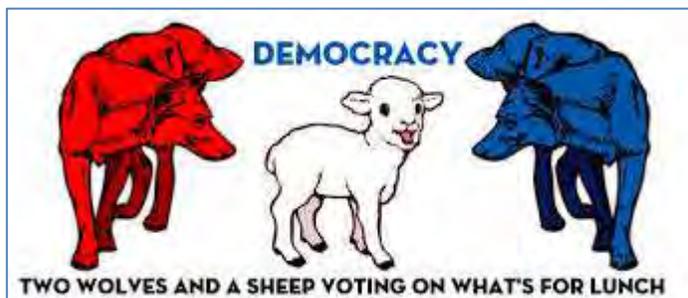


## An Open Letter to African-American Pastors (and everyone else)

Bruce Sutchar  
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Let me first say that my parents regarded Franklin Roosevelt as only slightly short of being the Messiah, for rescuing America from depression. As a result they voted for every Democrat from him, through his “younger brother” Adlai Stevenson, John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, Bill Clinton and Barak Obama and so on and so forth. For some reason my paternal grandmother

feared that if Richard Nixon defeated John Kennedy, there would be a wave of anti-Semitism flowing across America. Personally, I refused to vote for Hubert Humphrey in 1960 (my first chance to vote) because he was too conservative for me.



*Sutchar Family*

In the churches of Chicago, the word is going out strong—“we need to retain our Democratic Governor and our Democratic Senator—at all costs, no holds barred. Albeit that Illinois has jailed three former Democratic Governors and an overwhelming number of Democratic Alderman, County Councilmen, Judges and State Representatives. Still, the word is out from the African-American Church that only through the Democratic Party can prosperity be achieved.

I was never a fan of former House Speaker Newt Gingrich. I didn’t appreciate either his attitude or his moral behavior. However, several years ago, I was invited to a breakfast at which he spoke. He pointed out that most African-American inner-city families are truly centered on basic family values. He then challenged the audience to knock on the doors in the inner city and ask the families the following questions:

- Are they happy with the education in their community?
- Are they happy with the state of crime in their community?
- Are they happy with the prices in their local community stores?
- Are they happy with the situation with drugs and illegal weapons on the streets of their community?
- Are they happy with the availability of jobs in their community?
- Are they happy with the availability of fresh produce and healthy foods in their community?

After they answer every question in the negative, then ask them why they continue to vote for only the Democratic candidates on their ballots time after time.

This year I participated in the opportunity for early voting. However after the negative commercials on television and radio became non-stop and non-sensical, I began to wish that I could rescind my votes. Although I have voted in every election in the past forty six years, my college educated children refuse to vote at all, let alone even register. They are not lazy or irresponsible, they just do not believe that voting would be the best use of their time. They do not believe that just about any of the candidates is really running to “serve the people” (the true Latin meaning of the word *politis*—the root word of politics). They believe that their time would be better spent working for the betterment of their jobs, their families, their friends and their community. They trust their own ability to try and make things better far above trusting a politician to fulfill his shallow promises.

Now I am from Illinois—the “Land of Lincoln,” the home of the possibly the greatest President in American History, Abraham Lincoln. Although the state motto on our license plates that our Illinois convicts make in prison declare Illinois to be the “Land of Lincoln,” sadly, too many of our Illinois’ politicians seem to emulate our convicts rather than President Lincoln. And it’s not just the publicity grabbers—our five Governors who have gone to prison, but so many of our local politicians as well. Then there are the politicians who act “just this side of the law” by giving no-bid contracts to their relatives and allowing their relatives to inherit their political positions. One of the biggest issues in the current election for Governor of Illinois was whether the all-powerful Speaker of the House would step down, so his Attorney General daughter could move into the Governor’s mansion. In another case one of the most respected alderman in Chicago suddenly decided to retire in which coincidentally allowed the nephew of the former mayor who had appointed him to “inherit” his position in the city council. And I could go on and on citing examples like the Congressman who decided to suddenly retire in the middle of his term so his son could be named as his replacement. And the fiefdoms abound all over the state. The

powerful Suburban Republican County serving as a mirror image of the Democratic City County in exactis.

Several years ago the candidate for Governor, (who is currently in Federal prison) won the election because his superior campaign chest allowed him to invest in significantly more negative commercials than his opponent. In our current campaign scenario, there are almost nothing but negative ads coming from the two candidates for Governor, U.S. Senator and in the hottest Congressional race. Which leads me to ask the question; Assuming that the candidates are among the most qualified men in the state and therefore we should believe each of them and take their word as being true—why would anyone in their right mind vote for either one of them?

Interestingly, the one race in which this is not occurring is a race between two women.

So whether you are an African-American Pastor encouraging your congregants to vote Democratic or whether you are dedicated to carrying water for the Elephant or hay for the Donkey, I still have to ask the same gnawing question. Do you really believe for even one moment that either party's victory will make your state, your county, your city, your neighborhood or your race even one iota better off?

I am an Illinoisan, but I have traveled and lived in much of our great nation—including California, Oregon, Alaska, Wyoming, Arizona, New Mexico, Indiana and New York. To be honest, Illinois may be more infamous than many of those other states, but I really doubt if it is really more corrupt. Al Capone may be the most famous mobster in history, but do you think he was really any worse than so many others?

In 1908 Woodrow Wilson, the President of Princeton University was encouraged to run as a Democrat for Governor of New Jersey. His greatest challenge was to win over the Democratic Party "regulars," who were afraid that he might be too honest and not understand the real rules of New Jersey politics.

By the time you read this, the 2014 mid-term elections will be over and Illinois will have elected its next Governor, U.S. Senator and Congressmen. (Our aldermanic and mayoral election not occurring until next February). Currently Illinois has the worst credit rating in America and possibly the worst state pension plan as well. The question is, of course, will things be any different whether the old regime is re-elected or the new regime takes over. If I believe what the television commercials have told me it's certainly a lose-lose situation.