

Party Loyalty Can't Make Me Vote for Hillary Clinton

A lifelong Democrat, I'm backing Trump because he can shake up our politics and revive the economy.



Donald Trump at a rally in Ft. Myers, Fla., Sept. 19.

By ANDREW STEIN

Sept. 21, 2016 6:50 p.m. ET

I have been steeped in the Democratic Party all my life. My father, Jerry, was a New York City Democratic chairman and power broker, and I grew up in and around the Democratic Party. When I was a young man, former senators and Democratic presidential and vice-presidential nominees Herbert Humphrey and Estes Kefauver stayed at my apartment and we would proudly discuss the great traditions of the Democratic Party.

My father was a pallbearer at St. Patrick's for Bobby Kennedy's funeral. When I was young, Robert F. Kennedy and John F. Kennedy were (and remain) my political heroes. Four

years ago, former New York Gov. and liberal lion Mario Cuomo spoke at my father's funeral. I think his son, current Gov. [Andrew Cuomo](#), is a very effective leader.

I was elected five times to the New York state Assembly as a Democrat. In 1977, I beat David Dinkins and Robert Wagner Jr. in the election for borough president of Manhattan, and then was elected twice as City Council president.

With this background it is very hard for me not to support the Democratic nominee for president this year. But I believe my party has become the party of the elites and moneyed class and has deserted its historic mission as the party of the working class and disadvantaged.

Given my level of discomfort with the current leftist orientation of the Democratic Party, I am now supporting Republican nominee [Donald Trump](#) for president. I urge my fellow Democrats to vote for Mr. Trump. I have known him since the early 1970s and have seen his deep concern for people, and how effective he has been while working on behalf of the average citizen.

Donald Trump is no racist. On the contrary, he offers the best hope for rebuilding our inner cities and creating better education and jobs for those trapped in poverty and lacking hope. When a hurricane devastated Puerto Rico in 1984, I asked Mr. Trump to provide a 727 airliner to bring critical supplies to the island. He did so and without publicity. I asked him to rebuild the Wollman Skating Rink in Central Park because the city couldn't complete it in 10 years. Mr. Trump did it in under six months and under budget.

While he has made some controversial and provocative statements, I strongly believe he will bring needed change and vitality to our nation and shake up our political system, which is in a state of crisis. He is for strong pro-growth policies like reducing the marginal and corporate tax rates and eliminating thousands of job-killing and business-stifling regulations, the biggest of which is ObamaCare.

Mr. Trump is also for rebuilding the military, which has been decimated by Obama's dangerous cuts and sequestration. He is a strong supporter of Israel and will not abandon our allies in the Mideast and around the world. Unlike [Hillary Clinton](#), he will not allow tens of thousands of immigrants who cannot be vetted properly to come to the U.S.

Hillary Clinton, on the other hand, is the personification of the establishment and status quo. She voted for the war in Iraq and supported the Iran nuclear deal, two of the worst, and most-dangerous, mistakes in American foreign policy during my lifetime.

Everywhere in the world America's position is far worse now thanks in large measure to her actions as secretary of state. The whole saga of her private unsecure emails and server and the appearance of massive pay-for-play at the Clinton Foundation are also profoundly troubling.

Her domestic record is as bad as her international one. When Mrs. Clinton was elected to the Senate, she promised to create 200,000 new jobs in upstate New York. When she left office in January 2009, the region had a net loss of 8,000 jobs. Now she promises to create 10 million new jobs in the nation. Why should we believe that she will do that, based on her failed record in New York state?

Sometimes a break with your own party is compelled by events. This is not to say it is an easy decision politically or personally. It can be wrenching. In 1973 I was appointed by Gov. Nelson Rockefeller to be chairman of a commission to investigate patient abuse and massive Medicaid fraud in the New York state nursing-home industry—which was extensively covered by the press. The nursing homeowners were protected by the Democratic leadership in the state Assembly. I had to fight those leaders in my own party to get the needed reforms passed.

As President Kennedy once said to his trusted speechwriter and confidante Arthur Schlesinger Jr., “Sometimes party loyalty asks too much.” This is the case in this election. I believe Donald Trump will make a great president and I ask my fellow Democrats to vote for him. The future of the nation may very well depend on it.

Mr. Stein, who held elective office in New York between 1969 and 1994, is now a business consultant.