

**The
BLACK
C o m m e n t a t o r**
Commentary, analysis and investigations
on issues affecting African Americans
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June 12, 2008 - Issue 281

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**Echoes of History's Nightmares
Represent Our Resistance
By Dr. Lenore J. Daniels, PhD
BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board**

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We're from the same land, the same
persecuted people,
the same struggle encircles the waist
of our America...
The scattered heart
of the people, abandoned and submerged!...
[S]omething germinates beneath the flags:
the ancient voice calls us again.
Descend to the mineral roots,
and in the desolate metal's veins
reach mankind's struggle on earth,
beyond the martyrdom that mauls
the hands destined for the light.
Don't renounce the day bestowed on you

by those who died struggling. Every spike
is born of a grain seeded in the earth,
and like the wheat, the innumerable people
join roots, accumulate spikes,
and in the tempest unleashed
they rise up to the light of the universe.

-Pablo Neruda, "The Day Will Come"

I never thought this day would come.

A presumptive presidential candidate, an African American needs to stay clear from the issues affecting Black Americans.

I never thought this day would come.

An African American can't be seen associating with Black Americans who have long fought for the human rights of Blacks in the U.S.

I never thought this day would come.

An African American presumptive candidate for president becomes so by offering the white voters a narrative that speaks about an end to racial difference by ignoring the history of Black struggle for liberation.

I never thought this day would come.

While many Black Americans celebrated what the media called "an historic" night, June 3, 2008, I know that many of us on the Left were thinking what a long way backwards we have come.

June 3, 2008, seems to be a day of triumph for white Americans who want the issue of race, the guilt of slavery, and white privilege to simply go away.

June 3, 2008, seems to be the day those Americans found their hero.

Then the next morning, the first African American to be the presumptive presidential candidate for the Democrats, doesn't appear before a gathering of Black Americans identifying with the "historic" moment. No. The African American Joshua makes a mad dash to the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) on the second day of this "historic" moment.

June 4, 2008, Sen. Obama assured the prominent Jewish lobby that Israel's "security was 'sacrosanct' and 'non-negotiable,'" according to a BBC News report.

Here I am, thinking about all those I know who work so hard, feeling anything but secure and not at all assured that our rights as human beings, the right of Black self-determination in the U.S. is "sacrosanct" and "non-negotiable." Here I am wondering how the Palestinians heard this assurance from the African American Joshua that their suffering, their right for self-determination is of little importance to the presumptive candidate for president of the U.S.

To the display of Arab leaders, Senator Obama told the audience that Jerusalem will remain the undivided capital of Israel, (*AlJazeera.net*). "His comments appalled Palestinians who see occupied East Jerusalem as part of a future Palestinian state." For Saeb Erekat, chief negotiator, "this is the worst thing to happen to us since 1967...he has given ammunition to extremists across the region."

As for Iran, the report continues, Sen. Obama acknowledged to the audience that the "US-led war in Iraq [has] emboldened the Islamic state, which [poses] a real, grave danger." Joshua's goal "will be to eliminate this threat." This, too, seems to be in keeping with the King George regime. King George and Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert met June 5, 2008, to discuss Iran. The day before, the *JTA, Jewish Israel News* reported that Olmert "will urge President Bush to prepare an attack on Iran." King George told Olmert that "it's very important for the world to take the Iranian threat seriously, which the United States does (*Washington Post*, June 5, 2008). And Obama to AIPAC: he will "always keep the threat of military action on the table to defend our security and our ally Israel."

"I will do everything in my power to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon."

Everything!

This is not an *anti* militaristic war stance!

A speech that seemingly began with a joke about "provocative-emails" that suggest he's a secret Muslim, ironically points to the nightmare of racism and divisiveness many of us on the Left know lies at the center of this Joshua's success. He ignores this manifestation of the *real*, the violence of racism, to offer its erasure: "Let me know if you see this guy Barack Obama...because he sounds like a scary guy."

The Left sees *this* "scary guy!" Islam isn't scary! But this African American's brazen capitulation to capitalism, to U.S. Empire, is the nightmare facing conscious and unconscious Blacks in America, complete with its fascist repression of dissent. This scary guy has divided Black Americans from their roots and their "historic" responsibility among the downtrodden and oppressed, so that many Black supporters of Senator Obama now come to identify with the oppressor in this nightmare of Empire.

What if this African American, presumptive presidential candidate, the first in history had stood up before an audience of Black, Red, Brown, and Yellow people and said that he would do everything in his power to secure their rights, to prevent their further dehumanization and the further demoralization of their communities? What if he had said that their right to justice, to equality, to the best and fairest education, to adequate health care, to livable wages, to decent housing - these rights were "sacrosanct" and "non-negotiable"? What a change!

But what a day dream in this era of the nightmare!

British journalist John Pilger commemorating the fortieth anniversary of the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy, spoke about the eerie similarities between Kennedy's and Obama's position on war. On *Democracy Now*, (June 5, 2008), Pilger argues that Kennedy was not anti-war "much like Obama." "I draw the comparison,"

Pilger said. "I see so many echoes in Barack Obama of Robert Kennedy." As Pilger explains, Kennedy himself had actually supported the war [Vietnam War]...even when he was running as a candidate...There is a definite echo of Barack Obama - where he said, well, yes, I'm going to withdraw the troops, but when? And just as Obama is now saying - reserving his right not to withdraw troops next year. Kennedy was saying pretty much the same thing. And Pilger adds, "I think he [Kennedy] provides a very good lesson for those whose hopes are pinned on one candidate at the moment."

The *difference* I note is that for the record, in this 2008 presidential election, we haven't seen the man or woman who shakes hands with the poorest of the poor Black or Red or Brown or Yellow nor have we seen someone sit beside a Cesar Chavez figure among migrant workers struggling for a decent life. Today, the issues of people struggling, "submerged" beneath the flag and the wealth of middle class campaign contributors, has little value.

Have Black Americans come a long way from the days of the Maafa, enslavement, Reconstruction, and white backlash, or has the U.S. Empire gained an internal "ally," a new face of the same nightmare of imperialism? Will suffering in the world end? Will the people of color be assured of their security from the U.S. policy of "free" trade or face embargo or worst - war?

I never thought this day would come - around again - with such a *change!* But history also records, as Neruda knew, that those maintaining the global struggles against imperialism will rise "up to the light of the universe" - again!

BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board member, Lenore Jean Daniels, PhD, has been a writer, for over thirty years of commentary, resistance criticism and cultural theory, and short stories with a Marxist sensibility to the impact of cultural narrative violence and its antithesis, resistance narratives. With entrenched dedication to justice and equality, she has served as a coordinator of student and community resistance projects that encourage the Black Feminist idea of an equalitarian community and facilitator of student-teacher communities behind the walls of academia for the last twenty years. Dr. Daniels holds a PhD in Modern American Literatures, with a specialty in Cultural Theory (race, gender, class narratives) from Loyola University, Chicago. Click [here](#) to contact Dr. Daniels.

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