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**On This Day...In This Time
Between the Lines
By Dr. Anthony Asadullah Samad, PhD
BlackCommentator.com Columnist**

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I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.

They send me to eat in the kitchen

When company comes,

But I laugh,

And eat well,

And grow strong.

Tomorrow,

I'll be at the table

When company comes.

Nobody'll dare

Say to me,

"Eat in the kitchen,"

Then.

Besides,

They'll see how beautiful I am

And be ashamed -

I, too, am America.

-I, Too, Sing America - Langston Hughes, 1925

For the first time in the history of the United States, the nation let its darker brother out of the kitchen and into the dining room of its national politics. A major political party gave him a seat at the table of democratic power, to lay claim for a legitimate opportunity to sit at the head of this nation's table as President of the United States. Political reciprocity has avoided Black America for 221 years (since the nation's constitutional formation in 1787). Yet, on June 3rd, 2008 - on that date - in this time, America finally recognized the beauty of its darker brother, got over being ashamed of its past (at least in making the first big step) and gave Illinois Senator, Barack Obama, enough votes to secure the Democratic Party's nomination for President of the United States.

In many regards, part of America grew up then. Another part grew this past Saturday when Senator Hillary Clinton (finally) conceded. Hillary Clinton tried to coronate herself the next President of the United States, had the power and influence to set up the primary races in her favor and tried to will the American people into believing that it was her time by February 5th. It was not her time. Not because Barack Obama said so, not because the America People said so, but because destiny has said so.

Destiny defines any great moment in time. People do not define great moments. People are defined by great moments. Any moment considered "great" produces it's own energy, its own euphoria and its own outcome. Despite the routers (that tried to steer this race in Hillary's direction), the doubters (who didn't believe it could happen) and the haters (who want to prevent it from happening), the construction of the political equality agenda in America took a major step (social equality, currently in regression, is another matter). Let us not be naïve or misguided in what's about to happen over the next few months. Folks who never took Barack Obama seriously in the past, will take him seriously now, and that's good AND bad. We should be very guarded in advancing the notion that America is ready for a black President. But we

should bask in the significance of this moment, on this day - in this time.

Barack Obama has risen to national prominence, advocating that the American people must take its nation back - that it must change Washington. Obama not only talks about "the time," he talks (and walks) in time with what Americans need, staying in the moment which is what many Americans want - though they may not admit it. Obama's oratory has been compared to America's last conscious messenger, Martin Luther King, Jr. Both were on time as much as they were in time. The real comparison should be that both men walked in time with "the time" when nobody else could see it, and tried to unify the nation at critical junctures where the nation faced war, class/race conflict and economic instability. America needed King and his message, whether it knew it or not - and rejected it in the most vile manner. As correct as his message was, and has been glorified in martyrdom, America couldn't get past his race. America needs Barack Obama, and his message, whether it knows it or not - but I'm still not convinced that it knows it or prepared to embrace it.

All national polls indicate that the Democratic Party is seven to tens ahead at the precinct level in nearly every state in America. The nation is fed up with Republican domestic and foreign policy debacles, yet Republican nominee, John McCain, is running nearly even with Barack Obama. What accounts for the difference when clearly the nation is not feeling Republican ideology, and clearly wants a change? They say Barack's "too liberal." Well, that's exactly what the "out of work" factory workers in Pennsylvania would want, right? A liberal approach to keeping jobs in America. That's exactly what hard working, white voters in West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio would want, right? A liberal construction on mortgages to save "the American dream," their homes, right? The fact of the matter is that the difference is race, not message.

With Hillary Clinton's delayed concession, the play is now to hold Barack hostage on his Vice Presidential pick. Where military experience was once the top priority, it's now someone who can keep working class whites and white women in the party - an indication that to many Democrats, the message is correct, timely and appropriate, but the person is not. Remember, Obama's supporters represent one half of one party, that represents only one-third of the voting electorate in America. The other two-thirds are Republicans and Independents, and their support is highly unpredictable at this juncture. Where will they land in November? This will be the ultimate test in whether America is prepared to do what is right, in getting past its historical race-phobia.


We will see over the next few months. In the meantime, we celebrate this man, Barack Obama, on this day, in this time. We too are America. The darker brother, after 200 years, has been let out of the kitchen, and has earned a seat at the table to lay claim to the Presidency of the United States. Let's see what America does in November, when company comes...

BlackCommentator.com Columnist, Dr. Anthony Asadullah Samad, is a national columnist, managing director of the [Urban Issues Forum](#) and author of [Saving The Race: Empowerment Through Wisdom](#). His Website is [AnthonySamad.com](#). Click [here](#) to contact Dr. Samad.

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