigenerational coalition that voted for Obama and gave him numerous victories in the primaries, including many overwhelmingly White states throughout the nation's heartland. These voters, Democrats, Republicans and Independents, are disenchanted with eight years of catastrophic Bush policies and understand what is at stake. These voters have the potential to fundamentally alter the electoral map. Apparently, they did not fall for raw racial pandering, and understood that a crass appeal to white skin solidarity should be relegated to the past. Clinton has insulted their intelligence in the process.

To be sure, there are millions of White Americans who will not vote for a person of color under any circumstances. So what? The reality is that we don't need them and we don't want them. We cannot concern ourselves with votes that never were and never will be available. Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell, a key Clinton surrogate, was correct when he said that some Whites in his state would not vote for an African American, although his motives were questionable. In a state with entrenched racism - including hate groups and neo-Nazi activity in its middle "Alabama" region between Pittsburgh and Philadelphia - it is surprising that Obama trailed Clinton by a mere nine percentage points.

In the end, considering Clinton's failure to surpass her party's presumptive nominee in the primaries, the narrative of Obama as an unelectable Bantustan candidate who is unable to draw blue collar White votes rings hollow. Far more fascinating and relevant

than Clinton's edge among White voters in a limited number of contests is the nearly total evisceration of her Black support in only a few months. Early in the primary season, Senator Clinton enjoyed more African American support than Obama, when President Clinton was still the first Black president in the eyes of some. When the once-inevitable Hillary Clinton decided to become the Great White Hope in this presidential race, desperate in the face of the Obama steamroller, and her husband decided to assist her in sowing the seeds of division, things changed.

And indeed, the winds of change are upon us, and people are looking for a different way. We already know that the Clintons no longer own the Democratic Party that they so greatly influenced for two decades. Their "kitchen sink" strategy against Senator Barack Obama has tarnished their image and perhaps their legacy. Time will tell us if the Clintons' cynical Southern Strategy against Obama will cost them their political future. One thing is certain: It is a long walk back to the Senate for one of the Clintons, and an even longer walk back to Harlem for the other.


**BlackCommentator.com** Editorial Board member David A. Love, JD is a lawyer and journalist based in Philadelphia, and a contributor to the [Progressive Media Project](#), [McClatchy-Tribune News Service](#), [In These Times](#) and [Philadelphia Independent Media Center](#). He contributed to the book, [States of Confinement: Policing, Detention, and Prisons](#) (St. Martin's Press, 2000). Love is a former Amnesty International UK spokesperson, organized the first national police brutality conference as a staff member with the Center for Constitutional Rights, and served as a law clerk to two Black federal judges. His blog is [davidalove.com](http://davidalove.com). [Click here](#) to contact Mr. Love.

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