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## Bernie Sanders – Rising on Conviction & Courage



Source: mlive.com

With all the decks solidly stacked against him and with few giving him any chance at the outset, and with the Democratic establishment and the Party solidly backing the high profile candidate Hillary Clinton, who de-facto had the nomination sewed-up, Bernie Sanders had the Quixotic urge, and the extraordinary courage to take on the seemingly impossible task of defeating the shoo-in Hillary, and try and do it on what would be considered a suicidal political platform in America, as a "Democratic Socialist".

Upon reflection, considering the multitude of 'sudden-death' elements (*in political terms*) to his personal profile and his platform in the American political arena, the launch of his bid for the nomination of the Democratic Party, at this time, was nothing short of a seemingly insane and uncontrollable urge at self-immolation, for a largely unknown lifelong politician, to gain a bit of notoriety before the inevitable retirement into eternal obscurity.

Instead of a quick flameout as was largely expected, Bernie has put a true "Bern" on the political campaign and turned it into a fiery ideological debate on political, economic and social sacred cows of American politics on both sides of the partisan divide.

And given his steady rise, and now acknowledged as a contentious contender that has steadily gained traction and momentum, even if ultimately doomed, Bernie Sanders has become 'Heart-bern' for Hillary Clinton.

But when starting out, Bernie Sanders had so many strikes against him.

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He is not young. In fact, as a 74-year-old he is well into what would be considered generally, retirement age, even in this day and age of extended retirement age. And, he is in America; a society that generally speaking places little value on the old, and where youth and beauty are the much preferred god-like qualities and the high-value currency. Just ask Madonna.

While he is certainly charismatic in his zeal and passion for his causes, the 'moral economy' and the 'shameful inequality' in America, and the rights of the common man, he was not noticeable or much admired prior to his entering the nomination race.

Apart from a long and dedicated record of service as the longest serving independent in Congressional history, for the general population in America and particularly for those in other countries, neither he nor his career were particularly outstanding or noteworthy.

He neither came from a distinguished or wealthy background, nor is he rich on his own accord.

And, he decided to take up a contentious run at the highest office in the Country as a 'Democratic Socialist', at a time in American politics when the incumbent President (*a Democrat*) has been castigated as a do-nothing out-of-control socialist, that is spending America into everlasting oblivion, by the most vocal and virulent obstructionist Republican opposition that has ever thwarted a sitting President (*for two terms*) from the day he was elected. This opposition did not even try to hide their decidedly and most selective, unfair and severely partisan near-term memory. With America's natural tendency to be repelled by anything remotely resembling 'socialism', and with the current anti-socialistic and poisonous political environment created by the roguish Republicans, who are conducting cage-fights among their own candidates, Bernie Sanders decides to select and loudly announce as his political platform, 'Democratic Socialist', as if he had a hideously compulsive and irresistible political death wish.

To keep confounding conventional wisdom, Bernie, a most secular non-practicing but proud of his Jewish heritage politician, breaks with the most sacred and iron-clad of all American traditions (*regardless of background and religion*), that of singular and unquestioned loyalty and support of Israel, and an overwhelming bias against the Palestinian people and their cause.

Bernie, while professing '100% loyalty' to Israel' (*he lived in Israel for some time*) has actually had the audacity to question Israel and its treatment of the Palestinian people. Stating that it is ok to admit that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is 'not correct all the time', he spoke of America needing to insure a fairer treatment of the Palestinian people.

In doing so, instead of pandering to and playing up his 'Jewish-ness' to attract the support of the powerful American Jews, he angered and alienated the most powerful political and financial class in America, losing most of any potential support as the majority of the Jewish voters in the States are

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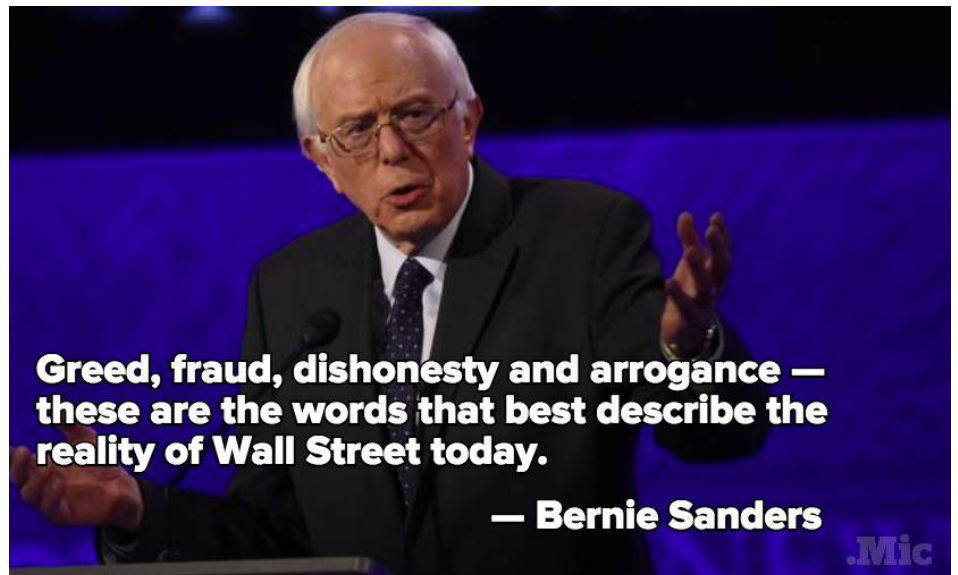
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overwhelmingly and staunchly pro-Israel. In this, his politically incorrect stand, he handed over to his rival Hilary, the block support of his own community.



Source: tapwires.com

And just to make sure he had quite thoroughly alienated the most powerful in the community, he makes one of his platform's main rallying cry, the abolishing of corruption and the undue political influence of big money and of Wall Street.



Source: mic.com

Conversely, Bernie Sanders has built a solid and verifiable reputation over decades of public service, of being in the corner of the little guy, of helping and pitching for the common man.

On the election trail a lot of politicians suddenly become loudly vocal about their concern for the middle class or the working class, and pledge to do something about their plight if elected. In most cases, the public is usually and justifiably cynical of such new found fervor and concern.

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In Bernie's case, there is no such cynicism, not even from the Republicans. In fact, Bernie's established track record of genuine concern for the "Common Man" scares the heck out of most of his Party as well as the Opposition. They are all, as is the public, much too aware that Bernie might just try and fulfill his election promises.

To the political class on both sides of the divide, his agenda is just too radical to be even American:

- ✿ Strengthen and expand Social Security;
- ✿ Have Medicare for all;
- ✿ Tackle income and wealth inequality;
- ✿ Get the influence of big money out of politics and restore democracy;
- ✿ Reform Wall Street;
- ✿ Make going to war the last resort (*big gasp! from the Pentagon*);
- ✿ Make college tuition free and debt free;
- ✿ Eradicate prejudice and racial inequality;
- ✿ Have a fair and humane Immigration policy;
- ✿ Fight for Women's rights, LGBT Rights, Tribal Nations Rights, Veterans Rights; and
- ✿ Combat climate change to save the planet, etc., etc., etc...

In all of that, he proves himself to be powerfully contrarian and morally and politically insanely courageous. We say courageous because his campaign didn't quickly die in the first few days or weeks of the campaign, as so many of the conventional, visionless, non-thinking, toe-the-party-line types did, as candidates, in the early stages of the campaign on both sides. If his run had ended swiftly, as it should have, considering the number of seemingly fatal weaknesses he started with (*and those listed above*), he would have been labeled anything but courageous, and most probably would have been dismissed simply as delusional, out-of-touch with reality, perhaps even downright senile.

Instead Bernie has proven almost everyone wrong.

In starting with seemingly insurmountable handicaps of age, social status, and totally unacceptable political platforms, and then willfully undermining his own few strengths, and alienating almost all the rich, powerful and influential, and attacking the most sensitive American sacred cows, he has through sheer audacity and native understanding, passionate uncompromising conviction, and outrageous courage, won over the only people in America who count, the public, and given his opponents a good run for their money.

Even if he does not win the nomination, and even if his numbers don't add up (*but then whose does?*), Bernie Sanders has our unmitigated admiration for his lifelong service for the "Common Man", his uncompromising integrity, his courage, and his sheer chutzpah!

