

Hillary Clinton to California: “Drop Dead”

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Global Research, May 23, 2016

[Reader Supported News](#) 22 May 2016

Region: [USA](#)

Theme: [Media Disinformation](#)

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

By now, anyone paying the least attention knows that the dishonest Democratic establishment and [dishonest mainstream media](#) have created a [false narrative of bad behavior](#) by Bernie Sanders supporters at the Nevada State Democratic State Convention on May 14. The evidence-free claims [about “thrown chairs” \(none\)](#) and “death threats” (tasteless insults) [have been widely rebutted](#), but they have served their purpose all the same: taking attention away from the arrogant, autocratic management of the Nevada convention by establishment Democrats working on behalf of Hillary Clinton.

It’s a measure of Democratic Party panic that party leaders feel the need to run a despotic convention, autocratically ramming their preferred results through when there were only two national delegates at stake.

Their fear of Bernie Sanders must run deep for them to follow this authoritarian performance with a smear campaign based on lies about the Sanders campaign. Establishment Democrats should be afraid, since almost half the voters allowed to vote in Democratic primaries reject establishment Democratic “values.” But their shamelessness, pusillanimity, and obtuse arrogance march on toward a possibly disastrous November that is wholly self-engineered.

Here’s what arrogant denial of reality sounded like on CNN May 19, inside the establishment Democrat echo-chamber: reporter Chris Cuomo tries a reality based question and Hillary Clinton meets it with almost absolute denial:

Cuomo (CNN): So you get into the general election, if you’re the nominee for your party, and —

Clinton: I will be the nominee for my party, Chris. That is already done, in effect. There is no way that I won’t be.

Cuomo: There’s a Senator from Vermont who has a different take on that —

Clinton: Well —

Cuomo: He says he’s going to fight to the end —

Clinton: Yeah, it’s strange.

Sanders still could pull a rabbit out of the hat for a “miracle ending”

First, let’s stipulate that the possibility of Bernie Sanders becoming the Democratic nominee for President is small. But it’s also real. Should he be able to get 85% of the California vote,

he'd get ALL the California delegates. No wonder establishment Democrats want to pretend the game is already over. It's close to over, to be sure. By analogy, it's the fourth quarter and the Patriots are down by two touchdowns, but Tom Brady and his team have the ball at midfield with all their timeouts remaining. Let's wait and see what the score really is when the game is really over. (In 2008, Clinton played out the game, [losing 15 of the last 23 contests](#); this year, Sanders is winning down the stretch.)

Cuomo's first question is precisely right, despite the "conventional wisdom," which is a somewhat desperate attempt at self-fulfilling prophecy. That's what Clinton counters with, the self-fulfilling prophecy gambit, and yet even she can't escape that shred of uncertainty when she says, "in effect." "In effect" is not a done deal, and wishing won't make it so.

On CNN, Clinton deflects whatever Cuomo was originally intending to ask. He takes the Sanders bait and, in mealy-mouthed fashion, says Sanders is going to fight to the end. Clinton cuts him off and calls that "strange." The candidate's talking point has silenced the reporter, but it hasn't changed reality: Clinton's nomination, however likely it may seem, also [hangs by a thread](#). That's a much more interesting story than most of the mainstream garble. Why would Clinton think her arrogance will help her? Why do Democrats think running a Potemkin convention in Nevada is necessary to secure two delegates? Why are Democrats resorting to blatant smears of the Sanders campaign if the nomination is already secure? If establishment Democrats actually believe that party unity is important, why have they ramped up their divisiveness?

On CNN, his reality-based question, Cuomo switches to the false narrative of Nevada that goes unexamined: "his supporters have become more aggressive.... We saw what happened in Nevada.... Did you feel that Sanders responded in the right way?" That is profoundly dishonest and unprofessional: Cuomo assumes a false reality, while ignoring the reality of the rigged convention, and then tosses Clinton a softball question. She affirms the false narrative ("what we saw there was disturbing") and slides past the question ("I have every confidence we're going to be unified") and [speaks falsely about 2008](#) ("I won 9 out of the last 12 contests"). Clinton goes on and on with a false analogy about 2008, talking about how she and Obama worked for unity AFTER all the primaries were over. Cuomo just smiles and nods, as if he believes Clinton's nonsense is relevant, when it's obviously not.

Revolution is hard, non-violent revolution is much harder

Bernie Sanders is fighting for a political revolution. He is doing it with nonviolence, working within the two-party system. The Democratic Party is not a revolutionary party, and hasn't even been close since the Johnson years in the sixties. Establishment Democrats like the Clintons are fundamentally counter-revolutionary, which is a problem for a party with ten million voters favoring the political revolution candidate. The Republican party is so intellectually corrupt that it fell apart facing the Trump challenge, and is now falling in line with it. Democrats still have enough party discipline (or top-down undemocratic hierarchy) that they can muster the ugly pushback that featured a convention with no meaningful participation followed by a vicious attack on the victims who have had the temerity to challenge authority.

Two days after having had their way with [their rigged convention](#), Nevada State Democrats [formally complained](#) to the National Democratic Committee that Sanders supporters had tried to disrupt and change the pre-ordained decisions the state committee had made in closed session and imposed on the convention. Writing for the state party,

general counsel Bradley S. Schrager dropped the [poison pill](#) that has distorted the Nevada narrative ever since. Schrager's May 16 letter reeks of fearmongering and falsehood. Schrager's central charge is an Orwellian fabrication that would seem hilarious if it hadn't been taken seriously by so many [credulous, agenda-driven people](#) in the party [and the media](#). Schrager was widely misquoted as saying the Sanders campaign has "a penchant for violence." What Schrager actually wrote to the Rules Committee was much nastier and more hysterical, apparently designed to inflame enough fear in the party hierarchy to panic it into adopting draconian rules to stifle dissent at the convention (thereby mimicking the Nevada convention):

"We believe, unfortunately, that the tactics and behavior on display here in Nevada are harbingers of things to come as Democrats gather in Philadelphia in July for our National Convention. We write to alert you to what we perceive as the Sander Campaign's penchant for extra-parliamentary behavior – indeed, actual violence – in place of democratic conduct in a convention setting, and furthermore what we can only describe as their encouragement of, and complicity in, a very dangerous atmosphere that ended in chaos and physical threats to fellow Democrats."

Polarizing Democrat lawyer blames the silenced as divisive – seriously

Lawyer Schrager complains of "extra-parliamentary behavior" at a convention that allowed no meaningful parliamentary behavior. The slippery lawyer speaks of "actual violence," attributed to no one and for which there is [not one specific example](#) in his three-page single-spaced letter full of ranting accusations ("threats to her life," "obviously criminal in nature," "sparking a street-fight," "an atmosphere of impending eruption," "screams from bullhorns," "profiting from the chaos," "shock troops," "inciting disruption," "incendiary, inaccurate, and wholly unauthorized," "inflammatory charge," "irrational minority," "lack of conscience," or "the glee with which they engaged in such destructive behavior.") This is not a carefully argued legal brief, with specificity and context – it is essentially a hate letter, apparently intended to provoke further hatred and repression of free speech within the Democratic Party. Most media ran with Schrager's version of events, unquestioned (as in The New York Times May 17, [with this provocatively false lede](#): "Thrown chairs. Leaked cellphone numbers. Death threats spewed across the Internet."). Schrager's demonization is not an argument, but it is an ad hominem emotional appeal that other Democrats (and pundits) have already reacted to without reasoning. Schrager's letter is also in apparent clear violation of the [state party's Anti-Bullying Policy](#).

All this has about it some of the stench of 1968, although the parallel is inexact. But then, as now, a large part of the electorate was incensed at the party hierarchy – then over the party's obdurate support of the Viet-Nam war, now over the party's adamant resistance to social change desired by most of the country. Then as now, the Democratic Party was unresponsive to its anti-establishment dissenters, then preferring a police riot to silence dissent over any rational effort at accommodation, now choosing a rigged convention (with the hint of worse to come). Then as now, the party hierarchy was rigid and intellectually corrupt. Then the Democratic hierarchy managed to get Richard Nixon elected. Now ... well, we'll see.

Besides the generalized victimization of a raucous convention, the only actual victim was also one of the victimizers. [Convention chair Roberta Lange](#), the [enforcer for the state committee's secret decisions](#), held the first vote on the rules before all the delegates had

arrived. The state committee had secretly given her absolute control over the convention and sole authority to rule on challenges to her own rulings. Given the brewing controversy over Nevada delegates since February, Lange's dictatorial running of the convention was clearly disruptive of the democratic process, as well as a catalyst for further disruption in response. Lange is not known to have addressed her exercise of authoritarian style, but she has widely complained of being a victim of electronic hate mail and hostile phone calls. She has claimed death threats, but one alleged threat that was published had a callback number and an offer to discuss what went down at the convention. She plays the pity card: "I feel threatened everywhere I go." Of course Lange should not be harassed, but many of the communications to her are actually political criticism of her actions as a public official. She may be a victim, but she is in no way an innocent victim.

Bernie Sanders made a cogent response, largely ignored

In a May 18 statement, Sanders first reminded the ostrich-like Democratic hierarchy of [a real world condition](#) they continue to try to deny:

"... that the political world is changing and that millions of Americans are outraged at establishment politics and establishment economics. The people of this country want a government which represents all of us, not just the 1 percent, super PACs and wealthy campaign contributors."

He suggested that the Democratic Party faces an existential choice between opening its door to people fighting for "real economic and social change," or it can choose to maintain its closed-door, corporate, big-money, service-the-rich current posture. (That's what the state party in Nevada chose.) Next, Sanders addressed the traducing letter from lawyer Schrager:

"Party leaders in Nevada, for example, claim that the Sanders campaign has a 'penchant for violence.' That is nonsense. Our campaign has held giant rallies all across this country, including in high-crime areas, and there have been zero reports of violence. Our campaign of course believes in non-violent change and it goes without saying that I condemn any and all forms of violence, including the personal harassment of individuals." [emphasis added]

Sanders then mentioned actual violence against his campaign in Nevada – a victimless shooting and a break-in/ransacking of staff quarters – that have not made news. For the remainder of the brief statement, Sanders addressed behavior of the Democratic Party, especially at the state level, with a detailed, brief critique of the Nevada convention.

Pundit nonsense is exemplified by the [usually cogent Eugene Robinson](#) of the Washington Post, whose May 19 column began: "Bernie Sanders is playing a dangerous game. If he and his campaign continue their scorched-earth attacks against the Democratic Party, they will succeed in only one thing: electing Donald Trump as president." Wait, who's scorching whose earth? Which [Debbie Wasserman Schultz](#) of the Democratic National Committee has scorched as much of Sanders' earth as she could, while also spending her time supporting the payday lenders who shamelessly exploit the poor and contribute to her campaign? (Bill Moyers sees Wasserman Schultz as a primary source of Democratic divisiveness.) What planet has Eugene Robinson moved to? He concludes that Sanders "and his campaign must stop attacking the Democratic Party in a way that might discourage voters in the fall." He

would be more persuasive and in touch with reality if he warned the Democratic Party to stop attacking Sanders in a way that will alienate his ten million primary voters. But the party may achieve that alienation anyway, just by sticking too closely to the status quo. And surely Robinson knows that.

[Another pundit atrocity](#) comes, apparently unintentionally, from Joan Walsh who describes a number of media Sanders-backers who have backed off after uncritically accepting the false narrative of Nevada. Then Walsh goes into conspiracy mode, hinting that the false narrative was not only a true narrative, but that the Sanders people staged the events (that didn't happen) with a nefarious purpose: "that the point wasn't the actual delegates—he trails her by about 280 at this point—but creating the appearance of a rigged system." Besides rejecting the reality of numerous elections irregularities (to put it nicely) in this primary season, Walsh goes on to explain her bias against "male entitlement": "I don't accept the presumption of moral and ideological superiority from a coalition that is dominated by white men, trying to overturn the will of black, brown, and female voters or somehow deem it fraudulent."

Top Democrats reacted without bothering to fact check

Nevada senator Harry Reid, the Democratic minority leader, had already taken Sanders to task on May 17, based on the false reports of the Nevada convention – "The violence and all the other bad things that has happened there," Reid falsely told reporters. [The New York Times reported](#) that Reid said that Sanders faced "a test of leadership" over the behavior of his supporters, and that Reid said he urged Sanders to "do the right thing." Neither the Times nor Reid, apparently, explained what "the right thing" was, nor did they mention the draconian nature of the convention itself. (The "test of leadership" meme was picked up with equal parrot-like vacuity by Politico, the Washington Post, The Hill, the LA Times, Daily Kos, the Chicago Tribune, and the Drudge Report. The media nadir was reached by the Times with such baldly biased front page headlines as "Sanders Is Urged to Quell Threats by His Backers – Chairs Fly in Nevada" (May 18) and "Bernie Sanders, Eyeing Convention, Willing to Harm Hillary Clinton in Homestretch" (May 19) – since it was actually Clinton's Nevada supporters who were harming Clinton with their thuggish takeover of the convention.)

What does Harry Reid know about tests of leadership? He can't even lead his 43 fellow Democrats in an effective effort to make the full Senate vote on the current Supreme Court nominee. Harry Reid has called the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff "incompetent," but [during the Viet-Nam war](#), which he did not oppose, [Harry Reid led from behind](#) as a capitol cop guarding the House and Senate. Under Harry Reid's leadership, the Democrats' Senate majority became a minority. Harry Reid called the Iraq War "the worst foreign policy mistake in the history of this country," but he voted for it. Bernie Sanders has characterized Iraq the same way, but he voted against it. The only significant test of leadership that comes to mind with Harry Reid is that he managed to keep nuclear waste from being buried in his Nevada backyard at Yucca Mountain. But he's done nothing to keep anyone else safe and nothing to stem the production of nuclear waste. Harry Reid is the Democratic establishment personified, and you can count on him for pretty much nothing.

Senate Democratic whip Dick Durbin of Illinois chimed in based on the false narrative, as did Senator Chris Coons of Delaware. Coons shot his foot into his mouth, lecturing Sanders on "the importance of respecting the process," numb to the notion that in Nevada [the process was the problem](#). Senator Barbara Boxer of California was at the convention to give a

keynote speech for Hillary Clinton, but when she lit into the Sanders disrupters she was booed and attacked the crowd, making the booing worse. Boxer claimed she feared for her safety. By contrast, [Democrat Nina Turner](#), an Ohio State Senator who was supposed to speak before Boxer but was bumped to later, [used her speaking time](#) to calm the audience: “we got to be calm but committed.” Turner, who was at the convention for almost eight hours, attests [that there was no violence](#) (“nobody tried to do anything violent whatsoever”) and that reports that she was booed were false, even when she said Bernie Sanders was going all the way to the convention “to make the impossible possible.” Rather tepidly, Democratic [House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi](#) of California semi-praised Sanders as “a positive force in the Democratic Party.” She said she was glad to see the energy of Sanders supporters, but warned that “there are rules that exist.” She didn’t mention the way Nevada treated rules as a variable, but she did reject comparisons between 2016 and 1968 as “ridiculous.”

[Another, excellent witness report](#) of the convention, at variance from the false narrative of the party and the media, came from Dan Rolle, Democratic candidate for Congress in Nevada. Acknowledging that there was a lot of chaos, Rolle talks for ten minutes about why it happened: the state committee’s decision to take autocratic control of the convention and [Chair Lange’s autocratic exercise](#) of her authority.

By Friday, May 21, there were reports that [Sanders was calling his fellow senators](#) and assuring them of what he’d said all along: that he would support the nominee of the party, once there was a nominee as determined by the convention. There’s no report that anyone in the Democratic establishment is assuring him of similar support in the event, however remote, that he is the nominee. That would be a real test of leadership for Harry Reid and his ilk in the face of a popular political revolution to change this country in ways establishment Democrats fear because it threatens their cozy nests of inert but lucrative legalized corruption. Embracing real change for the rest of the country is a test of leadership Clinton Democrats act like they’re determined to fail by any means necessary, the consequences be damned.

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