

Obama's Backers Make Their Threat

by Debra Hanania-Freeman

As it stands at this moment, unless Sen. Hillary Clinton continues her campaign for the Democratic nomination until the Party's convention, there is no presently visible chance that the U.S. will come out of the presently skyrocketing hyperinflationary crisis in any form easily recognized as being, still, our Constitutional republic. The attempt by the powerful, and also predatory financier groups which have sought to crush Senator Clinton, as they had attempted to destroy the nomination of President Franklin Roosevelt in Hoover's favor in 1932, has the smell of a serious attempt at fascist dictatorship all over it.

What is most alarming about this today, is the mafia-style pressure which Howard Dean's office, and the super-rich Obama campaign have put on Senator Clinton to resign here and now, at a time when the tallies on primaries to date, including that in Florida, show her to be still very much a leading contender. There is the smell of something very evil in the role which Obama and others are playing on this account.

The facts of the matter as they stand on Friday morning, May 9, are as follows.

The Numbers Just Don't Add Up

In the period between Hillary Clinton's overwhelming defeat of Barack Obama in the critically important state of Pennsylvania on April 22, and the opening of the polls in Indiana and North Carolina on May 6, every poll in the nation showed that momentum was very clearly on Clinton's side. Obama, whose candidacy had yet to face a serious defeat, was clearly badly shaken. Things only grew worse for Obama when his longtime pastor, Rev. Jeremiah Wright, made a highly publicized appearance at the National Press Club, and

uttered some of his most controversial remarks to date. Obama did ultimately cut the wrong Rev. Wright loose, but did so only after Wright turned his polemics against Obama for not defending him more strongly. In the eyes of both the press and the pundits, Obama handled the affair badly and appeared to be melting down.

That view seemed to be proven by both public and private polls. Clinton held an unwavering double-digit lead over Obama in Indiana, a state that shares a border with his home state of Illinois, and which he had long been expected to win. In North Carolina, where Obama was once as much as 30 points ahead, opinion polls showed that Clinton had whittled that seemingly insurmountable lead down to 6-7%. Then, the election polls opened.

There were some very troubling features to the way voting was structured in each state—features that should have served as red flags to ballot security experts. In North Carolina, largely as a result of a massive drive by the Obama campaign, a record 272,000 registered to vote for the first time this year. Eighty percent of them were Democrats and independents, both eligible to vote in the Democratic primary; in fact, those who registered as “unaffiliated” or independent, comprised the vast majority of the new voters. Another 31,250 voters switched their party affiliation so they, too, could vote in the Democratic primary. The vast majority of those individuals switched to “unaffiliated” status.

Isn't bringing new voters into the process a good thing? Of course it is. But, what should have been troubling to those charged with guaranteeing fair and honest elections, especially in a state that is still under the watch of the Voting Rights Act, is that over 300,000 new voters were now eligible to vote (and by all accounts *did* vote) in a Democratic pri-

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This cartoon, by Peter Brookes, appeared in the London Times online May 9.

primary election where ultimately 1.5 million voted, and the vast majority of those 300,000 were *not* Democrats. Ultimately, contrary to press reports that secret Republicans in both Indiana and North Carolina were casting ballots for Hillary Clinton, when the votes were tallied in North Carolina, Republicans who voted in the Democratic primary supported Obama by a startling 13-to-1.

For those monitoring the vote count after the polls closed, things grew more and more confusing. From very early in the evening, as expected, Obama had, and held, a solid lead in the Raleigh-Durham area, which is dominated by colleges and universities. But Raleigh-Durham only accounts for 29% of the voters eligible to vote in the Democratic primary. For most of the night, both candidates were within a point of each other in both eastern North Carolina, which accounts for 23% of the vote, and in Charlotte (22%). In Greensboro (17%), although Obama took an early lead in the city itself, Clinton was winning in the surrounding area. In the less densely populated western part of the state (10%), Clinton held a double-digit lead. In fact, in the rural areas (western North Carolina is included in this group), that comprise some 47% of the vote in the state, Clinton was either leading Obama or within one point of him. Then, suddenly, within approximately 17 minutes, all the numbers, save those in the West, inexplicably

changed and Obama gave one of the earliest victory speeches in North Carolina history, claiming 56% of the vote. Election analysts are still trying to figure out how the sudden shift occurred, and some are still arguing that the numbers just don't add up. But, the nation's attention has already shifted to Indiana.

Indiana Vote Stumps the Experts

The Indiana Democratic primary was open to all voters, regardless of party affiliation. 1.6 million voters ultimately cast ballots—of the 1.3 million votes cast in the Democratic primary, 200,000 of them were voters of “undetermined” party affiliation. Despite the bellowing from Rush Limbaugh, who is presumably drug-free following his latest stint in rehab, that he was leading a charge of Republican voters for Clinton in an effort to “sabotage” the Democratic primary, the results show that in Indiana, as in North Carolina, the independents and Republicans who voted in the Democratic primary voted overwhelmingly for Obama. Despite the fact that Clin-

ton held a solid lead of 7-9% all night long, the TV networks inexplicably refused to declare her the winner, arguing that they would not do so until the votes came in from several counties in the northwest corner of the state, one of which included the city of Gary, which was expected to go to Obama. It seemed odd. The total population of Gary is about 103,000, half of them under 18. Even if every registered voter in the city voted for Obama, it would not have been enough to change the ultimate outcome of the election.

Obama conceded Indiana to Hillary long before the networks did, and she gave her victory speech at about 11:30 p.m. EDT. Long after all the speeches were given and everyone turned in for the night, the tally shifted. An attempt to deprive Clinton of a win would have been too reckless, but her lead somehow diminished to just two percentage points. Again, election analysts were stumped. Clinton took 84 of the state's 92 counties. Although Obama won the urban areas, those areas only comprise about 30% of the vote. In the suburban and rural counties, which comprise 70% of the vote, Clinton's lead ranged from 8% to 32%. The next morning, when Indiana Sen. Evan Bayh (who is, admittedly, a Clinton supporter) was asked on CNN how he could account for such a close race between Clinton and Obama, Bayh said that he couldn't account for it at all, and

asserted that a recount would likely show that Clinton had indeed taken the state by a far larger margin.

One could argue that, ultimately, the results were what everyone expected. Obama took North Carolina and Clinton took Indiana. However, the press played it as a crushing defeat for Clinton and began speculating on when and how she would make a “dignified” exit from the race. And, according to all reports, the pressure on undeclared superdelegates to declare for Obama, and for those already pledged to Clinton to switch allegiance, became excruciating.

Despite the clamor, Hillary Clinton, looking bright, refreshed, and nothing like a loser, appeared before a rally in Shepherdstown, West Virginia, and continued to hammer away at the issues that have defined her campaign, “This election is about solutions, not speeches,” she declared. When she continued, shouting out “High-speed rail! Mass transit! Water systems!” the crowd roared its approval. She’s expected to win the next round of primaries in West Virginia and Kentucky by very sizeable margins. Yet, the calls for her to drop out continue to build, arguing that the numbers show she can’t win. But, those arguments aren’t based on reality.

The Threat of Disenfranchisement

By the close of business on Friday, May 9, Obama had picked up the support of five additional superdelegates. ABC-TV declared that Obama had taken the lead among the superdelegates and most of the pro-Obama blogs carried banner headlines asserting the same. In fact, though, Obama now has 1,592 elected delegates and 268 superdelegates for a total of 1,860, to Clinton’s 1,424 elected delegates and 272 superdelegates for a total of 1,696 delegates, making it a very close race.

Clinton detractors had argued from the start that she could not take the nomination without a significant vote from the superdelegates. And, while that is true, the fact is, that neither can Obama. The nominating process is designed in such a way that any presidential nominee must attain a majority of the elected delegates *and* a significant portion of the superdelegates. Just what that number is, however, has become the source of major controversy. Obama, and Democratic National Committee (DNC) chairman Howard “Scream” Dean, have declared the threshold number of delegates to take the nomination to be 2,025 (based on a total number of 4,049 delegates), and Obama has indicated his intention to declare himself the Democratic nominee on May 20, after the primaries in Kentucky and Oregon, where it is expected that he will reach that number.

If Obama does so, it will be a premature declaration. The 4,049 delegate count does not include some 368 delegates from Michigan and Florida. In January, Clinton won both states by very wide margins, but Dean stripped both states of their delegates, for holding early primaries that he did not sanction. Democrats from Michigan, where Obama took his

name off the ballot, have proposed a compromise, in which delegates would be apportioned between the two candidates, that is currently under consideration. The Florida case is far more problematic.

Both Clinton and Obama were on the Florida ballot, which accounts for 185 elected delegates and 26 superdelegates. Florida Democrats had no say in the setting of the date, which was established by the Republican-dominated legislature and governor, and turned out to vote in record numbers. They also voted overwhelmingly for Clinton. But, regardless of whether one supports Clinton or Obama, to disenfranchise some 2 million Florida Democratic voters who came out to participate in the electoral process in good faith, is not only unfair, it is illegal. Also, given that Florida Democrats feel that they have been disenfranchised in the past, they are unwilling to allow it to happen again.

A vocal group of some 600 Floridians, led by their Congressional representatives, the Hispanic organization LULAC, and members of the Building Trades union rallied in front of the DNC’s Washington headquarters May 7, and have scheduled additional demonstrations in major Florida cities throughout the month of May. The speakers at the Washington, D.C. rally made clear that if the Florida delegation is not seated intact, they will disrupt the convention. There is also the very real possibility that Hispanic delegates from other states would join such floor demonstrations.

Best Interest of the Nation?

The issue is the key item on the agenda when the DNC’s Rules and By-Laws Committee meets on May 31. Based on the nature of the issue, and the composition of the committee, it is expected that, at the very least, they will seat the Florida delegation. If that occurs, it is likely that the Obama campaign will take the issue before the Credentials Committee, which will have jurisdiction over the question beginning in mid-June. But, until the issue of Florida and Michigan is resolved, nobody knows what the threshold number of delegates needed to secure the nomination is.

The other issue, of course, is the question of how the approximately 850 superdelegates vote. At first, the Obama camp attempted to discount their role, since they seemed to heavily favor Clinton. Then, the argument was put forward that the superdelegates must follow the lead of the pledged delegates in their respective districts. That argument was joined by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. But, it seems that they only apply that argument to states in which Obama won the majority of the elected delegates.

But, the Party rules on the question of the “automatic” delegates, as the superdelegates are called, couldn’t be clearer. Whether the automatic delegates publicly or privately support a candidate, they are outside of the rule that binds the elected

delegates to vote (at least on the first ballot) for the candidate whom they were elected to represent. When political analyst James Carville was asked to comment on the scramble for superdelegate endorsements, he explained that “A superdelegate commitment today and four bucks will get you a cup of coffee at the Ritz-Carlton.” Not only are they not bound to vote for any candidate, regardless of what they may or may not promise at any point prior to the convention, the very purpose of designating automatic delegates in the first place, according to party rules, “is to give our convention more flexibility to respond to changing circumstances, especially when those changing circumstances might make the voters’ mandate less clear. The automatic delegates are expected to exercise their best judgment in the interests of the nation and the Democratic Party.”

That would seem to make a strong argument for Hillary Clinton to remain in the race until the convention in August. She is expected to make a strong showing in the remaining primaries, and regardless of whom the superdelegates endorse today, the convention is a long way off, and it would seem that they are expected to cast their votes based on the circumstances *at the time of the convention*, and not before it. In the midst of the rapidly worsening economic conditions, given Clinton’s continued focus on economic issues, and the lack of any substantive economic policy proposals to date by Obama, the automatic delegates might do well to abide by their own rules.

Additionally, if they are indeed to “exercise their best judgment in the interest of the Democratic Party,” given that virtually all polls show that Clinton can beat Republican John McCain while Obama cannot, one would conclude that, at the very least, they should remain publicly uncommitted until the convention.

Although all these arguments seem rational enough, none of them are reflected in the news media, or the statements by so-called leading Democrats. If one were to draw a conclusion based on their utterings, “Hillary Clinton is toast.”

Why So Desperate?

One cannot help but wonder why Clinton’s opponents seem so recklessly desperate. Why not just let the electoral process run its course? Why not let all of the voters have their say and then proceed to the August Convention? If the Obama camp is so confident of a win, then why are automatic delegates, particularly African Americans, coming under such excruciating pressure? Why are so many promises of money and appointments (most of which will never be met) being made?

Unimpeachable sources very close to the Clintons have reported that the morning after the Indiana and North Carolina primaries, calls were made by individuals, recognized as high-ranking members of the U.S. political elite, informing the Clintons that, “while this was not necessarily [their]

position,” they wanted it passed along that under no circumstances would Hillary Clinton be permitted to take the Democratic nomination, and that, if by some miscalculation, she did take the nomination, she would never be permitted to take the Presidency. Apparently, the messages concluded that, if, by some unanticipated occurrence, she were to actually go ahead and win the Presidency, it would be the shortest-lived Presidency in the history of the United States. The message was explicit: The combination of Hillary and Bill Clinton in the White House meant a Presidency that would simply wield more independence and more power than they were willing to tolerate. Undoubtedly, Clinton’s continual pledge to represent the lower 80% of the U.S. population, and the unspoken fear that some of her policies seem to lean too far in the direction of the proposals put forward by Lyndon LaRouche, have lowered their toleration level.

The point seemed to be underlined in a none-too-subtle cartoon in the May 9 online edition of the *London Times*. It shows Hillary Clinton laying face down, arms spread, eyes bulging. The American flag is the backdrop, but one of the stars has fallen, its point lodged deep in her back.

Note also, the widespread, and undisputed, reports that top officials of the Obama campaign have offered to pay off the financially strapped Clinton campaign’s \$15 million campaign debt as well as the \$11.43 million that Clinton has loaned her campaign organization, in return for her shutting down her campaign. The offer comes at the same time that Clinton’s finance committee has insisted on a meeting with the candidate next week, in what some believe will be an attempt to force her to withdraw.

The fact is that Obama, although his campaign has raised sizeable funds, does *not* have the capability to make good on an offer of that magnitude. A payoff of that size could only be made by the powerful financial forces tied to the City of London that have backed the Obama candidacy. It is a blatant and illegal attempt to shut down Clinton’s candidacy and to proceed with a completely orchestrated U.S. election.

So far, Clinton has remained steadfast in her commitment to continue her campaign. Individuals close to the Clintons don’t see her bowing out at this point. James Carville, who is personally close to both Bill and Hillary, told *Newsweek*, “If Hillary Clinton gave Obama just one of her *cojones*, they’d both have two.” Hillary Clinton is tough and she is certainly no quitter. But the issues at stake here are far bigger than any individual’s candidacy or even the election itself. Those who are attempting to shut down the Clinton campaign and control this Presidential election have no allegiance to Democratic Party, or to the United States. They are acting as agents of a dangerous foreign influence. If they were to succeed, the U.S.A. will have lost its sovereignty, and there would be very little hope for the continuation of civilized life on this planet.