Democratic convention nominates Hillary Clinton

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The Democratic National Convention on Tuesday officially nominated Hillary Clinton as the party's presidential candidate in the November election. At the conclusion of the state-by-state voting, Clinton's former rival Bernie Sanders underscored his embrace of the former secretary of state by calling for the convention to suspend the rules and declare Clinton the nominee by acclamation.

The nomination of Clinton was a foregone conclusion, part of an elaborately orchestrated and carefully scripted spectacle designed to portray a corrupt and reactionary capitalist party as a vehicle of progress. The fraudulent character of the entire event was underscored by the conspiracy of silence over the exposure, via leaked emails, of the antidemocratic manipulation of the primary process by the Clinton campaign and the Democratic National Committee to undermine the challenge from Sanders, including the illicit diversion of millions of dollars in campaign donations from the state parties to the Clinton campaign.

Speaker after speaker lauded Clinton, a crony of the most powerful Wall Street banks, the Pentagon and the CIA, as a woman of the people. They ignored her complicity in war crimes from Iraq to Libya to Syria and her association with reactionary domestic policies that have led to an explosion of social inequality and poverty.

The second day of the four-day convention was a nonstop exercise in racial and gender politics. All social and political issues were defined in terms of race or sex, with the large majority of speakers either black or female or both. The political framework was summed up by Jennifer Palmieri, the Clinton campaign director of communications, who declared, "It's a remarkable story that we may follow the first African-American president with the first woman president."

Almost immediately after the conclusion of the nominating process, the stage was filled with a parade of Democratic congresswomen, led by multimillionaire House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi. But the low point was the presentation of nine mothers of black men killed by police, including those of Trayvon Martin in Florida, Michael Brown in Ferguson, and Eric Garner in New York, to declare their support for Clinton.

The Democratic Party cynically exploited their tragedies to push its politics of race and conceal the essential class issues of capitalist state violence and poverty that are at the root of the epidemic of police killings across the United States. One African-American mother who was not invited to speak was Samaria Rice, the mother of 12-year-old Tamir Rice, who was shot and killed in November of 2014 by a Cleveland police officer because he was holding a toy gun. In advance of last week's Republican convention in Cleveland, Samaria Rice told an interviewer, "I don't know how you [President Obama] are able to sleep at night… nobody is getting any justice."

Nor was the mother of 19-year-old Dylan Noble, a white unarmed youth murdered by police in Fresno, California, brought onto the stage. Even though the majority of people killed by police in the US are white, Noble's case does not fit into the racialist narrative pushed by Clinton and the Democratic Party.

The Obama administration and the Democratic Party, moreover, have systematically defended the police and shielded those who kill and brutalize the working class and youth. They have militarized police departments with billions of dollars in combat equipment and defended police violations of due process and civil liberties in the courts. The Obama administration has not prosecuted a single cop caught on video attacking

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or even killing a defenseless worker.

Tuesday's speakers included the chief of police in Pittsburgh and a former New York City deputy. The message of the convention was deference and support for the police.

The central role of racial and gender politics in the fraudulent attempt to palm off the Democratic Party as a vehicle of the people reflects, first of all, the interests of privileged upper-middle class layers, black and white, which have no interest in equality or the needs of working people, but instead are consumed by the drive to increase their own wealth and status.

It is a political means for the ruling class to win broader support for its policies of war and austerity, while dividing and demobilizing the working class. The Democratic Party and its media allies, such as the *New York Times*, have intensified their promotion of racial politics in the aftermath of Sanders' withdrawal and endorsement of Clinton. They were shocked by the mass response to the denunciations of social inequality by Sanders, who calls himself a "socialist." The fact that millions of workers and youth in America oppose the capitalist system and favor socialism, and therefore seek to unite on a class basis, makes all the more critical for the ruling class the insistence that race is the defining issue in America and white racism is pervasive.

The appearance of former President Bill Clinton to deliver the keynote address was a fitting conclusion to Day Two of the convention. Clinton's potted version of the personal and political history of Hillary and himself exemplified the dishonesty and hypocrisy of the entire proceedings. He presented Hillary Clinton as a tireless and selfless advocate of the poor and downtrodden—a "change-maker" for the people.

He left out the key role both of them played in severing the ties of the Democratic Party with its previous policies of liberal reform and adopting the policies of social reaction of Reagan and the Republicans, the massive growth of financial swindling and corporate corruption, along with social inequality, during the Enron years of the Clinton administration, and the warmongering policies pursued by Hillary Clinton first as senator and even more as Obama's secretary of state.

Clinton also failed to mention how he and Hillary cashed in after his presidential tenure to make themselves multimillionaires, in part by taking tens of millions in speaking fees from Wall Street bankers.

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