

Tennis, Anyone? Michelle Obama Sounds Like a Candidate at US Open



by Roger L. Simon

Tennis fanatic that I am, I stayed up late on Aug. 28 to watch my hero Novak Djokovic play his first-round match in the U.S. Open, even though I knew the result would be a foregone conclusion.

Along the way, however, I would have to do penance. I was told that there would be a sure-to-be-tedious celebration of the 50th anniversary of Billie Jean King's engineering of equal prize money for women in tennis, delaying the Djokovic match to an unfortunate hour,

Can there be sports events these days *without* political posturing?

I also was told, several times and gleefully by the commentators, that there would be a “surprise guest” for the occasion.

If you’ve already read the title of this article, you know who that was: Michelle Obama.

Heavily made up for television, she strode out to wild applause from the fans at the world’s biggest tennis venue, Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Ms. Obama then proceeded to deliver a speech that was filled with the usual liberal/progressive boilerplate about how the struggle for equality—or was it “equity”—is never-ending and so forth.

It was time for me to head into the kitchen for a snack.

While I was there, it struck me what was happening.

This was the first salvo—tentative though it might have been—in what I had long expected, a Michelle Obama presidential candidacy.

And where better than at the U.S. Open, where the seats were filled, especially in the copious expensive sections, with the very people she would want to impress and reassure, not to mention gain their financial support—the fat cats of liberal America?

The Obamas were coming, not to worry.

Because, if you asked them in private, worried they were. Not only were there concerns about President Joe Biden’s age but also questions about his and his family’s overseas business growing so rapidly as soon to be unmanageable.

You could see the discontent if you watched the hints beginning to appear in the normally loyal pages of *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. It was rather like, in the past, faces suddenly being rearranged in those pictures of the Politburo.

I have thought for some time that President Biden wouldn't run again or quietly be forced to resign due to some issue. In either case, the widely disdained Vice President Kamala Harris would be a dubious substitute.

Only Michelle Obama would do.

The question was always whether the former first lady would want to abandon an extremely cushy, celebrity lifestyle for the constant stress of the presidency.

Her appearance as what was, in essence, the keynote speaker at the U.S. Open, an event that rarely has anything similar, may answer that question.

And watching the matches, former President Barack Obama was seated right beside her, applauding Novak's extraordinary shots, even though you suspected he didn't care much for Mr. Djokovic, whose heroics go beyond the tennis court for standing firm against mandatory COVID vaccination (not exactly a conventional Democratic Party position).

What's interesting, though sadly predictable, is that the Republican Party at its higher echelons seems to have been ignoring this highly possible eventuality of a Michelle Obama candidacy.

It's potentially considerably more powerful than a doddering President Biden, for a host of reasons. But it may be that at least some of those higher echelons don't care to do so.

In their heart of hearts, or even pretty close to the surface, wouldn't the Republican establishment of the Mitch

McConnell/Karl Rove ilk prefer yet another Obama term to President Trump or even upstart Vivek Ramaswamy, who would both, separately or together, upend the comfortable lives they have lived for decades?

The two-party system isn't simple.

Meanwhile, pay close attention to the former first lady.

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