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**Cover Story:
Assassination Talk Shows Hillary's True Colors
Color of Law**

By David A. Love, JD

BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board

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When Hillary Clinton invoked the 1968 assassination of Robert F. Kennedy as a justification for staying in the 2008 Democratic presidential race, she revealed how desperate she has become.

"My husband did not wrap up the nomination in 1992 until he won the California primary somewhere in the middle of June, right? We all remember Bobby Kennedy was assassinated in June in California. I don't understand it," she said in an interview with the editorial board of the Argus Leader in Sioux Falls, S.D. Although some would chalk up her comment to fatigue or a lack of sleep, Clinton had similarly invoked the slain senator several times in recent months.

Talking assassination is serious business. Throughout the world and throughout history, the assassin's bullet has made martyrs of positive change agents. The bullet has stopped leaders of democratic movements, and often those movements themselves, in their tracks. The names Gandhi, Biko, Lumumba, Allende, Rabin and Sadat are just several that come to mind.

And in the United States, a number of truth tellers and change agents have been assassinated, figures such as Martin Luther King, Malcolm X, Fred Hampton, and Medgar Evers. The FBI under J. Edgar Hoover had a policy of preventing the rise of a "Black messiah," a matter of public record rather than urban legend or some wild-eyed conspiracy theory. Lovers of freedom are aware of the damage done to this nation because these individuals are no longer among us, taken from us before their

time, before their work was completed, through violence and hatred.

To be a high-profile, charismatic leader of color in America is to find oneself under the gun, in a figurative and a literal sense. Sen. Obama and his family have received [death threats](#), causing him to receive Secret Service protection earlier than any presidential candidate. Meanwhile Obama's foot soldiers have experienced the full brunt of racial epithets, defamation, bomb threats and vandalism throughout the inhospitable underbelly of this nation. For Clinton to make light of this American reality - and to contemplate the assassination of her Democratic rival, an African American, as a political tactic - is to demonstrate a level of instability, insensitivity and cold-heartedness which belies, even betrays, her qualifications for the office which she seeks.

For the Clintons, it has been a long journey to the bottom of the barrel. It all started with Clinton's "kitchen-sink" strategy to "mess up" her rival, Sen. Barack Obama, and render him unelectable.

The Clinton camp played the race card in a manner that would have made any Jim Crow politician blush. From the start, President Clinton did his part to stoke the fires of racial division in the South Carolina primary by comparing Obama to Jesse Jackson. At the same time, Sen. Clinton downplayed Martin Luther King's role in the passage of civil rights legislation. This led to [the revocation of the Clintons' Black pass](#), and the exodus of Black voters to Obama. In an attempt to woo White voters, Sen. Clinton further disrespected African American voters by [denouncing and scape-goating Rev. Jeremiah Wright](#), Obama's pastor. Meanwhile, as **BlackCommentator.com** reported in its April 20, 2008 special investigative report, [Senator Hillary Clinton Must Explain the Praising of a Group of KKK Supporters](#), in the 1990s President Bill Clinton expressed his support for the United Daughters of the Confederacy, a White supremacist organization that Hillary Clinton has yet to denounce. And Sen. Clinton won West Virginia and Kentucky by exploiting racism and appealing to what she referred to as "[working, hard-working Americans, white Americans.](#)"

But none of this could stop Obama. The Clinton camp tried to change the measure of success in the Democratic primaries, and manufactured all sorts of metrics, aside from the metric that really counts, the number of delegates, to define victory. Counting the votes in Michigan and Florida, states that were penalized by the Democrats for breaking party rules and holding early primaries, became a cause célèbre and civil rights issue for Clinton. This, despite her promise not to campaign in those states, a promise made when she was the frontrunner and thought she would win the nomination in February 2008.

It is not surprising to many observers that when all else failed, and there was no other way to catch up with Obama in the delegate count, Clinton's strategy was to wait it out, hoping that something bad would happen to Obama to render him ineligible and otherwise unavailable for consideration for the presidency. Apparently, hoping for the demise of her opponent was part of the Clintonian calculus.

And Clinton's latest assassination comments further reveal the contradictions regarding her candidacy. She cannot have it both ways. Hillary Clinton cannot claim to be a feminist whose candidacy has fallen victim to misogyny, yet engage in raw,

unabashed appeals to white-skin solidarity, and endorse military aggression against innocent women and children in Iraq and Iran. Red meat, testosterone and hubris dressed in a pants suit do not equate to feminism.

Touting her civil rights record while waiting for her Black opponent to be slain, Clinton does nothing but debase the public discourse and show her true colors. It suggests an unhealthy desire for power at all costs, and at the very least, a sore loser with sour grapes over a poorly-run campaign.

Most of all, it suggests that Clinton has a lot on her mind these days, and no good can come out of what she has been thinking.


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](#). Click [here](#) to contact Mr. Love.

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