



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on July 19, 2019

Sanders' Starving Campaign Workers Ask for Another Bowl of Gruel

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Senator Bernie Sanders, the [millionaire comsymp](#) who [sided with America's Red enemies](#) in the waning days of the Cold War, faces an uprising of lowly campaign staffers who want the presidential candidate to pay them a living wage.



They think \$15 an hour sounds about right.

That's the minimum Sanders proposes for every American worker because, as his [campaign website says](#), "working for a living should mean earning a living wage."

But Sanders' apostles don't make that much, the [Washington Post disclosed](#) in a report that depicts Sanders as the [Mr. Limbkins](#) of American politics, his campaign the parish workhouse.

Union Trouble

The Sanders campaign, the [Post reported](#), "made history in March when it announced that all employees below the rank of deputy director would be represented by a union."

Other campaigns have followed, but at any rate, the campaign and the union representing the workers, the hard-left United Food & Commercial Workers Local 400, hammered out a pact that "established wage classifications for national and state staff, ranging from \$15 an hour for interns and canvassers to \$100,000 annual salaries for bargaining unit deputies."

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But here's the problem, the [Post reported](#):

Field organizers, who are on the front lines of the campaign's crucial voter contact efforts, were to be paid not by hours worked but via an annual salary set at \$36,000. Regional field directors were to be paid \$48,000 annually, and statewide department directors were allocated \$90,000 per year.

A \$36,000 annual salary, at 2,080 hours, is about \$17.31 per hour, while \$48,000 is about \$23.08. At \$90,000, a worker earns \$43.27. But those figures are for a 40-hour week, which is not how many hours those campaign staffers work.

Problem is, the *Post* reported, the hero of proletariats is working his employees until they drop: 60 hours a week. That's \$11.53 an hour for the \$36,000-a-year employee. At \$48,000, it's \$15.38 per hour.

And so, reported the *Post*:

Campaign field hires have demanded an annual salary they say would be equivalent to a \$15-an-hour wage, which Sanders for years has said should be the federal minimum. The organizers and



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other employees supporting them have invoked the senator's words and principles in making their case to campaign manager Faiz Shakir, the documents reviewed by *The Washington Post* show.

More, Please

Union members drafted a letter that said "many field staffers are barely managing to survive financially, which is severely impacting our team's productivity and morale. Some field organizers have already left the campaign as a result."

The letter, the [Post reported](#), says field organizers "cannot be expected to build the largest grassroots organizing program in American history while making poverty wages. Given our campaign's commitment to fighting for a living wage of at least \$15.00 an hour, we believe it is only fair that the campaign would carry through this commitment to its own field team."

And so, the [Post reported](#), lifting their wooden bowls, licked clean of the Sanders gruel, campaign workers bombed Shakir, the campaign's Bumble the Beadle, with a message: "[Please, sir, we want some more.](#)"

"I am struggling financially to do my job, and in my state, we've already had 4 people quit in the past 4 weeks because of financial struggles," wrote one field organizer. Another employee said his co-workers "shouldn't have to get payday loans to sustain themselves."

A third said he supported the demands for higher wages "because I need to be able to feed myself." A fourth quoted a line Sanders often uses in speeches, writing, "As you know, real change never takes place from the top on down, it always takes place from the bottom on up."

Amusingly, the [old skinflint's](#) campaign, Shakir said, "offers wages and benefits competitive with other campaigns, as is shown by the latest fundraising reports."

Whether that's \$15 an hour he doesn't say, but he added, "Bernie Sanders is the most pro-worker and pro-labor candidate running for president. We have tremendous staff who are working hard. Bernie and I both strongly believe in the sanctity of the collective bargaining process and we will not deviate from our commitment to it."

The campaign and union are negotiating, and hope to close a deal by July's end.

The union wants 30-percent raises of \$10,800 and \$14,400 for field organizers and directors, the [Post reported](#), which would bring their salaries to \$46,800 and \$62,400. Another demand is 100-percent coverage of "health-care costs," which presumably means insurance premiums, for workers earning under \$60,000. Only workers earning \$36,000 or less receive that benefit now.

Shakir and Sanders can hatch a plan to keep the workers happy at one of the multimillionaire candidate's [three homes](#).

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