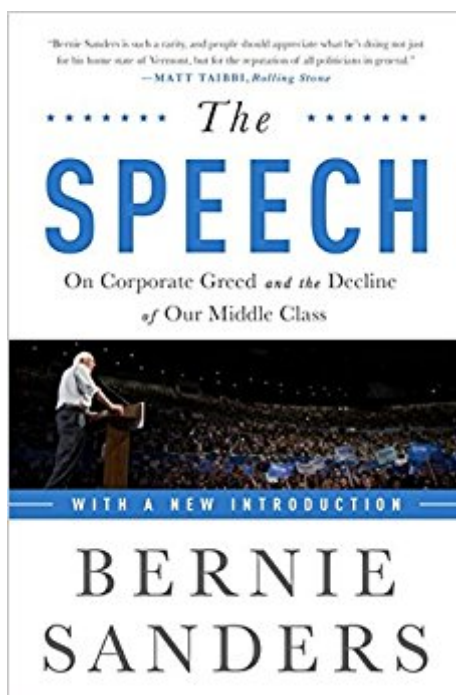


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The Speech: On Corporate Greed And The Decline Of Our Middle Class



Synopsis

On Friday, December 10, 2010, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders walked on to the floor of the United States Senate and began speaking. It turned out to be a very long speech, lasting over eight and a half hours. And it hit a nerve. Millions followed the speech online until the traffic crashed the Senate server. A huge, positive grassroots response tied up the phones in the senator's offices in Vermont and Washington. President Obama reportedly held an impromptu press conference with former President Clinton to deflect media attention away from Sanders' speech. Editorials and news coverage appeared throughout the world. In his speech, Sanders blasted the agreement that President Obama struck with Republicans, which extended the Bush tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires, lowered estate tax rates for the very, very rich, and set a terrible precedent by establishing a "payroll tax holiday" diverting revenue away from the Social Security Trust Fund, threatening the fund's very future. But the speech was more than a critique of a particular piece of legislation. It was a dissection of the collapse of the American middle class and a well-researched attack on corporate greed and on public policy which, over the last several decades, has led to a huge growth in millionaires even as the United States has the highest rate of childhood poverty in the industrialized world. It was a plea for a fundamental change in national priorities, for government policy that reflects the needs of working families, and not just the wealthy and their lobbyists. Finally, Sanders' speech-published here in its entirety with a new introduction by the senator-is a call for action. It is a passionate statement informing us that the only people who will save the middle class of this country is the middle class itself, but only if it is informed, organized, and prepared to take on the enormously powerful special interests dominating Washington.

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"Bernie Sanders is such a rarity, and people should appreciate what he's doing not just for his home state of Vermont, but for the reputation of all politicians in general." -- Matt Taibbi "Rolling Stone" "A rare oratorical tour de force." -- U.S. News and World Report "U.S. News and World Report" "A progressive hero." -- Washington Post "Washington Post" "I endorse Brother Bernie Sanders because he is a long-distance runner with integrity in the struggle for justice for over 50 years." -- Cornel West "Cornel West" "Bernie Sanders has a proven track record of uncompromised activism and advocacy for working people, and a message that resonates with nurses, and, as we have all seen, tens of thousands of people across the country" -- NNU Executive Director RoseAnn DeMoro "NNU Executive Director RoseAnn DeMoro" "Bernie Sanders is such a rarity, and people should appreciate what he is doing not just for his home state of Vermont, but for the reputation of all politicians in general. Matt Taibbi, Rolling Stone A rare oratorical tour de force. U.S. News and World Report A progressive hero. Washington Post "I endorse Brother Bernie Sanders because he is a long-distance runner with integrity in the struggle for justice for over 50 years." Cornel West "Bernie Sanders has a proven track record of uncompromised activism and advocacy for working people, and a message that resonates with nurses, and, as we have all seen, tens of thousands of people across the country" NNU Executive Director RoseAnn DeMoro "Bernie Sanders is the only remotely reasonable candidate for president of the United States" Flea (The Red Hot Chili Peppers) "I feel weird using words like values, and morals, because those are words that have been coopted by people who wear them as shrouds to justify terrible things... I'd like to take those words back tonight and use them to describe Bernie Sanders, because his moral compass and sense of values inspires me. He always seems to be on the right side of history." Sarah Silverman "However you may vote, Bernie Sanders is pretty great. He doesn't pander, is consistent and clear on important issues." Mia Farrow"

On Friday, December 10, 2010, Senator Bernie Sanders walked onto the floor of the Senate and gave a very long speech. It lasted over eight and a half hours, and it hit a nerve. Millions followed the speech online, and a grassroots response tied up the phones in the senator's offices. Editorials and news coverage appeared throughout the world. Sanders' speech published here in its entirety with a new introduction by the senator is a call for action. In it, he blasts the agreement that extended

the Bush tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires, lowered estate tax rates for the very, very rich, and diverted revenue away from the Social Security trust fund. But the speech is more than a critique of a particular piece of legislation. It is a dissection of the collapse of the American middle class and a well-researched attack on corporate greed and on public policy that, over the last several decades, has led to a huge growth in income inequality. It is a plea for a fundamental change in national priorities; for government policy that reflects the needs of working families, not just the wealthy.

I have seen more and more quotes from this senator being shared in Facebook. What he consistently said in those quotes came across to me as honest, practical, factual and were insights or opinion on a specific issue. No partisan bullets. No extreme political biting remarks. I know this seems like a contradiction in terms, but he comes across with rational emotion. He cares about the people of this nation, that is clear. And he obviously (and to me, uniquely) reads the bills that come up for a vote and does deep analysis of what the enactment of any bill will DO to the average citizen, the effect to the nation. When CBS interviewed him about this book, there was given a glimmer of a possibility that he might run for President. Independents are becoming a rare breed in this polarized political environment. So I wanted to know more and decided to read this book. He explains right from the start that this is the actual 8 1/2 hour filibuster speech, just as the title states. He explains that as a speech there is a lot of redundancy. Senate members are coming in and out, for one thing. The key points of his speech thus need to be repeated. Besides this is a filibuster - the point is to keep talking for a long time. So I kept that in mind as I read the script of the speech - this book. I did not skip over the repetition as I discovered that there were the occasional supporting Senators who added to his speech. They provided additional perspective and sometimes more facts. I now want to know more about this senator.

Read this book, if you want the gory details on how corrupt and callous the GOP is, and how much it costs this nation. Bernie tried in every way possible to show them how cutting the estate tax for the rich gave billions only to the people who already have billions, while they cry about the deficit and cut social programs. He tried to get them to add a \$250 one time check to seniors, who hadn't had a Cost of Living Adjustment in two years. He tried to get them thinking about children in poverty, seniors who can't afford their medication, etc. But no, they were unmoved and glued to their plan. I'm even more disgusted with Republicans now than I was before I read the book. Bernie knows his facts, and more importantly, knows the meaning of those

facts, into the future, and what it means about the hearts of our legislators.

Bernie has always fought really hard for the middle class of this country and this book is a perfect example of that. Show me another politician who would devote that amount of time and energy towards fighting the insanity that is giving tax breaks to billionaires when ordinary hard working people of this country are struggling to get by. He speaks on many important issues facing the American people including corporate greed, the crumbling infrastructure, trade deals, and health care. Don't bother reading this book if you're a billionaire, but on the off chance that you're not, it's definitely worth a read. BERNIE 2016

05-18-2015. I liked Bernie Sanders message from the first time I heard him on programs like C-span "Washington Journal", MSNBC, And C-span. I'm glad to hear he is running for President. He is honest and cuts-through all the indoctrination & propaganda we hear from so many other members of the U.S. Senate and House.

Proof that this is our champion for the new political revolution, in which we stand up together and say: we want the government back for ALL of the people of America, and we want to govern in a way that does not have super PACs, nor filthy rich politicians.

A great read for anyone interested in politics, to make it even better the proceeds go to charity. What's not to love? Bernie Sanders is a rare thing in government, he is honest, can't be bought by any amount of money and a very kind and caring man. This historic Filibuster was a great moment in our history and it is great to read to see everything that was said. Our country is in trouble because of corporate welfare and greed, Bernie knows what we have to do to make our country work for the people again and he is leading the country in the right direction. Even people that don't agree with him respect him because of his honesty and integrity, it is such a rare thing in today's world of politics and truly amazed me when I first learned of him.

With Bernie Sanders, what you see is what you get. Now how many politicians can you say that about? He is honest, informed, compassionate, visionary, direct, and fearless. I hope voters will read this book and get a fuller sense of who he is. Don't listen to labels or smear campaigns. Learn what this man's views and values are, then examine his record to see if he walks the talk. Then make a decision based on the facts. I think people (Republicans, Democrats, Independents, and

others) will find that he speaks for and to them. He refuses to raise a SuperPAC and he refuses to run a dirty campaign. We need an honest president in the White House, someone who cares about working people and the common man/woman. This book gives a full and clear picture of what Bernie Sanders stands for. Read it before 2016!

Bernie Sanders tells it like it is. He is the only real representative of the interests of ordinary people in the Senate today. He lays out, not only how the specific proposal at issue (whether to pass President Obama's lopsided compromise with the Republicans wherein the Democratic caucus acquiesced in incredibly foolish, economically destructive, and pro-elitist extension of tax cuts for the rich and uber-rich demanded by the Republicans, but got precious little in return) was a really, really bad idea, but how for years the Republicans, and far too many fellow traveling Democrats, have sold out the interests of their middle class and working class constituents in favor of the 2 Party Dictatorship of the Rich and Corporations that now rules the United States. Hooray for Bernie Sanders. If only we had 100 of him in the Senate.

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