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**If Obama fails... America fails...**  
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Evidently there is a schism between the American public and the media pundits, written and electronic, perceptions of President Obama's brief tenure in office. While his approval ratings have been continuously high; those in the media seemingly have a need to micro scrutinizing his every policy or political move. Clearly, it is their professional responsibility to keep the public abreast of the affairs of government; however, one wonders if Senator McCain had been victorious would the "questions" or concerns that presently are asked of the President's daily performance be echoed? Honestly, I do not think so!

It seems to me, that try as they may to be objective and honest in their "reporting" of the "news" there is in existence a not too subtle, subliminal and unconscious questioning of his ability to perform. This, I would suggest, is owing to his being the first African-American President. And. owing to the nation's long systemic history of racism the concept of a Black man running the country is still very difficult to emotionally digest. Thus, what he does must be constantly checked and rechecked for fear that he may not know what he is doing. In a sense it is tantamount to Jackie Robinson's early days with the Dodgers.

Consider the following: In fifty plus days in office, it seems that he is expected to have already solved, or on the verge of solving, the economic crisis, developed a strategy for victory in Afghanistan, reduced the deficit, and persuaded the Republicans that it is in their interest to work with him for the betterment of the country. At the same time he must keep the promises he made during his campaign; such as, developing a strategy to resolve the on going crisis in the middle east, reforming the banking system, protecting the planet from further man made destruction, and restoring confidence in the American way of life... All this in his first 100 days. They seem to forget that the problems facing America were inherited by him.

Mockingly, he has been dubbed, by some, as "The Messiah"; without intending to be blasphemous, I am not certain a "messiah" could accomplish the task. The

expectations are unrealistic! .

Some would argue, I included, that President Obama's campaign rhetoric is, in part, responsible for these expectations. He said "Yes we can." and promised to reform and renew America. Thus, he is now expected to "produce." However, as every student of politics should know, there is a difference between "campaigning" and "governing". One may desire to accomplish certain ends but faced with diverse and often intransigent ideologies and beliefs it becomes extremely difficult to produce that which was promised, especially within the time frame that it was first offered. Still, I believe, had McCain won, the urgency that is reflected in the frenzied approach that the media—generally speaking—is taking even during this allegedly "honeymoon" period would have been much different. There would have been questions but without the not too hidden expressions of doubt. White America would not have found Mr. McCain as an anomaly, his behavior as a President would not have been analyzed with such fervor. He would have been – ideology notwithstanding, a known political entity.

Let me list a few of the items that the press found of interest: The removal of his jacket in the oval office; his wife's predilection for sleeveless tops. Those were among the most frivolous notes. Then there were perhaps a few that were more serious in nature but equally—to me from a political realistic perspective, a no-brainer. He said that he would have the troops out of Iraq in 16 months; instead it now appears that they will be out in 19 months. Granted that three additional months will keep our men and women in harms way, nonetheless the senseless and costly Bush-Chaney war will be finally over. The question as to whether he is doing too much too quickly is another one of those made for cable news questions that is used to fill the 24 hour cycle is another. One need only to objectively look at the state of our nation's health system, schools, employment, infrastructure, --- all interwoven with our failing economic system; one that was brought almost to its knees by avarice, greed and deregulation, to comprehend the imperative need to address these problems from a comprehensive and holistic perspective. There is no piecemeal, slow as molasses approach that will bring America out of the muck and mire into which she has fallen. Finally, there is another well meaning but curious one. "Obama needs to inspire and not lecture"... I ask "Can one really inspire a people who are fearful and who do not fully comprehend the underlying causal factors that placed them and their belongings at risk that which has filled them with fear or what sacrifices will be asked of them if they are to once again to bask in the sunlight of solvent America without first raising their level of political consciousness? I think not! Further, had Obama the candidate not inspired the American people he would not now be Obama the president.

I believe that this generation of Americans who elected Barack Hussein Obama as their leader have a greater understanding of the ills of this country and more patience than those who "report" the news and the political pundits. Both earn their paychecks with exaggerations they apparently feel are necessary to keep gathering an audience for advertisers.

Beneath it all however, and what for me is more lamentable, is my belief that while Rush Limbaugh, for his own reasons, openly stated that he wanted "Obama to fail" many pundits, without saying so or perhaps consciously so desiring, and for different psychology reasons, also would like Obama to fail. If only to say, "I told you so.... He was too good to be true." As many have said.... If Obama fails, America fails.

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**The BlackCommentator Readers' Corner Blog**

**BlackCommentator.com** Guest Commentator, Carlos E. Russell, PhD is Professor Emeritus C.U.N.Y. - Brooklyn College. In the sixties, he served as an Associate Editor of the *Liberator* magazine. As such, he was one of the first to interview Malcolm X after he left the Nation. He is best remembered as the founder of Black Solidarity Day in New York in 1969 and as the Chair of the Black Caucus of the Conference on New Politics in 1967. In addition, he was a consultant to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the planning for the [Poor Peoples March](#). Excerpts of his participation can be seen in [Citizen King](#) and [Eyes on the Prize \(PBS Mini Series Boxed Set\)](#). Born in the Republic of Panama he has served as that country's representative to the U.N and the O.A.S. with the rank of Ambassador. He has also served as the nightly host of "Thinking it Through" a talk show that was aired on WLIB in New York. He is a playwright and poet as well. [Click here](#) to contact Dr. Russell.

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