

Bernie Sanders and the End of the Democratic Party

By [Margaret Kimberley](#)

Global Research, March 10, 2016

[Black Agenda Report](#) 8 March 2016

Region: [USA](#)

In-depth Report: [U.S. Elections](#)

As Black Agenda Report makes clear, black voters make electoral decisions primarily based on fear of Republican victory. Nothing else is more terrifying to them than seeing the white people's party emerge triumphant. The fear is understandable if one thinks there is no other alternative to keeping Democrats in power. Not only are black people convinced of the questionable claim that Hillary Clinton is more electable than Bernie Sanders, but they also fear being "spoilers" who guarantee a Republican victory.

In 2000 Al Gore won the popular vote but lost in the electoral college because of suppression and theft of black votes in Florida. That same year Ralph Nader ran for president as the Green Party candidate and was blamed for Gore's defeat. Had he not syphoned votes from Gore, as the argument went, George W. Bush would not have become president.

The trauma of this memory keeps black people and other progressives from doing anything which is seen as harming the Democratic party. No matter how many wars Democrats support, no matter how often they fail to help working people, no matter how worthless their pretend efforts to fight Republicans, it seems unthinkable to speak the truth and say that a Democratic loss is no loss at all.

It is time to stop the quixotic search for better Democrats. It is time for a wholesale rejection of the reliance on electoral politics. A rotten system can't accomplish anything that leftists want to see realized.

The truth is that America is ruled by one far right wing party and another center right party. The Democrats don't even go through the motions of reaching for low hanging fruit. Bernie Sanders and other Democrats controlled Congress under a Democrat presidency in 2009 and 2010. They could have but chose not to reform immigration laws, end mass incarceration, enact card check legislation or end military occupations and interventions. They did bail out the thieving financial services sector that was responsible for destroying the economy.

The renewed focus on modern day lynching at the hands of police hasn't resulted in even one federal prosecution under a Democratic Justice Department. Donald Trump is excoriated for saying that he would not only kill terror suspects but their families as well. Barack Obama already did that to Anwar al-Awlaki and his son but Democrats don't dare mention that inconvenient fact.

The only thing we have to fear is fear itself and discredited beliefs in the Democratic Party and in the value of electoral politics. The ballot didn't win the day in the 1960s and 1970s. Instead it was ordinary people who created the much needed political crises. We have them

to thank for the Civil Rights Act and the existence of Medicaid and Medicare. The duopoly tag team and failure to deliver for working people should mean an end to the unending masochistic exercise.

Most Bernie Sanders supporters will not fall in line if the disliked Hillary Clinton is the Democratic presidential nominee. They probably won't vote for the eventual Republican choice either but they won't turn obediently to Clinton. They should choose to start over with a new party. That should mean using mass action against their political enemies. Hopefully they recognize that in fact they have political enemies. That level of consciousness won't emerge from wishy washy liberals who just want someone to love.

The Democratic Party crack up should not be avoided or feared. It must be embraced. But that will only happen if so-called leftists want a victory outside of the voting booth. Too many progressives really yearn for acceptance rather than bringing about systemic change. That is why many of them love Bernie Sanders even though he is as willing to be the drone killing commander in chief as Hillary Clinton.

It isn't hard to be less repellent than Hillary Clinton. She is such a bad liar and so obviously in bed with banksters that anyone looks better in comparison. Rejecting Hillary Clinton isn't proof of left wing bona fides. The implosion of the Democrats should not be just about getting Bernie Sanders the nomination. It is an opportunity to break with a system which is incapable of being truly democratic.

The end of the Democratic party as we have known it is inevitable but it isn't clear if Democrats will learn the right lesson from the fracture. The Sanders people will have wasted a golden opportunity if they do nothing but sulk in the event of a Clinton nomination or try once more to reform the unreformable. They must question themselves too and what they want to change in this country.

Black voters, who have no legitimate reason to prefer Clinton over Sanders, must also do serious self-examination. In their case that will mean asking what the bought off black misleaders have done for them lately. The answer is that they have done nothing except look out for themselves and dredge up the specter of Republican bogeymen and women at opportune moments.

A Republican president would be a political a disaster but so is another Clinton in the White House. Hillary will be even worse than her husband because she will make the case for openly moving to the right in order to defeat Donald Trump or whomever the Republican nominee happens to be. There is no need for black people, the most left wing in the Democratic constituency, to stand aside or to participate in the train wreck.

If Sanders is denied the nomination, a movement based politics ought to emerge from all sectors of the Democratic constituency. That is the only way to take victory from the jaws of defeat.

Margaret Kimberley's *Freedom Rider* column appears weekly in BAR, and is widely reprinted elsewhere. She maintains a frequently updated blog as well as at <http://freedomrider.blogspot.com>. Ms. Kimberley lives in New York City, and can be reached via e-Mail at [Margaret.Kimberley\(at\)BlackAgendaReport.com](mailto:Margaret.Kimberley(at)BlackAgendaReport.com).

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