2016 Democratic Presidential Contenders

THIRD COMPILATION OF ESSAYS BY AND ABOUT BERNIE SANDERS. Compiled by Dick Bennett, Oct. 16, 2015.

Newsletters

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I. COMMENTARY ON FIRST DEBATE

We are off and running

Dick -
I want to talk with you about last night — but not what happened in Vegas. I
want to talk about what happened across the country.

You signed up to attend one of more than 4,000 debate watch parties in homes, pubs, and public venues. More than 100,000 people came together to watch the debate at these events. Thank you for coming out in support of our campaign.

In American politics, there are two primary sources of power: organized people and organized money. Last night proved that we have the people and that we’re well organized.

Now let’s show them that we can compete with the billionaire class, too.

Your contribution will help us continue to build a movement that will win the White House for the people:

If you’ve saved your payment information with ActBlue Express, your donation will go through immediately:

- EXPRESS DONATE: $10
- EXPRESS DONATE: $25.55

(↑ Our average donation this past week ↑)

- EXPRESS DONATE: $50
- EXPRESS DONATE: $100

OR, DONATE ANOTHER AMOUNT.

The debate watch parties that you attended — again, more than 4,000 of them — serve as the backbone of the organization that will turn out votes and help us win this election.

We heard from so many hosts of these events, and I want to share some of their stories with you, because I think that it speaks to this special moment we have together.

“I'm in a rural part of Texas that is overwhelmingly Republican. I met a kindred soul in this sea of red and we hit it off.” - Barbara in Texas

"I got a big hug from a gentleman who thought he was alone in our rural area and was so glad to see so many like minded people." - Marian in Missouri

"Awesome night last night. Bernie - words can't describe what a tremendous
“When Bernie mentioned the debate parties, we all clapped and cheered. It definitely made us each feel as though we are part of this movement. It was wonderful!” - Heidi in New Jersey

“What a great debate! I appreciated how the candidates kept it respectable and concentrated on the issues that face us. It was fun sitting with fellow Bernie supporters and cheering him on. There is a real buzz about him in North Iowa. I look forward to the next debate.” - Steve in Iowa

“There are very few progressives in this rural corner of SC, we were all really happy to have found each other. Lively conversation, good food, cold beer....plans to watch the rest of the debates together.” - Barbara in South Carolina

“We had a wonderful, intergenerational group. Everyone was engaged in the night's discourse. We laughed; we cheered; it was amazing. I have a small apartment, and I set the capacity at 6 not including me and my roommates. Then people started calling, and my party grew to 8. Then 10. Then 12. Then 14 in my tiny apartment!” - Nikki in Missouri

“There were a large number of people in my apartment and no one really knew each other. Sven came to my first hosting party in August and last night brought a table to sign people up for volunteering based on precincts. So we are off and running.” - Diane in Colorado

When we started this campaign, a lot of folks wrote us off. **Well, I think last night showed them wrong, and that we can win. We are indeed off and running.**

Nothing significant in this country happens in terms of change unless a strong grassroots movement takes place. That’s what we’re building together, and people should not underestimate us.

**Help us take the next step to build our campaign with a contribution of $50.**

Thank you for all you do.

In solidarity, Bernie Sanders

Paid for by Bernie 2016
Pundits Thought Clinton Beat Sanders--but Did Viewers?

Who won the Democratic debate? Depends on whether you ask pundits or people.

A New York Times article (10/14/15) by Alan Rappeport about who won last night’s Democratic presidential debate reported today that “Hillary Rodham Clinton was the clear victor, according to the opinion shapers in the political world (even conservative commentators).”

The Times quoted National Journal columnist Ron Fournier (“Hillary Clinton won,” 10/13/15), Slate writer Fred Kaplan (“She crushed it,” 10/14/15), New Yorker staffer Ryan Lizza (“Hillary Clinton won because all of her opponents are terrible,” Twitter, 10/13/15), Red State blogger Leon Wolf (“Hillary was (astonishingly) much more likable and personable than everyone’s favorite crazy socialist uncle,” 10/13/15), pollster John Zogby (“Mrs. Clinton was just commanding tonight,” Forbes, 10/13/15) and conservative radio host Erick Erickson (“I’m still amazed the other four candidates made Hillary Clinton come off as the likable, reasonable, responsible Democrat,” Twitter, 10/13/15). If these so-called “opinion shapers in the political world” declare Hillary the winner, then Hillary must be the winner, according to the Times.

What the Times and these pundits failed to mention is the fact that every online poll we could find asking web visitors who won the debate cast Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders as the winner—and not just by a small margins, but by rather enormous ones.

Seventy-one percent of participants in Slate’s online poll, for example, favored Sanders, while only 16 percent preferred Clinton. Time’s web poll of nearly 235,000 had Sanders at 56 percent and Clinton at 11 percent (Webb: 31 percent).

At Daily Kos, which caters to hardcore partisan Dems, 56 percent of nearly 22,000 participants said that Sanders won, vs. 38 percent for Clinton. MSNBC’s poll of 18,000 had Sanders at 69 percent and Clinton at 12 percent.

Sanders also showed appeal among the visitors to right-leaning sites: The conservative Drudge Report found that of more than 315,000 people, Sanders polled at 54 percent and Clinton at 9 percent (former Sen. Jim Webb got 25 percent). A poll by KSWB-TV, Fox’s San Diego affiliate, found that 78 percent of 45,000 respondents thought that Sanders won, as opposed to 15 percent who favored Clinton. The Street, a financial news website, found that 80 percent of 13,000 respondents dubbed Sanders the winner, while only 15 percent thought Clinton won.

Although these polls only represent the views of these sites’ visitors who volunteered to
participate, the consistently high share saying that Sanders prevailed in the debate, across a range of websites with wildly varying audiences, is striking.

Adam Johnson, associate editor at *AlterNet* and frequent *FAIR.org* contributor, pointed out (*AlterNet*, 10/14/15) that not only had Sanders won every online poll “by at least an 18-point margin,” he also was picked as the winner by various media-convened focus groups: “Sanders won the CNN focus group, the Fusion focus group and the Fox Newsfocus group; in the latter, he even converted several Hillary supporters.”

Another, more rigorous gauge of Sanders' debate performance came from an analysis of Google searches. According to Google, Sanders was the most-searched candidate for almost the entire debate. After the debate was over, he was the most-searched candidate in all 50 states.

There is one outlier in the data about the Democratic debate, but it’s one that should carry some weight, given that it’s the only poll so far ask a random sample of respondents about debate performance. This poll, conducted via automated telephone calls by research firm Gravis Marketing (*One America Network*, 10/14/15), found that 62 percent thought Clinton won, while 30 percent gave it to Sanders.

The poll, however, is described as a “random survey of 760 registered Democratic voters across the US”—not as a survey of people who actually watched the debate. Given that there are some 43 million registered Democrats in the country and 15 million people who watched the debate, not all of whom are Democrats, it’s highly likely that a large majority of the poll’s respondents got their impressions of who won the debate secondhand.

If they relied on corporate media to tell them about the debate, as no doubt many of them did, it’s no wonder that most of them thought Clinton won.

*Gunar Olsen is an editorial intern at FAIR and a student at Fordham University. Follow him on Twitter at @GunarOlsen.*

*Read the original post here.*
2016 Presidential Poll Results: October 2015

Note: This is not a scientific poll; it is a straw poll of 3 million Democrats.com subscribers. If you are not currently a subscriber but would like to vote, please subscribe here and we’ll send you our poll via email. Thanks for your interest!

Last update: 10/15 7:00 p.m.

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Dick,

The Democratic presidential debate showed just how much the “Warren wing” has shifted the national conversation:

**MSNBC:** Democratic Debate: Progressives Win the Night

**THE NATION:** Who Won the Democratic Debate? Progressives, Hands Down

**WASHINGTON POST:** A Highly Progressive Economic Agenda Dominates the Democrats’ First Debate

Let’s make sure voters and reporters see how much progressives have shifted the debate on issues like debt-free college, expand Social Security, and Wall Street accountability.

Click the links on the right to share the images on Facebook and Twitter.

In the days ahead, we’ll address some important distinctions between the candidates. But for now, let’s celebrate that disagreement is not over the direction we should go -- but rather, on how big to go and how we should get there.
Dear James,

Last night was like a breath of fresh air.

We saw the 2016 Democratic presidential candidates lead a healthy and substantive debate on the issues we care about most.

What a contrast to the Republicans.

Now, we’re more excited than ever to elect our principled Democratic candidates to the U.S. Congress, to take back Democratic control in 2016, and to put our country on a better path toward peace.

If you’re feeling just as hopeful as we are, contribute $5, $10 or $20 and help us elect progressive national security candidates to Congress next year.

Last evening, Hillary Clinton said that the spread of nuclear weapons is the greatest threat the United States faces, while Bernie Sanders talked about the dangers of unilateral military action.

Each of our Council-endorsed candidates believes these issues are critical to American foreign policy.

Meanwhile, their Republican opponents would rather bicker about Planned Parenthood, undocumented immigrants, and Hillary’s emails. It’s time to replace them.

Council for a Livable World is proud to endorse candidates for Congress who are just as articulate and knowledgeable on national security as the ones on stage last night. Help us keep up this work by donating today.

Thanks for all your help,

Sincerely,
SANDERS ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND CAPITALISM

Common Dreams commondreams@commondreams.org via uark.edu

Oct 14 to James 10-14-15
(2 days ago)

Common Dreams' small staff works tirelessly to bring you the news that matters—and the views of the best progressive thinkers of our time. But our continued survival is impossible without you. Our Fall Fundraiser still needs to raise $39,900 and we need your help to get us there! Every dollar makes a difference. Will you pitch in today?

Click here to make a safe, tax-deductible online contribution now. Or send a check: Common Dreams, P.O. Box 443, Portland, Maine 04112.

News & Views | 10.14.15

Featured...

Bernie Says: No Bones About It, Our Biggest Threat is Climate Change
by Lauren McCauley
"If we do not address the global crisis of climate change, transform our energy system away from fossil fuels to sustainable energy, the planet that we’re going to be leaving our kids and our grandchildren may well not be inhabitable."

News...

Thanks to Sanders, Democratic Party Just Debated Merits of Capitalism
by Sarah Lazare
"I believe in a society where all people do well," he continued, "not just a handful of billionaires."

Jill Stein, Green Party Presidential Candidate, and Others on 
Democracy Now

Hillary Clinton & Bernie Sanders Take Center Stage at First Democratic Debate of 2016 Race

OCTOBER 14, 2015 STORY

O’Malley’s Baltimore Policing Record Criticized as Candidates Address Whether #BlackLivesMatter

http://www.democracynow.org/2015/10/14/clinton_sanders_take_center_stage_at

JILL STEIN

2016 presidential candidate for the Green Party. She was the Green Party’s 2012 presidential nominee.

LES PAYNE

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and former editor at Newsday.

D. WATKINS

columnist for Salon. He is a professor at Goucher College in Baltimore and runs a creative writing workshop at The Baltimore Free School. His debut essay collection is The Beast Side: Living (and Dying) While Black in America.

This is viewer supported news DONATE

In the first Democratic presidential debate of the 2016 campaign, five contenders squared off last night in Las Vegas: former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, former Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley, former Virginia Senator Jim Webb and former Rhode Island Governor Lincoln Chafee. It was the first of only six debates scheduled for the Democrats this election cycle. The debate covered contentious topics from gun control to climate change to the 2003 vote to invade Iraq. Throughout the night, Senator Bernie Sanders focused much of his message on inequality and the economy. In one of the most tweeted-about moments of the night, Sanders also criticized the media for focusing too much on the controversy over Hillary Clinton’s use of a private email server while she was serving as secretary of state. We speak to Jill Stein, the 2016 presidential candidate for the Green Party; Les Payne, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and former editor at Newsday; and D. Watkins, columnist for Salon and author of the new book, "The Beast Side: Living (and Dying) While Black in America."
JUAN GONZÁLEZ: Let’s move on to the Democratic presidential debate, the first one of the 2016 campaign. Five contenders squared off last night in Las Vegas: former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, former Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley, former Virginia Senator Jim Webb and former Rhode Island Governor Lincoln Chafee. It was the first of only six debates scheduled for the Democrats this year. Senator Bernie Sanders focused much of his message on inequality and the economy.

SEN. BERNIE SANDERS: I believe that the power of corporate America, the power of Wall Street, the power of the drug companies, the power of the corporate media is so great that the only way we really transform America and do the things that the middle class and working class desperately need is through a political revolution, when millions of people begin to come together and stand up and say, "Our government is going to work for all of us, not just a handful of billionaires."

AMY GOODMAN: Senator Sanders also made headlines when he criticized the media for focusing too much on the controversy over Hillary Clinton’s use of private email servers while she was serving as secretary of state.

SEN. BERNIE SANDERS: Let me say something that may not be great politics, but I think the secretary is right. And that is that the American people are sick and tired of hearing about your damn emails.

HILLARY CLINTON: Thank you. Me, too. Me, too.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: While Senator Sanders has surged in the polls, Secretary Clinton described herself as the outsider in the race.

ANDERSON COOPER: Secretary Clinton, Governor O’Malley says the presidency is not a crown to be passed back and forth between two royal families. This year has been the year of the outsider in politics. Just ask Bernie Sanders. Why should Democrats embrace an insider like yourself?

HILLARY CLINTON: Well, I can’t think of anything more of an outsider than electing the first woman president, but I’m not just running because I would be the first woman president. I’m running because I have a lifetime of experience and getting results and fighting for people, fighting for kids, for women, for families, fighting to even the odds. And I know what it takes to get things done. I know how to find common ground, and I know how to stand my ground.
AMY GOODMAN: In one of the feistiest moments of the debate, Hillary Clinton criticized Sanders’ record on guns and his history of voting against measures like the Brady Bill.

ANDERSON COOPER: Secretary Clinton, is Bernie Sanders tough enough on guns?

HILLARY CLINTON: No, not at all. I think that we have to look at the fact that we lose 90 people a day from gun violence. This has gone on too long, and it’s time the entire country stood up against the NRA. The majority of our country supports background checks, and even the majority of gun owners do.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: Former Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley repeatedly stressed that climate change will cause political instability and called for moving to clean energy.

MARTIN O’MALLEY: I have put forward a plan—and I’m the only candidate, I believe, in either party to do this—to move America forward to a 100 percent clean electric grid by 2050. We did not land a man on the moon with an all-of-the-above strategy. It was an intentional engineering challenge, and we solved it as a nation. And our nation must solve this one.

AMY GOODMAN: All five candidates were also asked to identify what they believe is the greatest threat to national security. Former Rhode Island Governor Lincoln Chafee spoke first.

LINCOLN CHAFEE: It’s certainly the chaos in the Middle East. There’s no doubt about it.

ANDERSON COOPER: OK.

LINCOLN CHAFEE: And it all started with the Iraq invasion.

ANDERSON COOPER: Governor O’Malley?

MARTIN O’MALLEY: I believe that a nuclear Iran remains the biggest threat, along with the spread of ISIL. Climate change, of course, makes cascading threats even worse.

ANDERSON COOPER: Secretary Clinton, the greatest national security threat?
HILLARY CLINTON: I think it has to be continuing threat from the spread of nuclear weapons, nuclear material, that can fall into the wrong hands. I know the terrorists are constantly seeking it, and that’s why we have to stay vigilant but also united around the world to prevent that.

ANDERSON COOPER: Senator Sanders, greatest national security threat?

SEN. BERNIE SANDERS: The scientific community is telling us if we do not address the global crisis of climate change, transform our energy system away from fossil fuel to sustainable energy, the planet that we’re going to be leaving our kids and our grandchildren may well not be habitable. That is a major crisis.

ANDERSON COOPER: Senator Webb?

JIM WEBB: Our greatest long-term strategic challenge is our relation with China. Our greatest day-to-day threat is cyberwarfare against this country. Our greatest military operational threat is resolving the situations in the Middle East.

AMY GOODMAN: Well, for more on the debate, we’re joined by a number of guests. Here in New York, we’re joined by Jill Stein, the 2016 presidential candidate for the Green Party. Les Payne is also with us, Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, former editor at Newsday. And D. Watkins joins us, a columnist for Salon, author of the book, The Beast Side: Living (and Dying) While Black in America.

I want to start with Jill Stein. Your response, overall, to the debate, what was covered, what wasn’t?

DR. JILL STEIN: It was not a new day for the Democratic Party. It was very—you know, it was enriching. It was wonderful to see the focus on economic justice, and that was very welcome. But there it was taking place in the luxury Wynn hotel in Nevada, you know, and this is where we’re having a discussion about economic justice. And Hillary Clinton, as sort of the dominant voice in the debate, is a little hard to believe. She’s sort of talking out of both sides of her mouth: She wants to go against Wall Street, but she won’t support Glass-Steagall. She—

AMY GOODMAN: Explain what Glass-Steagall is.

DR. JILL STEIN: Glass-Steagall being the law that separated speculative banking from everyday consumer banking and basically allows banks to take risks—or, I should say, it prevents banks from taking risks at consumers’ burden, so that it permits bailouts, and—or, I should say, it prevents bailouts
from going forward. So, you know, Glass-Steagall was repealed under the Clinton administration and needs to be brought back. But Senator Clinton does not support it.

AMY GOODMAN: Let’s actually go to Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders sparring over their plans to address abuses on Wall Street.

ANDERSON COOPER: Senator Sanders wants to break up the big Wall Street banks. You don’t. You say charge the banks more, continue to monitor them. Why is your plan better?

HILLARY CLINTON: Well, my plan is more comprehensive, and, frankly, it’s tougher, because of course we have to deal with the problem that the banks are still too big to fail. We can never let the American taxpayer and middle-class families ever have to bail out the kind of speculative behavior that we saw. But we also have to worry about some of the other players—AIG, a big insurance company; Lehman Brothers, an investment bank. There’s this whole area called shadow banking. That’s where the experts tell me the next potential problem could come from.

ANDERSON COOPER: Senator Sanders, Secretary Clinton just said that her policy is tougher than yours.

SEN. BERNIE SANDERS: Well, that’s not true.

ANDERSON COOPER: Why?

SEN. BERNIE SANDERS: Let us be clear that the greed and recklessness and illegal behavior of Wall Street, where fraud is a business model, helped to destroy this economy and the lives of millions of people. Check the record. In the 1990s—and all due respect—in the 1990s, when I had the Republican leadership and Wall Street spending billions of dollars in lobbying, when the Clinton administration, when Alan Greenspan said, "What a great idea it would be to allow these huge banks to merge," Bernie Sanders fought them and helped lead the opposition to deregulation. Today, it is my view that when you have—

ANDERSON COOPER: Senator—

SEN. BERNIE SANDERS: —the three largest banks in America are much bigger than they were when we bailed them out for being too big to fail, we have got to break them up.
AMY GOODMAN: Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton. Journalist Les Payne, your response?

LES PAYNE: Well, I agree that it was—they were in swank surroundings, but at times I think Hillary and Sanders lifted it and put it in a back alley. I think that it was—the issues were joined. I thought that on the—I think Hillary refused to throw her husband under the bus on Glass-Steagall and did her thing. And I think, throughout the debate, I found her pivoting. When she was attacked, she pivoted. She was—on Glass-Steagall, she pivoted, said her issue was stronger. When he attacked her on Iraq and why she voted for the war, she said, "Yeah, but I was named secretary of state." And she even embraced O’Malley, I mean. So I thought she was on her game. But then again, she’s a good debater. She’s been debating since high school. She was on the high school debating team. If the next president is to be selected by who is the better debater, then Clinton would certainly be in the running, and perhaps deserves to be the front-runner.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: Les, I’m wondering, in terms of the overall picture that you got of this debate versus the first two Republican debates, is there any particular lessons you can draw from the combined activities of these candidates versus what happened with the Republican candidates?

LES PAYNE: Well, I think the Republicans went for the personal. I think that the issues were joined here. I thought that Anderson Cooper and company did a pretty good job of getting the issues joined. I thought the questions were sharp. I thought that—it was a debate. And I think, for instance, someone observed that, for instance, when the audience was allowed to ask, "Does black lives matter?"—"black" was never mentioned in the first two Republicans’ debate, and "African-American" was mentioned only one time, and that was by Rand Paul, so that they clearly stayed away. For the six major issues that they dealt with, the Republicans did not deal with them at all. So, I think if you want to compare the two, I mean, it was a debate versus, you know, a kind of a personal waltz around Trump.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: I was struck, though, by how little there was on questioning on foreign policy of the candidates. With the exception of some discussion on Iraq and Syria, there was very little to try to elicit the differences between them when it comes to foreign policy. Jill, do you want to—

DR. JILL STEIN: Yeah. I mean, not only that there wasn’t much said, but that what was said was really pretty uniform. It was all kind of in the mode of the tough guy, American militarist approach to foreign policy. And there was no—you know, there was this incredible cognitive disconnect. You know, the Middle East is going up in flames. We have about five failed states right now, going on many more. And we have created ISIS. And the thinking is that we can fix ISIS by doing more of what created ISIS. And there was absolutely no meaningful dialogue about this quagmire that we are plunging into headlong.

AMY GOODMAN: We’re going to play some of the clips from the debate, but before we do, D. Watkins, your overall take on the Democrats and what they addressed last night in Las Vegas?
D. WATKINS: It was great television. It was interesting and funny. But from where I come from in Baltimore, I’m responsible for working directly with the people. And the way some of these candidates talk, I feel like they don’t even know a poor person. You don’t even know what’s going on out there. Everything sounds great, and it’s cool to throw around rhetoric about gun control and Black Lives Matter. Oh, cool, I’m happy, I’m happy that made it into the debate. But I also feel like some of these politicians will say whatever they have to say just to be elected, and that’s not going to change the conditions of anyone living in a place like Baltimore City right now.

JUAN GONZÁLEZ: Any particular statement by any of the candidates surprise you in terms of its refreshness, in terms its being on point?

D. WATKINS: Yeah, Martin O’Malley’s love for African Americans surprised me, because as—when he was the mayor when I was a kid, I didn’t know. I didn’t feel that. I know a lot of my friends been through the system—and they shouldn’t have gone through the system—because of those—the high, ridiculous amount of arrests that happened while he was mayor. Dudes going to jail for sitting outside on the steps, dudes going to jail for riding their bike on the curb—like, that’s crazy.

AMY GOODMAN: D. Watkins, hold that thought. We’re going to break and then come back to Martin O’Malley addressing just that issue. We’re talking to D. Watkins, who is author of The Beast Side: Living (and Dying) While Black in America. We’re also talking to Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Les Payne and with Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein. Stay with us.

http://www.democracynow.org/2015/10/14/clinton_sanders_take_center_stage_at

II. FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES

Dividing analyses according to the two categories of Domestic and Foreign accentuates similarities and differences.

On Foreign policy the US has essentially one Party, the Imperial National Security State. Voters’ only choice is among tactics of armed violence. For example,


The differences appear in Domestic policy--in degree, for both agree on some New Deal ideas. For example,
10-12-15: Bill Curry Compares Clinton and Sanders to the disadvantage of Clinton.

FOREIGN POLICY

Zaid Jilani Condemns Sanders’ Weak Position on Israel and Palestine.

Sanders Opposing the Iraq War 2002, Video and Transcript

Bernie Sanders’ progressive blind spot: The Middle Eastern tragedy he refuses to address

If Sanders really wants to reunite the Obama coalition, he can't afford to remain silent on the plight of Palestine

TUESDAY, OCT 13, 2015 03:15 AM CDT

Zaid Jilani, AlterNet

http://www.salon.com/2015/10/13/bernie_sanders_progressive_blind_spot_the_middle_eastern_tragedy_he_refuses_to_address_partner/

One of the most appealing qualities of Bernie Sanders' campaign for the presidency is how consistent he is. While Hillary Clinton continually faces questions about her changing positions, Sanders is seen as the good kind of broken record; someone who says what progressives want to hear over and over again, for decades.

But there is one issue about which Sanders used to be much more outspoken, and has in recent years become very quiet: Palestine. Considering the elevated role of the Israel-Palestine issue in progressive circles, and Sanders’ continued success leading up to the primaries, it’s worth revisiting Sanders’ history on the topic and his early approach to foreign policy.

Burlington’s Foreign Policy

Sanders’ first big political office was as mayor of Burlington, Vermont in the early 1980s. Under the Sanders administration, Burlington was rejuvenated, becoming a much more
equitable and progressive city. But not all of his policies were focused on the city.

“[H]ow many cities of 40,000 have a foreign policy? Well we did,” writes Sanders in his memoir *Outsider In The House*. “I saw no magic line separating local, state, national and international issues.”

It was this sort of thinking that convinced Sanders to bring linguist and foreign policy critic Noam Chomsky to speak in Burlington in 1985, mostly about U.S. policy in Latin America. Latin America was a hot topic in the city, and Sanders frequently wrote to federal leaders to condemn U.S. involvement there. The same year he invited Chomsky, he traveled to Nicaragua, witnessing the casualties of the U.S.-sponsored civil wars firsthand. “I will never forget...dozens and dozens of amputees in wheelchairs – young soldiers, many of them in their teens, who had lost their legs in a war foisted on them and financed by the U.S. government,” he wrote in his memoir.

**Speaking Up For Palestinians, Once**

Jesse Jackson’s progressive-charged 1988 campaign for the Democratic nomination, which Sanders endorsed, prompted Sanders’ first politically articulated views on Israel-Palestine. Political reporters pressed Sanders to explain his support for Jackson and to react to attacks on Jackson’s belief that the Palestinians have a right to an independent state. Jackson had been under heavy fire for this stance from the Democratic establishment, led by then-Senator Al Gore.

Sanders offered support for Jackson’s position, and went further when asked about Israeli treatment of Palestinians during the first intifada (uprising against the occupation). “The sight of Israeli soldiers breaking the arms and legs of Arabs is reprehensible. The idea of Israel closing down towns and sealing them off is unacceptable,” Sanders said.

“The United States of America is pouring billions of dollars into arms and into other types of aid in the Middle East. Has the United States of America used its clout, the tremendous clout that it has by providing all kinds of aid to the Middle East, to demand that these countries sit down and talk about a reasonable settlement which will guarantee Israel's sovereignty, which must be guaranteed, but will begin to deal with the rights of Palestinian refugees,” said Sanders.
A reporter asked if Sanders was asking the United States to impose sanctions. He said he wasn’t, but did say that “you have the ability when you are the United States of America, which is supporting the armies of the Middle East, to demand that these people sit down and support a reasonable settlement.”

“Oh else what?” asked another reporter.

“Or else you cut off arms,” suggested Sanders. “If the United States goes into the Middle East and demands a reasonable, a responsible, and a peaceful solution to the conflict that has gone there because of its clout because of the tremendous amounts of money that it is pouring into that region I think we can do it.”

Watch the full exchange:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sU5EmTlHOEM

In that moment, Sanders aligned himself with the basic position of today’s global human rights community – that the way to resolve Israel-Palestine is for the United States to use its leverage as the major underwriter of Israel’s development and security to push a political solution on the country.

The Missing Palestine Plank

Throughout the ‘90s and into the 21st century, Sanders has put out a fairly mainstream line on the question of the Palestinians. And since being elected to the U.S. Senate, Sanders has been in a much stronger position to draw a lot more attention to Israel’s behavior. But he’s been totally quiet on the matter.

Sander’s basic thinking on Israel-Palestine was on display at a recent event in Chicago; a young Muslim student told him that “progressives have great ideas when it comes to race, class and many other issues, but often not as progressive of ideas when it comes to the Israel-Palestine question. Very simply, could you state your position on Israel-Palestine?”

Sanders responded: “In terms of Israel and Palestine you are looking at one of the more
depressing tragedies that has gone on in the world for the last 60 years. And I would not be telling you the truth if I said I have a magical solution. But this is what I do believe. I believe in two simple principles. Number one, Israel has a right to exist in peace and security. The Palestinians are entitled to a state of their own with full political and economic power. That's the broad view that I hold and I will do everything that I can to make that happen.”

What Sanders said there and has said many times on the campaign trail in response to this question is basically a restatement of the U.S. diplomatic line on the conflict: that it will only be resolved with a so-called two-state solution that guarantees Palestinian rights and Israeli security. The problem with such rhetoric, whether it comes from Sanders, Congress or President Obama, is that it is presenting a goal without offering a path to get there. It's like saying one supports world peace without offering any sort of tangible solution to war. And it's the solutions that are the most politically controversial—such as the idea of cutting off arms transfers to Israel, as Sanders did in 1988.

That isn't to say Sanders has become a typical politician when it comes to the issue. Earlier in the campaign season, during an interview with Diane Rehm, Sanders said, “I'm not a great fan” of Netanyahu; a remarkable comment from a man who is now a viable contender for the presidency. Later, in an interview with Vox, he told Ezra Klein he would like to move away from providing military aid to Egypt and Israel and instead “provide more economic aid to help improve the standard of living of the people in that area.” These are genuinely iconoclastic statements in the moribund mainstream Israel-Palestine debate in the United States. But there is little evidence that Sanders wants to pursue them to their logical conclusion. In a statement given to a local website a few weeks after the Vox interview, Sanders spokesperson Michael Briggs said, “Bernie does not and has not ever supported cutting off arms to Israel and that has never been his position.”

If you go strictly by how the senator votes, that is very true; Sanders does not vote against military aid to Israel, even if he has floated it on a number of occasions. But the tension between Sanders' words, his actions and the statement put out by his press secretary points to a wider issue: his inability to stand up on the issue when it counts. The most glaring example of this is a raucous town hall he held in the summer of 2014. While he condemned Israeli attacks against United Nations schools, he also defended the wider Israeli war, and even tried to deflect attention from the conflict by talking about ISIS. As his constituents grew more and more angry, he threatened to call the police on
Sanders’ defense was that he did not cosponsor the legislation before Congress that praised Israel’s war on Gaza. But his failure to do anything to block it (it passed by unanimous consent) reinforces the idea that while Sanders does hold somewhat dissident views on Palestine, he fails to vote his beliefs.

Since that town hall, questions about Palestine have dogged him. During a panel he held after a massive climate change march in New York City, Sanders was confronted by Palestine activists who unfurled a banner criticizing him for failing to oppose the war against Gaza.

There is some evidence that these criticisms have started to make an impact on Sanders’ approach. In the last month, his campaign finally started to roll out foreign policy platforms on his website. The platform repeats much of the same U.S. foreign policy mantras about the need for a two-state solution and Israel’s right to defend itself, but also condemns “disproportionate” violence by Israel and killings of civilians by the Israeli army. Most notably, the platform calls for Israel to end its blockade of Gaza, a topic all but forgotten in U.S. discourse.

(There is no record of Sanders attending events with the primary Israel lobbying group, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), which every presidential contender makes sure to appear at. Sanders also does not speak at pro-Israel rallies, and he hasn’t traveled to the region in decades. While he is Jewish, he does not seem to align with the harsh anti-Palestinian politics of many of the mainstream Jewish organizations in the United States such as the American Jewish Committee or the Anti-Defamation League. His brother Larry supports the Boycotts, Divestment, Sanctions campaign.)

**Engaging With a Growing Movement**

In the beginning of October, Sanders held a mega-rally in Boston that drew over 25,000 people, the largest Democratic primary rally in the city’s history. A group of young people with Boston Students for Justice in Palestine wanted to attend the rally with a banner reading, “Will Bernie #feelthebern 4 Palestine?” A campaign staffer saw their banner and refused to allow them into the event. To many, this was confirmation that the campaign
just doesn’t have time for the Palestinian issue.

But after the event became public and many activists chimed in with their disapproval, the campaign responded. Sanders' manager, Jeff Weaver, personally called the student activists and apologized. “They shouldn’t have been excluded,” he said in a public statement. “It was an overreaction by an over-eager staffer who didn’t show good judgment.” Weaver vowed that the staffer who refused to let them in would no longer be working at campaign events.

Engagement with the Palestinian issue also presents an opportunity to make an additional contrast with Sanders' chief rival, Hillary Clinton. Clinton wrote a letter to major Israeli-American donor Haim Saban vowing to help fight the Palestinian movement, and recently parroted an Israeli government talking point when she said there cannot be a resolution to the conflict until the nearby civil war and rise of ISIS in Syria are concluded.

Conventional wisdom says this topic is a political minefield for any Democratic candidate, something that is likely to push pro-Israel donors away from a campaign. But Sanders is not relying on pro-Israel billionaire donors like Haim Saban and Sheldon Adelson. The average donation to his campaign is less than $30. And he's grappling with a Democratic Party whose rising youth and minority base is averse to the politics of the Israeli government; by two to one, Americans under the age of 29 said Israel's 2014 war against Gaza was “unjustified”; views were most intense among non-white voters, particularly Hispanics and African Americans.

If Sanders wants to reunite the Obama coalition and truly stake out territory no presidential candidate has since Jesse Jackson's race more than 25 ago, he can show that he does, indeed, “feel the Bern” for the Palestinians and the human rights the U.S. government helps deny them.

(Video and Transcript) Rep. Bernard "Bernie" Sanders Opposed the Iraq War


C-SPAN

Video:
Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from New Jersey for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, I do not think any Member of this body disagrees that Saddam Hussein is a tyrant, a murderer, and a man who has started two wars. He is clearly someone who cannot be trusted or believed. The question, Mr. Speaker, is not whether we like Saddam Hussein or not. The question is whether he represents an imminent threat to the American people and whether a unilateral invasion of Iraq will do more harm than good.

Mr. Speaker, the front page of The Washington Post today reported that all relevant U.S. intelligence agencies now say despite what we have heard from the White House that "Saddam Hussein is unlikely to initiate a chemical or biological attack against the United States." Even more importantly, our intelligence agencies say that should Saddam conclude that a U.S.-led attack could no longer be deterred, he might at that point launch a chemical or biological counterattack. In other words, there is more danger of an attack on the United States if we launch a precipitous invasion.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know why the President feels, despite what our intelligence agencies are saying, that it is so important to pass a resolution of this magnitude this week and why it is necessary to go forward without the support of the United Nations and our major allies including those who are fighting side by side with us in the war on terrorism.

But I do feel that as a part of this process, the President is ignoring some of the most pressing economic issues affecting the well-being of ordinary Americans. There has been virtually no public discussion about the stock market's loss of trillions of dollars over the last few years and that millions of Americans have seen the retirement benefits for which they have worked their entire lives disappear. When are we going to address that issue? This country today has a $340 billion trade deficit, and we have lost 10 percent of our manufacturing jobs in the last 4 years, 2 million decent-paying jobs. The average American worker today is working longer hours for lower wages than 25 years ago. When are we going to address that issue?

Mr. Speaker, poverty in this country is increasing and median family income is declining. Throughout this country family farmers are being driven off of the land; and veterans, the people who put their lives on the line to defend us, are unable to get the health care and other benefits they were promised because of government underfunding. When are we going to tackle these issues and many other important issues that are of such deep concern to Americans?

Mr. Speaker, in the brief time I have, let me give five reasons why I am opposed to giving the President a blank check to launch a unilateral invasion and occupation of Iraq and why I will vote against this resolution. One, I have not heard any estimates of how many young American men and women might die in such a war or how many tens of thousands of women and children in Iraq might also be killed. As a caring Nation, we should do everything we can to prevent the horrible suffering that a war will cause. War must be
the last recourse in international relations, not the first. Second, I am deeply concerned about the precedent that a unilateral invasion of Iraq could establish in terms of international law and the role of the United Nations. If President Bush believes that the U.S. can go to war at any time against any nation, what moral or legal objection could our government raise if another country chose to do the same thing?

Third, the United States is now involved in a very difficult war against international terrorism as we learned tragically on September 11. We are opposed by Osama bin Laden and religious fanatics who are prepared to engage in a kind of warfare that we have never experienced before. I agree with Brent Scowcroft, Republican former National Security Advisor for President George Bush, Sr., who stated, ``An attack on Iraq at this time would seriously jeopardize, if not destroy, the global counterterrorist campaign we have undertaken."

Fourth, at a time when this country has a $6 trillion national debt and a growing deficit, we should be clear that a war and a long-term American occupation of Iraq could be extremely expensive.

Fifth, I am concerned about the problems of so-called unintended consequences. Who will govern Iraq when Saddam Hussein is removed and what role will the U.S. play in ensuing a civil war that could develop in that country? Will moderate governments in the region who have large Islamic fundamentalist populations be overthrown and replaced by extremists? Will the bloody conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Authority be exacerbated? And these are just a few of the questions that remain unanswered.

If a unilateral American invasion of Iraq is not the best approach, what should we do? In my view, the U.S. must work with the United Nations to make certain within clearly defined timelines that the U.N. inspectors are allowed to do their jobs. These inspectors should undertake an unfettered search for Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and destroy them when found, pursuant to past U.N. resolutions. If Iraq resists inspection and elimination of stockpiled weapons, we should stand ready to assist the U.N. in forcing compliance.

DOMESTIC POLICY
BERNIE’S ANALYSIS OF The FIRST REPUBLICAN DEBATE

Tell Bernie to Connect Oligarchy and Militarism

Bernie Sanders <info@bernieSanders.com>
Unsubscribe

Did you watch last night’s Republican presidential debate, Dick?
If you are one of the wealthiest people in this country, then you had ten candidates talking about your needs for two hours.

**But in the entire time I watched, I saw very little discussion about the issues important to most American families.** There was no talk about climate change and clean energy, raising wages and providing healthcare for all Americans, criminal justice reform and the undermining of the Voting Rights Act, and nothing at all about the crushing burden of student debt.

And when they did talk about campaign finance reform and the billionaire class buying candidates and elections, it was the butt of a Donald Trump joke.

We need to be discussing issues facing working families at a debate hosted by trade unions. We need to discussing climate change and environmental issues at a forum hosted by the environmental community. We need to be discussing civil rights issues and racial injustice at a forum sponsored by civil rights groups. We need to be discussing gay rights at a forum hosted by the LGBT community. In other words, more discussion, more debate is good for the Democratic Party and good for the American people.

I know, and you know, that the best chance for this country is to discuss the issues that matter. Republicans aren’t going to do it, so we need more Democratic debates — more than the four scheduled by the Democratic National Committee before the Iowa Caucuses.

**And I know that if Secretary Clinton wants more debates, we’ll get them.**

**Sign my petition and tell Secretary Clinton to encourage the Democratic National Committee to schedule more debates before the Iowa Caucuses and New Hampshire primary in February and to allow important constituencies within the Democratic Party to host their own debates.**

Here’s what I did hear a lot about last night: I heard a group of ten Republicans on stage longing for a return to the days of George W. Bush. The return to more war and tax breaks for the rich, and less jobs and health insurance for most American families.

Do they remember the two wars George Bush put on the credit card?

I do. Some of us voted no.

Do they remember the 800,000 jobs a month we were hemorrhaging when Bush left office?

I do. Some of us voted against the policies that led us there.
The American people deserve more debates — debates about how we got to where we are today, and how we move this country forward. And if all the candidates running for the Democratic nomination, especially Secretary Clinton, call for more, then we'll get them.

Add your name and encourage Secretary Clinton to call on the Democratic National Committee to schedule more debates before Iowa and New Hampshire, and let's start right away.

We are at a moment of truth. We need to face up to the reality of where we are as a nation, and the best ways to move forward.

Thank you for standing with me.

Bernie Sanders

The DNC screwed Hillary — now get ready for a Bernie Sanders earthquake

Limiting debates did her no favors. Now she's barely leading a 74-year-old socialist. This debate is pivotal

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http://www.salon.com/2015/10/12/the_dnc_screwed_hillary_now_get_ready_for_a_bernie_sanders_earthquake/

Bill Curry

With so many people thinking the system is rigged and that politics has devolved into mere vulgar entertainment, the Democratic Party's choice of a Las Vegas casino as the venue for its first presidential debate seems counterintuitive. That the casino in question bears the surname of Steve Wynn seems odd as well. In 2012, Wynn, once a Democrat of sorts, dropped $10 million on Karl Rove's Super PAC. He's gone on Fox News to lambaste Obama, whom he calls a socialist. His punishment: a ton of free publicity plus whatever it cost to rent the hall.
The Democratic National Committee delayed the debates as long as it could and limited their total number to six. By way of comparison, there were 26 debates in 2008. The first was held in April 2007; by this point in the cycle there had already been 13. To enforce its new limit the party threatens a drastic sanction: anyone caught participating in a rogue debate will be locked out of all party debates.

The phrase ‘Democratic National Committee’ is imprecise. When DNC chair Debbie Wasserman Schultz announced the schedule last August she didn’t say who made the decision or how. Nor did anyone ask. It seems like an awfully closed system for an outfit with the word ‘democratic’ right there in its name. I wondered how the party picked it. Did its national committee hold a meeting? If so, was it public? Was there a notice, agenda, or minutes? Was there even a vote?

On Thursday I spoke to the DNC communications director, a nice man named Luis Miranda. After a few minutes of polite evasions I had my answers: no, no, no, no, no and no. From what I could glean, staff made recommendations to Schultz and she then made the call all on her own. It isn’t clear that party rules authorize her to do so. What is clear is that they shouldn’t. Miranda told me the party consults with all the candidates. I don’t doubt him, but the consultations don’t appear to mean much, in that four of the five candidates wanted more debates.

The fifth is Hillary Clinton, who recently said in a low whisper that she’s ‘open’ to more debates. Clinton is still the nominal frontrunner and the establishment choice. In 2008 Schultz was in the bunker with Clinton till the bitter end. Clinton is the only candidate in the field likely to retain Schultz in her present job or otherwise advance her career. There’s a good chance the only important consultation Schultz had was with Clinton. This should come as no surprise. Every four years party insiders tweak the process in hopes that some establishment favorite can wrap things up early. Due to the law of unintended consequences, and because these people aren’t nearly as smart as they think, this almost always backfires.

Republicans did it this year with delegate selection rules that starting March 15, Super Tuesday, award candidates who win a mere plurality of the vote all of the delegates. The idea was to save Jeb Bush, or some Bush doppelganger, the trouble of a long, messy nomination fight. Among the variables left out of their equation: Donald Trump and a field the size of the Boston Marathon. Their new nightmare: seven of their 15 candidates
survive to Super Tuesday, when Trump gets 24 percent of the vote and 100 percent of the delegates, including in Florida where he waves adios to Jeb and Marco Rubio. That's right. Trump's only possible path to victory comes via rules meant to send him packing before he broke any crockery. Nice work, fellas.

Schultz's brazen move to muzzle debate wasn't any smarter. As Trump points out, debates are free advertising. Democrats could use some. The contrast with the Republicans might have helped. Trump's made them so rabid Democrats could have scored points just by being polite. Debates could have helped Clinton by reminding voters there's more to her than the email scandal. And they'd have gotten her outdoors. If she had her druthers, she'd never leave her comfort zone. It's one reason Bernie Sanders could cut her lead from 60 to 16 points. By limiting debate Schultz is enabling Clinton, not helping her.

All of which raises the stakes Tuesday night. What Bernie Sanders has done is all the more remarkable for his having done it without benefit of a primetime debate and despite a virtual media blackout imposed by a know-it-all press. In 2008 Obama drew crowds half the size Sanders pulls and got written up like the Beatles at Shea Stadium. The press believes only in polls and money. In September 2007 Clinton led the young, charismatic Obama by 14 points after debating him every other week for six months. She still led by 8 in national polls the night he ran her over in Iowa. On the eve of their first debate she leads Sanders, a disheveled, 74-year-old socialist from Vermont, by 16 points. Last week Sanders' finance report showed over a million small donors, better than Obama's record 2008 pace. More impressive to the press, he pulled even with Hillary in total money raised. This week it began giving him some of the coverage he deserved all along.

In a primary, packed stadiums and an army of volunteers and small-dollar donors mean more than polls and Super PACs. Some say Sanders has hit his ceiling but he hasn't even had a chance to reach his audience. Tuesday will be the first long look many centrist Democrats have had at him and the first time anyone has examined him side by side with Clinton. If he picks up as many points for his performance as Carly Fiorina and Marco Rubio did for theirs, it will be an earthquake.

No one should underestimate Clinton's forensic skills. She's never lost a debate to anyone but Barack Obama and even those were close. There are two dangers for her.
One is stylistic. Urged on by the media, her maladroit staff still pursues its five-year, 10-point plan to make her seem more “spontaneous” and “authentic.” These are the same folks who taught her to say ‘ordinary Americans’ and who pepper her speeches with the flattest jokes in the history of politics. Her best bet between now and Tuesday is to have as little to do with them as possible.

Clinton somehow translates ‘being authentic’ into being more like someone else, someone more ‘ordinary.’ In April she got in a van and rode from New York to Iowa. She named the van ‘Scooby’ even though it wasn’t hers, ate at a Chipotle and rhapsodized about people she met glancingly along the way. No one told her that ordinary people don’t drive 1,000 miles except in an emergency or on a camping trip, or that she’s far too old to be naming her van after a cartoon character.

You Might Also Like

Little has changed. Now she gets down with the common folk by flipping pancakes with Savannah Guthrie on the “Today” show. No one is fooled. She’s Hillary Clinton. She hasn’t touched a griddle since Bill got elected governor of Arkansas. The closest she’s come to seeming like a regular gal was on “Saturday Night Live” reading from a script written by sketch comedy writers for a TV show. If you’re a passionate, cerebral wonk, busting a move with Ellen or yucking it up with Jimmy Kimmel won’t make you seem any more real; just the opposite.

Clinton doesn’t need to be more authentic, she needs to be more honest. The email affair may go down as the ultimate example of the old saw that it isn’t the crime, it’s the cover up. I don’t know if she broke any law. I do know everything she said in that circus of a press conference at the UN has thus far proved untrue. And to what end? Imagine if she’d taken a different approach. Imagine if instead of all the folderol about the server being just for convenience, the emails being personal, and her being just the most transparent person ever, she’d looked straight into a camera and said something like this:

I don’t know all the facts but I know I made mistakes. I always meant to abide by the letter of the law. Americans are right to worry about the excesses and abuses that arise from government secrecy. If I’m your president, I promise you a truly open and accountable government.
She couldn't say it because admitting fault comes hard to her, and because she doesn't believe it. From her tenure as Secretary of State, from her remarks on the Edward Snowden case and for lots of other reasons we know her basic take on government secrets is ‘the more the better.’

This is her problem; misunderstanding many of the issues she studies so hard. She can't speak with conviction of the evils of globalization, she spent years cheering it on and doesn't really get what's wrong with it. She can't get too worked up about pay to play politics; she perfected it and still deems it the best way to win elections. After four years as Secretary of State she still doesn't see the folly of exporting democracy by force of arms, or that our safety lies in the rule of law.

Clinton has reversed herself on two huge issues: the Keystone pipeline and the Trans Pacific Partnership. She'll get less credit than she'd like and fume about how hard it is to satisfy liberals. But in making each switch she looked and sounded as if she were moving pawns on a chess board. She announced the Keystone decision in a blog that provided almost no rationale; the line the “SNL” writers gave her was stronger than anything she said about it in real life. Her TPP interview makes clear her commitment there is provisional. (She hasn't seen the text) She speaks of jobs and currency but not a word on the issue many progressives find most galling, the ceding to corporate interests of the prerogatives of democracy. Nothing she's ever said in public suggests she's given that much thought.

Sanders faces different challenges. He takes justifiable pride in never having run an attack ad and has taken care throughout this race never to attack Hillary. On Tuesday he must lay out their differences and explain why they matter. It wouldn't be ‘negative’ or personal, it would be logical and factual and also indispensable.

Bernie doesn't have an authenticity problem. He is that rare politician who stood his ground and waited for the world to come to him. The bum advice he gets from the Zeitgeist consultants pertains to anger. They equate him to Trump, the idea being that both are vessels of populist anger. It's only a tiny bit true. The violent rage of Trump's base has to do with race, gender, sexuality and status. Those who feel it would be happy sitting in the audience of the Howard Beale Show, or just listening to Rush in their car. When Trump gets vicious they get a vicarious thrill.
The rest of America is over the condition of the middle class, the democracy and the planet. All they want to hear is a plan. Only a portion of the hard core of Bernie's base is in the least bit dogmatic. They may like a little anger but what they really like is the truth. Sanders’ enemies hope to paint him as an ideologue and a grouch. He must make it through the night without giving them any ammunition.

Hillary's recent epiphanies attest to just how much Sanders has moved the debate. If the TPP dies he more than anyone will deserve the credit. Trump has shown that a rich celebrity can succeed in politics without buying very many TV ads. Bernie’s proving that anyone can. In 2008 Obama built the biggest grass movement in the history of politics, but once he won he took it private. Bernie’s movement is built for his supporters and built to last.

Bernie's miles ahead of Hillary on the issues that count the most but there are two things he still needs to do. The first is to speak more to the problem of public corruption and inefficiency. On most issues most voters are Democrats, yet Republicans run two of the three branches of the federal government and stand a very good chance of perfecting their monopoly in 2016. Voters want to know that the party of government is ready to fix the government.

The second thing he or any progressive must do is help people connect the dots: show how climate change, globalization, pay-to-play politics and mindless militarism reinforce one another, then offer them not just another liberal to do list but a coherent theory of the problem and a strategy for solving it rooted in values deeper than ideology. It's been so long since any politician in America has done that and he's one of the few who could. If he starts that discussion on Tuesday night, there's no telling where this will all go.

Bill Curry was White House counselor to President Clinton and a two-time Democratic nominee for governor of Connecticut. He is at work on a book on President Obama and the politics of populism.

Our plan to take on Wall Street
Add your name to support Bernie's plan to break up the banks and take on Wall Street:

https://go.berniesanders.com/banks

BERNIE SANDERS FOR PRESIDENT CONTRIBUTE

ADD YOUR NAME

Endorse Bernie's Plan to Take on Wall Street

Today, we live in the richest country in the history of the world, but that reality means very little because much of that wealth is controlled by a tiny handful of individuals.

Wall Street's dangerous manipulation of our economy has helped divert most of all new income to the top one percent, contributing to the most unequal level of wealth and income distribution of any major country on earth. We need a system that works for all of us, not just the millionaires and billionaires.

Add your name to say you support Bernie's plan to take on Wall Street, break up the big banks, and restore sanity to our financial system.

BERNIE 2016, PO BOX 905, BURLINGTON, VT 05402

Sanders supports Sen. Elizabeth Warren’s bill to reinstate the Glass-Steagall Act

New Jersey Today

http://njtoday.net/2015/07/19/sanders-supports-sen-elizabeth-warrens-bill-to-reinstate-the-glass-
July 19, 2015

Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) is co-sponsoring a bill by Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) to reinstate the Glass-Steagall Act. This important piece of legislation would prevent commercial banks from engaging in risky investment schemes that nearly destroyed the economy in 2008.

Hillary Clinton won’t propose reinstating a bank break-up law known as the Glass-Steagall Act, according to Alan Blinder, an economist who has been advising Clinton’s campaign. “You’re not going to see Glass-Steagall,” Blinder said after she failed to mention it in her economic speech. President Bill Clinton signed the law that repealed Glass-Steagall, a post-Depression measure signed by Democrat Franklin Roosevelt.

“I strongly support Sen. Elizabeth Warren’s bill to reinstate the Glass-Steagall Act,” Sanders said.

On July 1, 1999, while Congress was voting on the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act to permit commercial banks, investment banks and insurance companies to merge, then-Rep. Sanders said: “I believe this legislation, in its current form, will do more harm than good. It will lead to fewer banks and financial service providers; increased charges and fees for individual consumers and small businesses; diminished credit for rural America; and taxpayer exposure to potential losses should a financial conglomerate fail. It will lead to more mega-mergers; a small number of corporations dominating the financial service industry; and further concentration of economic power in our country.”

Looking back today, Sanders said: “Allowing commercial banks to merge with investment banks and insurance companies in 1999 was a huge mistake. It precipitated the largest taxpayer bailout in the history of the world. It caused millions of Americans to lose their jobs, homes, life savings and ability to send their kids to college. It substantially increased wealth and income inequality and it led to the enormous concentration of economic power in this country.”

Sanders continued: “I am proud to have led the fight in the House against repealing the Glass-Steagall Act in 1999. Sixteen years ago, I predicted that such a massive deregulation of the financial services industry would seriously harm the economy. I would give anything to have been proven wrong about this but unfortunately what happened seven years ago was even worse than I predicted.”

Sanders concluded: “Today, not only must we reinstate this important law, but if we are truly serious about ending too big to fail, we have got to break up the largest financial institutions in this country. If an institution is too big to fail, it is too big to exist.”

Speaking of Hillary Clinton’s position, economist Robert Reich says, “It’s a big mistake economically because the repeal of Glass-Steagall led directly to the 2008 Wall Street crash, and without it we’re in danger of another one.”

“The idea is pretty simple behind this one,” Senator Elizabeth Warren said. “If banks want to engage in
high-risk trading — they can go for it, but they can’t get access to ensured deposits and put the taxpayers on the hook for that reason.”

Salim Muwakkil, “Building Support for Bernie.”  *In These Times* (October 2015). With 80 percent approval rate from the black electorate, Clinton is “by far” their “favored candidate.” But black progressives are organizing to showcase Sanders’ “progressive platform and long history of support for the black struggle.” --Dick

Stand up to big drug companies.

US Senator Bernie Sanders, for Social Security Works via mail.salsalabs.net

9:53 AM (22 minutes ago)  to me  9-10-15

Dick,

All across the country, people are finding that the prices of the prescription drugs they need are soaring, and tragically many can no longer afford their medicine. Americans pay – by far – the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs. Drug costs increased more than 12 percent last year, more than double the rise in overall medical costs. And in 2013, the U.S. spent nearly 40 percent more per person on prescriptions than Canada, the next most expensive industrialized country.

Last year, nearly 20 percent of the population, or 35 million people, did not fill a prescription because they could not afford it. That should not be happening in the United States of America – but it is. And it's not likely to end anytime soon, unless we do something.

That is why I have introduced the Prescription Drug Affordability Act of 2015. Please stand with me and our partners at Social Security Works in telling Congress that we
need common sense solutions to rein in drug prices and hold the pharmaceutical industry accountable.

This is not a partisan issue. Most Americans – Republicans, Democrats, and Independents – want Congress to do something about drug prices. Eighty-six percent of those polled in a new Kaiser Health poll, including 82 percent of Republicans, think drug companies should be required to release information to the public on how they set their prices. Large majorities support other solutions to the problem of rising drug prices as well.

Our drug costs are out of control because that's the way the pharmaceutical companies want it. Drug lobbyists have been able to block Medicare from negotiating better prices on behalf of the American people.

Please, stand with me today in calling on Congress to pass the Prescription Drug Affordability Act of 2015 to rein in drug prices, demand transparency from drug companies and hold the pharmaceutical industry accountable for fraud and price manipulation.

Americans should not have to live in fear that they will go bankrupt if they get sick. People should not have to go without the medication they need just because their elected officials aren't willing to challenge the drug lobby. The public is fed up, and they have a right to be fed up. It is time we joined the rest of the industrialized world – not only by enacting a national health care program, but by implementing prescription-drug policies that work for everybody, not just the CEOs of the pharmaceutical industry.

Sincerely,

Bernie

Sent by Social Security Works on behalf of US Senator Bernie Sanders
Dick,

The middle class is at a tipping point, and it won't last another generation if we don't boldly change course now.

The surest path to the middle class for American workers is with unions. The security and strength of a union job means that workers can have good pay, health care, and a voice at work.

Today our country celebrates Labor Day in honor of the working people who fought for our rights to regular hours, fair pay, and a decent living. For decades, the labor movement propped up the middle class in America by ensuring a level playing field for workers.

There are many reasons for the growing inequality in our economy, but perhaps the most significant reason for the disappearing middle class is that the rights of workers to join together and collectively bargain for better wages, benefits, and working conditions have been severely undermined.

That is why this fall I will introduce a bill in Congress whose sole purpose is to restore and encourage workers' rights to bargain for better wages, benefits, and working conditions. It's called the Workplace Democracy Act, and if it is made law, it will help rebuild the middle class.

Click here to celebrate Labor Day by signing the petition to support the Workplace Democracy Act.

Workers need unions because there are people working for minimum wage, barely able to afford to put food on the table — if even that. There are people whose jobs are dangerous, or even life-threatening, who can't speak up for workplace safety for fear of being fired. And there are countless people working without sick days or even health insurance.

Unions change that equation. When workers have unions, they are no longer afraid to speak up. They have a clear path to getting health care, sick days, basic
safety precautions, and better pay. They don’t have to live in fear of their employers, and they can work to provide for their families.

That is unfortunately far from the reality that exists today. Under the current law, it is incredibly easy for corporations to prevent workers from joining unions. One in five workers who try to form a union today will be fired for doing so. And half of all employers threaten to close or relocate their businesses if workers elect to form a union.

But there’s effectively no deterrence for when companies do break the law. The penalties are far too weak, and there is no incentive to stop corporations from dragging their feet when workers want to negotiate contracts.

The Workplace Democracy Act changes that equation. Our bill would:

1. Ensure companies can’t prevent workers from getting a first contract.
2. Make it easier for workers to form unions through a majority sign up process.
3. Strengthen the enforcement when corporations break the law.

This is a commonsense idea that will help our economy and rebuild the middle class. Can you say you support it?

For Labor Day, join me in standing with working people. Click here to say you support the Workplace Democracy Act.

Thank you for your support.

In solidarity,

Bernie Sanders

Sanders Endorses $15 Minimum Wage

Dick -9-2-15

Sign my petition if you agree that every Democratic candidate running for president should publicly support a $15 minimum wage.

Dick: Nobody who works 40 hours a week should live in poverty.

The current federal minimum wage is a starvation wage, and it must become a living wage. That is why I recently introduced legislation that would increase the minimum wage to $15 an hour over the next several years.
When we first talked about this idea, hundreds of people wrote in to share how a raise to $15 an hour would change their lives. I heard from parents caring for young children, from children caring for their aging parents, from students, and from countless others. I want you to read two of those notes:

"Raising the minimum wage would mean that my single mother would no longer have to break her back working two jobs just to barely afford to support me and our family."

And:

"If I made 15 dollars an hour at one job, I would not have to work 65 hours a week at three different jobs to afford rent, bills, food and other living expenses. If I made 15 dollars an hour I could easily support myself while having money left over to put in savings, invest back into the economy, and have a rainy day fund in case my car breaks down or something unexpected comes up without having to rely on a credit card or small personal loans. I think psychologically I would be a lot happier."

The good news is, we are making progress on this issue. We started with Democrats advocating for an increase from $7.25 to $10.10 an hour in 2014. Earlier this year, a handful of senators introduced a bill that would raise the minimum wage to $12 an hour. And just last week, the call to raise the minimum wage to $15 an hour was approved as part of the official Democratic Party platform.

I believe that position should be adopted by all of the candidates running for president. Sadly, that is not yet true, even for the Democrats.

Sign my petition if you agree that every Democratic candidate running for president should publicly support a $15 minimum wage.

It is a national disgrace that millions of full-time workers are living in poverty and millions more are forced to work two or three jobs just to pay their bills. We live in the richest country in the world, but that reality means very little because so much of that wealth is controlled by a tiny handful of individuals.

But real change is possible when large numbers of ordinary Americans speak out, vote, and get involved in the democratic process. If we stand together, we will win. If we are divided, the big money interests opposed to raising the minimum wage will win.

Nothing significant happens in this country without a strong grassroots movement. That’s what this political revolution is all about.

In solidarity, Bernie Sanders
REPORTS FROM *IN THESE TIMES* NEWSLETTER

Newsletter 15 August 2015

**TOP STORIES THIS WEEK**

**The Bernie Debate: Would Sanders Advance Feminism and Racial Justice Better Than Clinton?**

Feminists debate symbolism, socialism and racial politics in the presidential race.

BY KATHLEEN GEIER

**Would Jesus Vote for Bernie Sanders?**

With the decline of culture war issues and the rise of crises like climate change, Bernie might actually be able to win over young evangelicals.

BY THEO ANDERSON

**A New Poll Has Bernie Sanders Leading Hillary Clinton by 7 Percent in the New Hampshire Primary**

New Hampshire seems to be feeling the Bern.

BY MARC DAALDER

**Bernie Sanders Speaks to 28,000 People in Portland.**

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**While Hillary Hosts $2,700-a-Head Fundraiser**

The contrast between candidates could not be more stark.

*BY ZAID JILANI*

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**WORKING IN THESE TIMES**

**Union Members Seem To Want Bernie Sanders Over Hillary Clinton. Will Labor Leadership Follow Them?**

The candidate of the rank-and-file appears to be Bernie Sanders.

*BY MARIO VASQUEZ*

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*In These Times is in part sponsored by the United Auto Workers of America (UAW), the American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) and the Puffin Foundation.*

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*Like what you've read in this newsletter? Consider making a [donation](#) or [subscribing](#) to our print edition.*
Tell Bernie to Connect Oligarchy and Militarism

When we surveyed RootsAction supporters nineteen months ago, more than 80 percent said they wanted Senator Bernie Sanders to run for president.

That wish has come true. With a strong grassroots campaign, Bernie is eloquent as he denounces corporate power, economic inequality and “oligarchy.”

But he’s saying very little about crucial issues of war, militarism and foreign policy.

Militarism and oligarchy go together. Click here to urge Bernie Sanders to say so.

As of now, on his campaign’s official website, the page headlined “Bernie Sanders: On the Issues” says nothing at all about foreign policy, war or any other such topics.

So far, Bernie’s stump speech hardly mentions the huge military budget -- and does not talk about how it is a massive roadblock for the scale of public investment in education, infrastructure and jobs that he is advocating.

Click here and put your name on the petition we’re launching today -- “Bernie Sanders, Speak Up: Militarism and Corporate Power Are Fueling Each Other.”

While invoking the name and spirit of Martin Luther King Jr., so far in this campaign Bernie has detoured around Dr. King’s essential antiwar message.

Just days ago, Bernie addressed the organization that King led, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. The long speech was eloquent, but you’d never know from it that the United States is now in its fourteenth year of continuous warfare. In fact, the only time Bernie’s speech used the word “war” was in the phrase “war on drugs.” The only mention of the war industry was a two-second reference to the “military-industrial complex.”

Bernie’s speech to the SCLC paid resounding tribute to Dr. King but made no mention of his antiwar leadership. From Bernie’s speech, you wouldn’t have a clue that King explicitly and emphatically linked the issues of economic injustice at home with war abroad.

Bernie Sanders is one of only two sitting U.S. senators who joined the 1963 March
on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, where King spoke about his dream. King’s life was cut short five years later as he campaigned for expanded federal programs and a “poor people’s bill of rights” — not only organizing for economic uplift but also an end to what he called “the madness of militarism.”

**Click here to urge Bernie Sanders not to bypass this pivotal truth: Adequate funds for programs of economic equity and social justice will require an end to the “madness of militarism” that persists today.**

**Ongoing war and huge military spending** continue to be deeply enmeshed with basic economic ills from **upside-down priorities**. As the National Priorities Project has documented, 54 percent of the U.S. government’s discretionary spending now goes to military purposes.

**To urge Bernie to make clear on the campaign trail how corporate power and the nation’s war machinery are fueling each other, click here.**

Overcoming militarism is just as vital as overcoming oligarchy. We won’t be able to do one without the other.

Thank you!

After signing the petition, **please forward this message to your friends**. You can also share it from the webpage after taking the action yourself.

This work is only possible with your financial support. **Please chip in $3 now.**

-- The RootsAction.org Team

P.S. RootsAction is an independent online force endorsed by Jim Hightower, Barbara Ehrenreich, Cornel West, Daniel Ellsberg, Glenn Greenwald, Naomi Klein, Bill Fletcher Jr., Laura Flanders, former U.S. Senator James Abourezk, Coleen Rowley, Frances Fox Piven, Lila Garrett, Phil Donahue, Sonali Kolhatkar, and many others.

**Background:**
> [Bernie Sanders campaign website: “On the Issues”](#)
> [National Priorities Project: “Military Spending in the United States”](#)
> [Bernie Sanders: Speech to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference](#)

III. HOW MANY DEBATES? More Debates Are Good for Bernie Sanders, Martin O’Malley, Lincoln Chafee—and Hillary Clinton

With new contenders, the DNC’s plan for just six debates is inadequate.

John Nichols

June 2, 2015 | This article appeared in the June 22-29, 2015 edition of The Nation with the title “A Call for More Debates.”

Former Maryland Gov. Martin O’Malley announces his entrance into the Democratic presidential race in May 2015. (AP Photo/Evan Vucci)

The race for the Democratic presidential nomination woke with a start in late May. Hillary Clinton still has a daunting lead in the polls, which she has ably maintained by eschewing cautious centrism and articulating progressive positions on issues like mass incarceration and immigration reform. But the notion that Clinton will simply grab the crown and stroll with it into a fall 2016 contest with the eventual Republican nominee has been upset by the entry of Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders and former Maryland governor Martin O’Malley into the race.

Sanders kicked off his campaign at a boisterous May 26 rally in Burlington, Vermont, where environmentalist Bill McKibben told a crowd of 5,000 that “this land was made for you and me…not for a handful of billionaires and oil-company executives.” It remains to be seen whether McKibben’s argument that “all of us trump money” will prevail, but the overflow crowds that Sanders has attracted in New Hampshire, Iowa, and Minnesota have both The Washington Post and The New York Times taking stock of “Bernie-mentum.” After an audience of 700 cheered Sanders’s call in Davenport, Iowa, for “an economy that works for all of us, not just the top 1 percent,” Democratic Mayor Bill Gluba predicted: “If he keeps at it, he is going to capture the hearts and minds of Iowans.” Indeed, a recent national poll showed Sanders’s support jumping from 4 to 15 percent in two short months, cementing his status as the leading rival to Clinton—a status underscored by the Run Warren Run campaign’s announcement that it would suspend its efforts to draft Senator Elizabeth Warren into the race.

O’Malley is less fiery than Sanders, and he draws smaller crowds, but the former Clinton backer is also positioning himself to the left of the front-runner on economic issues. If his opening speech is any
indication, he intends to link such populism with a critique of dynastic succession. “Recently, the CEO of Goldman Sachs let his employees know that he’d be just fine with either Bush or Clinton. I bet he would,” O’Malley said. “Well, I’ve got news for the bullies of Wall Street: The presidency is not a crown to be passed back and forth by you between two royal families.”

Younger than the other contenders, O’Malley has a generational appeal, as well as an executive track record as governor and, before that, mayor of Baltimore. That legacy has been tarnished by the renewed attention to racial disparities in policing and incarceration since the death of Freddie Gray in April. But O’Malley still has an opportunity to candidly address his record on law and order, as well as to make a credible case for a new urban agenda.

To do so, however, he must be heard, which is why his camp objected to the Democratic National Committee’s plan to schedule just six debates (as opposed to as many as 12 on the Republican side) and to impose an “exclusivity” rule that punishes candidates for participating in other debates. Sanders also wants “a lot more debates,” and he talks of starting them in July. That makes sense for both men, as well as other presidential prospects like former senators Lincoln Chafee and Jim Webb. It also makes sense for Clinton, who should recognize that grassroots Democrats are flocking to Sanders and paying attention to O’Malley because they want specifics on issues ranging from corporate trade policy to income inequality. Engaging these questions will make Clinton a stronger candidate (if she’s nominated). The last thing that the Democrats need is a scripted campaign and a scripted nominee. Sanders and O’Malley understand this; so should Clinton and the DNC.

John Nichols

June 2, 2015 | This article appeared in the June 22-29, 2015 edition of The Nation.

END SANDERS ANTHOLOGY #3

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Dick Bennett

Newsletters


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