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**The Storms Are Gathering  
The Substance of Truth  
By Tolu Olorunda  
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*"We can't be on the stock exchange we are the stock exchanged."*

- Giovanni, Nikki. [\*The Selected poems of Nikki Giovanni\*](#). New York: William Morrow, 1996, pp. 80.

With less than 60 days into the young presidency of Barack Hussein Obama, certain factions of the right have begun beating the drum of fear, xenophobia, racism and Negrophobia, across the country. Getting their message across wouldn't require heavy lifting, as they've found refuge in mainstream TV and radio stations. Unable to stomach the reality of a Black president, and a Black family in the White House, the war-like noises have escalated to the point of calls for secession and armed insurrection against Obama—otherwise known as the Communist, Socialist and Marxist put into one. The main theme articulated was the presumed loss of their country—the loss of its identity. Many of these *dissidents* believe that Obama is pushing their homeland to the brink of defeat in Iraq and Afghanistan. Whatever Obama does, in their eyes, can only further validate the rumors, first proselytized on the campaign trail, that he has a hidden agenda—which will inevitably come into place, as he ascends to the highest seat in the land.

In a 2007 episode of the Comedy Central series, *The Daily Show*, Jon Stewart, the host, sought to quell brewing reports that Obama was a Muslim, who participated in repeated phone conferences with Al-Qaida operatives. In the segment, he explained to a show correspondent that "what they're [the right-wing machine] doing, is they're linking him with a loaded image. It's unfair to do such a thing." His correspondent agreed, with a sharp twist of irony, that "it's patently unfair," but "Obama has been laden with a name that causes all kind of problems." Many incidents in the course of the '08 Presidential race would seek to pin the Muslim "smear" on Obama, and dig deeper into the well of xenophobia. Obama's renewed insistence that he was "not a Muslim and

I never have been. I never studied at a Madrassa and I have never sworn on the Koran. I am committed to Christianity," would enable the invectives being flung at the 7 million+ Islamic U.S. citizens, and the millions other human beings of Islamic ancestry or faith, around the globe. Obama, who [early on in the race](#), described, to a New York Times reporter, the Muslim call to prayer as "one of the prettiest sounds on Earth at sunset," stood back as the Clinton machine and Republican war room joined forces to render Islam synonymous with terrorism. Obama's inability to defend the heritage of his father plays a significant role in the recent utterances, by right-wing TV/radio hosts, declaring his presidency the end of American hegemony in the world. Smelling fear, the right-wing army, right on cue, has begun its campaign of gloom and doom, as it concerns the first Black presidency.

A recent episode of *Glenn Beck*, on FOX Noose, [encouraged viewers to experiment](#) with potential "worst-case scenarios," which Obama's economic and foreign policy plans might create, by 2014. "We're going to *try to show you how to prepare for the worst while everybody else is sitting back and hoping for the best. We're not doing the show to scare you tonight, but... I'll explain in the end of the show exactly why,*" he explained. His first scenario: *"It's the financial meltdown. The year is 2014. All the US banks have been nationalized. Unemployment is about between twelve and 20% Dow is trading at 2800. The real estate market has collapsed. Government and unions control most of the business and America's credit rating has been down."* His second scenario was, hard to imagine, even more reactionary: *"Global civil unrest. Now the United States is no longer the world's policeman. Mexico has been taken over by narco gangs. Oil and gas pipelines have been targeted and destroyed. Tourism nonexistent due to safety concerns. Ukraine is the first European country to fail. Ireland is the first western country to fail. Fifty million people worldwide are unemployed. There are riots in the streets."* His third and final, the Crème de la Crème, managed to link internet use with potential for armed insurrection: *"Anger and discontent at home. The year is 2014. Many Americans are feeling disenfranchised. People are isolated from their political leaders. They've been betrayed over and over and over again. The internet connects likeminded people. And the Bubba effect—a rise in individual militias."*

Alan Keyes, the failed-Senate candidate from Chicago, was more poignant in his warnings against an Obama presidency. In an [interview](#) with a reporter from KHAS-TV, last month, Keyes declared Obama a "radical communist," who *"is going to destroy this country, and we are either going to stop him or the United States of America is going to cease to exist."* Obama, a man with a "seared conscience," has "actually advocated infanticide," he continued. Obama's sins are so grave that Keyes *"can't even understand why anybody in their right mind would consider him worthy of political support. That's a violation of conscience that is inconceivable."* Taking it a step further, he asks: "Is he president of the United States?" Defying all laws of sanity, Keyes adds: *"According to the Constitution, in order to be eligible for president, you have to be a natural born citizen. He has refused to provide proof."* His most aggressive push came a few seconds later, with a call for insubordination, within the army, against Obama's commands: *"I'm not even sure he's president of the United States, neither are many of our military people now who are now going to court to ask the question, 'Do we have to obey a man who is not qualified under the constitution?' We are in the midst of the greatest crisis this nation has ever seen, and if we don't stop laughing about it and deal with it, we're going to find ourselves in the midst of chaos, confusion and civil war."*

Alan Keyes must have inspired the base of the Republican Party, for shortly after his rant, the same tune was being carried by many conservative choir members. In an interview on Glenn Beck's (the same nut-case) radio show, Chuck Norris, martial artist

and TV star, arose to a level of psychosis very few people are capable of. Inspired by Beck's comments that, in the case of a worsening political climate, "*Americans... won't stand for it. There will be parts of the country that will rise up,*" Norris reignited the flames of secession, already lit by Keyes and Glenn Beck. "Texas is a republic, you know," he informed the host. "*We could actually... break off from the union if we wanted to,*" he noted. In a subsequent column, Norris stood by his earlier comments. The impulse to secede "*may be a reality sooner than we think,*" he wrote. "*My president-of-Texas quip was tongue-in-cheek, but the idea behind it isn't.*"

The rabid, right-wing's calls for secession and armed insurrection against Obama's policies are certainly no new strategy. Many fear that the vulnerable state of the U.S. economy, coupled with the reality of two seemingly endless wars looming over its existence can be capitalized upon by right-wing fascists and demagogues to inflame the passion for destruction in the hearts of millions of, otherwise reasoning, citizens. Sarah Posner, author of "[God's Profits: Faith, Fraud, and the Republican Crusade for Values Voters](#)," thinks the impossible can take place, if citizens are uniformed of the truth, at such critical time.

As one who has [covered the extremist wing](#) of the Christian-right's fundamentalist sect, Posner knows best how easy it is for public figures to build a legacy of conquest on the fears and hopes of innocent people. She has documented the pulverization of Christianity, by prosperity prophets (pimps), for commercial gain. The conservative wave of the Republican Party has "become more and more hysterical," with smears of Obama, hoping to paint him as an *other* and *unknown*, she contends. There's a "theological element" in the attacks on Obama, says Posner. The socialist ties are meant to arouse "apocalyptic, end of the world discussions of what's happening in America," she asserts. The rhetoric of Socialism fits perfectly with the "the idea that the end is near, and before the second coming of Christ, there will be the rise of the anti-Christ, or false prophet," with the institution of "a world war government," which, for a lot of "conservative movement folks," is the epitome of Socialism, says Posner. By tying Obama to the fundamental philosophies of Socialism, the crackpots of the religious-right can successfully turn the knob into the hearts of those who are either unlearned of what Socialism truly is, or "have a general fear" of it.

In October 2008, Sarah Posner [penned a column](#), meant to expose the apocalyptic rants many on the religious-right had begun chanting. She noted that, "*with polls showing Barack Obama pulling ahead of John McCain in the US presidential race, the Republican party's hard-right evangelical allies are starting to panic. As the political elites in the movement freak out, they're sowing the seeds of grassroots anxiety that God will punish America for electing Obama.*" Citing various examples, such as a magazine feature titled, "Obamageddon: Could We Survive a Barack Presidency?" and a popular evangelist-activists' worries that, in the event of an Obama presidency, "God could take his hand of protection off of America," Posner concluded: "*But if the polls are right and Obama wins, the fundamentalists are already poised to pounce on any new crisis, be it on economic, national security, or another front, as the latest divine cause célèbre.*"

Though Posner is unsure of what inroads the conservative town-criers are making, she supports making a parallel between the recent calls for secession/armed insurrection, and the claims, earlier in the '08 Presidential race, that Obama was a practicing Muslim. When the smear machine was turned on, in the beginning months of 2007, many were unsure of what harm the "Obama is a secret Muslim" smear could cause. Unfortunately, the nonchalance permitted would prove deleterious, with polls showing 1 in 3 voters confessing, later in the race, to being unconvinced of Obama's faith. Obama's high

approval rating, and the attention being paid to the right-wing's assaults, is a comforting sign that repetition will not take place, she believes. It's imperative that progressives "keep an eye on it," due to the "echo chamber" of mediums like FOX News, but "it's not time to hit the panic button yet," she says.

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### **The BlackCommentator Readers' Corner Blog**

Either way, the storms of fear, war, and unrest are gathering, and it will take keen insight, along with foresight, to avert whatever insidious plan(s) they have in mind.


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