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ELECTION 2008

So, after eight years, we finally get a new President. And, a most interesting President he or she will be.

Senator Hilary Clinton is of course female. Never before has there been a serious and potentially electable female candidate for President of the United States. I wonder how many women will vote for her because she is a woman, and perhaps there are some men who will do the very same. I wonder, generally, how many people think it is time for a woman to be President rather than a man.

Then, there is Barack Obama. He is, as everyone knows, a man both black and white. I wonder how many African Americans will vote for Obama because he is half black, and I wonder how many others will not vote for Obama because he is half black.

The issues are important because Obama and Clinton are engaged in a fierce struggle for the nomination as candidate for President of the Democratic Party. A fierce, struggle indeed. No matter the verbiage or the political diatribe, whatever is on the surface cannot fully mask what lies beneath. The struggle, the fight can only get more aggressive. Clinton of course claims that Obama is young and without experience. There are some who wonder whether or not the race card might be played, whether directly or indirectly. Desperate times call for desperate measures. We do indeed sincerely hope that race will never be an issue in this or any other American election. But, one never knows.

Then, there is the Clinton record. It is complicated politically and compromised ethically. There is indeed a revealing record of things done by Senator Clinton in the Arkansas days, the eight years as first lady and her years as Senator of the great State of New York. There are things unflattering in that record, some claim bordering on the criminal, and it will be interesting indeed to see whether or not Obama resurrects that record directly or indirectly as a political weapon. Desperate times call for desperate measures.

It seems obvious that the nomination will not be decided before the Denver convention, unless a deal, a very big deal is struck. That is highly unlikely. Even though Obama is in the lead, and may well have captured the fancy of the super delegates, Clinton has

resolved to fight to the finish and do anything in her power to win the nomination. When Senator Clinton fights, the gloves come off.

But there are clarifying moments coming. To the fore come Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Indiana and others with their primaries. A win or loss will indeed clarify the position of either candidate and perhaps tip the scales. But, perhaps not. Many think that no matter who wins these three primaries, and the rest remaining, and no matter who may be in the lead with respect to elected delegates and delegates won at the primary level, the nomination cannot and will not be decided until the party meets in Denver in August. Obama, now in the lead, surely will not withdraw or compromise. Clinton, close to the lead has vowed to fight to the bitter end to the chagrin of many in the Democratic Party. But a fight it will be, one way or another.

The question is whether or not it will be a fair one. The prize, the nomination is one-of-a-kind, nothing like it in the world. To be as close to that prize as these two Americans are is the opportunity of a lifetime. I have no doubt neither will concede. I only hope that, for the good of America, one candidate does not play the race card, directly or indirectly.

And, I hope for the good of America the other candidate does not play the gender card. When it comes to leading the greatest country in the world, neither race nor gender play a role. For all men and all women are created equal. If one of these two candidates becomes our next President, let us pray we get the right one. Nothing else matters.