

## Barack Obama: Yesterday's Gone

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Global Research, January 29, 2008

[The Planetary Movement](#) 29 January 2008



Something significant has changed. The political calendar has just flipped a page. We are now on the threshold of Super-Mega Tuesday, 2008. The tide of change is coming in stronger now. Destiny is racing forward to greet tomorrow. Yesterday's gone.

Sadly, the presidential process is often observed as if it were a tournament of chess – or poker.

Barack Obama's opening gambit was classical and aggressive. He executed a bold strategy nominating himself as a new phenomenon in American history – a presidential candidate whose vision was larger than the issue matrices swirling out of the mouths of his opponents. Obama proposed himself as a candidate above and apart from the field of mortal combat. A force of nature so subtle yet so aggressive that he would become irresistible, irreversible, inevitable.

Hillary Clinton predicated her candidacy on her identity – stellar pupil, successful lawyer, seasoned politician, First Lady, Senator and the first woman to contest seriously for the presidency. Above all, Hillary Clinton advocated herself as a woman of presidential caliber – a new phenomenon in presidential history – a woman with unique experience at the top levels of power, a woman ready to govern from day one of her presidency with a portfolio brimming with motherly nurture.

While Obama stood separate and apart from his status as a racial minority; Clinton

embraced her gender as her defining claim on the presidency.

Obama laid claim to the brand of change, and Clinton countered with an unusual move – a King gambit. By ordering Bill Clinton into South Carolina to attack Obama as a black candidate, Hillary exposed her King to Obama’s withering countergambit – the Kennedy Attack – which Obama executed by moving his knight into play threatening the existence of the Clinton King.

The Clintons’ misjudgement was to introduce race as the crucial issue in South Carolina. This ploy empowered Obama’s message that he was above race. The outcome demonstrated that the Clintons were not above the racial level of yesterday’s politics.

In the nomenclature of poker, Clinton played her cards aggressively, betting the family farm on the bedrock of a royal flush headed by her husband, the ex-president – a veritable King of Hearts. When Obama laid down his cards, he had drawn to an inside straight flush – the high hand. Then Obama played the Joker, and the Joker in this campaign is wild. Ted Kennedy will trump the Clintons with his ringing cry of racial politics.

Nothing stings the Clintons worse now than recalling their theme song: Don’t Stop.

Here are some of the lyrics:

Don’t stop, thinking about tomorrow,  
Don’t stop, it’ll soon be here,  
It’ll be, better than before,  
Yesterday’s gone, yesterday’s gone.

Why not think about times to come,  
And not about the things that you’ve done,  
If your life was bad to you,  
Just think what tomorrow will do.

Don’t you look back,  
Don’t you look back.

Yesterday’s gone.

Indeed, yesterday’s gone for good.

Barring tragedies or a massive outbreak of electronically rigged primaries like New Hampshire/2008, Barack Obama will defy the odds and win major victories next Tuesday. Instead of the candidates being tested, the people of America are being tested – can they put yesterday behind them – or not.

Yesterday, I received an email from a senior and sage Democratic political strategist asking about the Obama phenomenon imploring me with that pregnant question on every mind cognizant of the struggle taking place in America today, “Can we hope?”

Yes, we can.

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