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Why "Real American Leftists" Should Not Vote for Bernie Sanders

I'm not "Feeling the Bern!"

By Joseph Waters
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Real leftists should not support Bernie Sanders for the simple reason that he is not actually a socialist. When asked about socialism he is very quick and eager to point out that he is no Marxist, but rather a "democratic" socialist. It sounds less threatening, I suppose, to your average ignorant American raised on anti-communist propaganda to put the "democratic" qualifier in there; whatever the hell that means.

Besides making excuses for his cute, watered-down version of socialism, Bernie makes it clear that he does not deign to represent the interests of the working class. Almost without fail he frequently uses the terms "middle class," "working people," or "working families" instead.

Bernie is no internationalist, either. This is a key component of real socialism, by the way. Several times in the most recent Democratic debate he referred to President Bashar al-Assad of Syria as a "terrible dictator." He has also been quick to badmouth President Vladimir Putin, condemning his "invasion" of Ukraine and initially (before later changing course as politicians are wont to do) criticizing Russia's intervention in Syria, saying that "Mr. Putin is going to regret what he is doing."

Sanders has stated that he is attempting to lead a "political revolution," not a social revolution. He does not want to fundamentally reshape American society. He's here to save the capitalist system from itself, kind of like FDR did back in the 30's with the New Deal. In an audience before the DNC in August of last year he made it quite clear that he considered himself to be a Democrat through and through. In his comments he indicated that his campaign would be an effort to bring voters back into the Democratic Party fold who had become disillusioned and disgusted with it over the years. His twofold concern (which does not seem to include actually winning the presidency) can be summed up by these statements from his DNC talk:

> "I think you're looking at the candidate who can substantially increase voter turnout all across the country."
>
> "If the question is, 'Can we defeat the Republicans?' I think the answer is that, yes, we can."

Some have reasoned that if, against all odds, Bernie is actually elected President, then he will very likely sell out or otherwise be ineffective. However, the theory goes, this will provide absolute proof to the yearning masses, through painful but necessary experience,

that the system is hopelessly rigged against them. This is expected to spur them to action to move the revolution forward.

Flawed thinking like this only proves why historians are so helpful to society and especially to progressive social movements. The thing is, we've had this experience before. We don't need to go through this trauma again.

The most recent and obvious example of how the system is rigged happened in the period of 2006 – 2010. In the 2006 congressional elections the Democrats promised that if they got control of Congress and the Senate that they would do all in their power to end the Iraq war. They did nothing. In 2008 Obama campaigned as the peace candidate who would put an end to the wars and close down Guantanamo. He did nothing of the sort.

For two years the Democrats had a large majority control in both houses of congress and they held the presidency. They had the power to do practically anything they wanted, maybe even make amendments to the constitution, but they did absolutely . . . nothing!

Let it be clearly understood that Bernie has always caucused with the Democrats, he is running as a Democrat, and he always has been, in essence, a Democrat. The Democratic Party is a key part of the political establishment and they will never, ever lead a revolt or even a significant reform movement against the status quo.

Comrades, do not be tempted to support Bernie Sanders in any way! Don't vote for Bernie! In fact, I urge you not to vote at all!

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