

## Leftists Acting Like Right-Wingers

That's an odd-sounding title, isn't it? Specifically, the people it describes should not logically exist, and did not exist in any significant numbers before 2016.

*Most people on the left, from moderate progressives to socialists, have long had a quality seldom found in conservatives: a belief in rational, logical thinking and accurate facts. We're the people you want on your jury if you are innocent. If you want to convince us of something, you'd better use confirmed facts and correct logic, even if it's something we'd like to believe. We may not be perfect, but we don't deliberately spread lies to advance our arguments.*

But during the 2016 election season, a number of people who considered themselves left-wing began to behave like Republicans. It isn't that they changed their ideology, but they started to use right-wing style tactics- assertions and accusations without evidence. Worse, they turned against the liberal candidate for President, using a decade's worth of Republican-created character assassination against her. Even worse than that, the opposition was not an ordinary Republican, but one campaigning with blatant appeals to bigotry, who constantly lied and displayed a tendency to react with ill-considered anger and insults.

While they didn't quite endorse him, they may as well have, because they helped him win.

What caused this behavior? Their excuse was that Clinton beat Sanders in the primaries. They claim she "cheated", though it was not actually true. And when Sanders graciously and wisely endorsed Clinton, they turned against him as well.

Sanders was a refreshing and appealing candidate. It should have been a good thing that he was able to get issues and ideas heard. The mistake, by both Sanders and his supporters, was to imply that Clinton was not just more moderate, but because of paid speeches and donations, was not a sincere advocate for the poor, the workers, and the middle class.

As anyone familiar with basic logic should know, donations do not "buy" anyone who does not agree to be bought. Speaking fees buy only a speech. Rhetoric speculating that donations determine policy is normally not taken too seriously, since both sides usually need them to fund campaigns. Some of Sanders' supporters accepted it literally without thinking. They completely ignored the fact that Hillary has spent a lifetime standing up for the disadvantaged, the vulnerable, the victims of discrimination

As it became clearer that Clinton had more support in the primary, a number of Bernie fans turned to the many years of Republican anti-Clinton propaganda and used some of it, despite the fact that they should have known better.

**We have seen, over the years since Bill Clinton was elected, Republicans making accusations of claimed scandals, investigating them, finding no wrongdoing, yet continuing to repeat allegations. When they did dig up Bill's sexual indiscretions, they used impeachment for the second time in history against him, unsuccessfully. Everything they have thrown at Hillary has proved false.**

**Republicans' real issues are ideological, but they don't try to argue policy. Their preferred tactic is attempted mudslinging, character assassination, trying to create doubt among Democrats. We know what they do. They've been using that for years. Why would any Democrat borrow their lies to use against another Democrat?**

**Yet, some did. The pseudo-progressives who were so angry that Bernie Sanders didn't win the primaries, started behaving like Republicans. The positions of Bernie and Hillary were not that far apart, so they didn't argue issues much. They insulted Hillary's character, and added the claim that she was a war hawk, and even said she wanted war with Russia. That was absurd.**

**That was almost as absurd as "progressives" attacking the progressive candidate. She has more experience in and awareness of foreign policy than any Presidential candidate in a very long time. No one with any sense wants to start a war with a major nuclear power, and she knows that better than anyone.**

**It was not as if Trump was any sort of "peace" candidate. He may admire Putin, but that only shows his affinity for an authoritarian and aggressive leader, and a white nationalist government.**

**If anyone believed Trump would bring a more peaceful foreign policy, they were only fooling themselves. From anti-Muslim rhetoric and cabinet appointments to arrogant hostility toward Mexico, reckless disregard of diplomacy with China, advocating even bigger military budgets, and disturbing statements about use of nuclear weapons, there is nothing peaceful about Trump.**

**It was a bizarre phenomenon, in the midst of an election in which the choice should have been obvious to any enlightened liberal, progressive, Democrat, or democratic socialist. Hillary was not a radical leftist, but since when have we expected to elect a radical President? Still, her platform addressed the same important issues that Sanders had, with a well-thought-out approach. There were no positions to oppose.**

**The rhetoric from Trump was packed with everything to oppose.**

**I understand the opinion that the Democratic candidate was not far enough to the left in her positions. I favored Bernie Sanders in the primary. I like his democratic socialism. I donated to his campaign. I was disappointed that he lost.**

**But I also understand the concern that he may have seemed too radical to beat a Republican in the general election. We can't know now if that was true. He may have done better, or worse. Democratic voters decided on Clinton.**

We've all heard the ignorant defiance of the "don't vote" people before. Deliberate apathy. But the pseudo-progressives who ruthlessly attacked Clinton, knowing they were helping the worst of all possible choices, were really something new.

### **[The Nihilistic Purity of the Far Left Will Kill Us All](https://medium.com/@sammystyle77/the-nihilistic-purity-of-the-far-left-will-kill-us-all-54169b25e3a8#.6skrsqhj3)**

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The purists the article refers to are not necessarily the furthest to the left, but those who do not understand, or refuse to accept, that politics is not binary. It is perfectly fine to criticize a politician's wrong choice, but know that the same person may be right on several other issues. Don't reject them entirely over one disagreement.

Regarding the recent example of Cory Booker and 12 other Democrats voting against an amendment to allow prescription drug imports from Canada, I think that all 13 should have voted for it, whether or not they also voted for a similar one. But Booker in particular has been a positive progressive voice in general, and should be highly commended for opposing the Sessions confirmation, one of the worst of Trump's appointments, and the one that would do more harm than most by failing to vigorously prosecute civil rights violations.

Sammy Leonard is clearly angry at the "purists" who have betrayed and sabotaged the progressive movement and bear much of the responsibility for the disastrous Trump win. So am I.

"I'm sick of this bullshit. I'm sick of seeing hard fought progress and reform won by dogged and determined people being continuously undermined and outright destroyed by petulant, selfish and egotistical narcissists who do absolutely nothing but trash and destroy everything just because they didn't get everything they wanted in record time..."

"These grandiose motherfuckers LOVE to do nothing but shit on Democrats who aren't 100% perfect progressives when they're in office—which is pretty much everybody—and love to go on and on about how "both sides are the same" and how "we're fucked either way".

And when a right-wing extremist that would inflict pain and suffering to the most marginalized populations inevitably comes to power, suddenly they want to either complain about how fucked we are, revel in the prospect of the "revolution" that will finally be at hand, or try to wash their hands of their complicity and say "don't blame me, I voted for (fringe minor party candidate)" and use it to advocate the "necessity" of a third party."

**He is absolutely right. Some people have forgotten that we live in the REAL world, not a virtual one. In the virtual environment, you can code your own reality, make up your own "facts", skip over all the intervening struggles, go directly to a revolution (never mind the death and destruction), win, establish utopia, live happily ever after.**

**Reality doesn't have "gosubs" and "gotos". If I want to drive from point A to point B, I have to cross every centimeter of the intervening**

**distance. I know if I want a more progressive government, I need to vote for the most progressive people available, each and every time.**

***“Available” means not just on the ballot, but having a chance to win. The more people who do that, the more progressives there will be to choose from next election, and the fewer RE-gressives there will be to threaten us.***

**Maybe too much has been made of the Russian propaganda and email-hacking. Certainly American voters ought to be smart enough to overlook both of those. But when people who once seemed reasonable start spouting mindless hateful diatribes at a widely respected liberal candidate it almost leads one to believe that someone was using mind-control techniques on them.**

**Republicans have been using lies in their propaganda long before the Russians began meddling. Perhaps the Russians are more subtle and effective at it, but the combination of the two have had their effect.**

**In an atmosphere of emotionality, where fact-based reasoning has seemed almost irrelevant, confusion is much easier to induce. Reason would tell us that, while Russian foreign policy has often been more correct than ours, Russia's interests are not the same, and their authoritarian white-dominated governing culture is NOT the direction we need to follow.**

**While the CIA has been the means for some of the worst of US foreign activities, and deserves suspicion and resentment, that does not mean it is wrong, or not an expert authority about security facts.**

**And, while US foreign policy has long needed progressive change, and we may be impatient with the rate of that progress, abandoning it to Trumpist ignorance and attitudes was NOT the answer.**

**We cannot afford simplistic binary reactions to complex world issues. And we can't afford more progressives and liberals fighting with one another. That has brought disaster. Now, we need unity to recover.**

***-cosmicrat Jan. 26 2017***