



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on May 1, 2015

Who Is Bernie Sanders?

In his remarks announcing his decision to campaign for the Democrat Party's presidential nomination, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders (shown) [fired a warning shot](#) at those either disparaging or belittling his intentions:



People should not underestimate me. I've run outside of the two-party system, defeating Democrats and Republicans, taking on big-money candidates.... [My] message that has resonated in Vermont is a message that can resonate all over this country.

Polls show Sanders running more than 50 points behind Democratic front-runner Hillary Clinton while journalists have emphasized his inability to raise large amounts of cash for his campaign. Others have said he has little name recognition outside of Vermont, and that his stage presence lacks Hillary's practiced homilies and faux sincerity. Even the *Wall Street Journal* wrote, "Sanders isn't going to be president," claiming that he only wants to redirect the political conversation more to the left, forcing Clinton to clarify stands about which she has been both opaque and obtuse.

Observers should know that Sanders has been in politics almost continuously since 1981, racking up a voting record that [violates the Constitution three-fourths of the time](#) during the period 1999-2014, according to *The New American's* "Freedom Index." He is persuaded that so-called global warming is caused by humans, that a single-payer healthcare system is the best of all worlds, that Wall Street and billionaires such as the Koch Brothers are the enemy of the common man, that the Supreme Court's decision in *Citizens United*, which restored First Amendment rights to groups of people who incorporate, is a complete and unmitigated disaster, and that, as a result, campaign finance rules need to be completely rewritten. He believes in income redistribution by force in order to turn America into an egalitarian state in the name of social justice. His campaign mantra is: "How do we create an economy that works for all of our people, rather than a small number?"

He is a master at asking slanted rhetorical questions, each of which leads to the inevitable answer: more government, more theft, and less individual freedom:

Is it morally appropriate that 99% of all new income is going to the top 1%? Is it good economics that the top one-tenth of 1% own almost as much wealth as the bottom 90%? Is our democracy being destroyed when one family can spend \$900 million to buy elections?

His solutions are in keeping with his proudly proclaimed socialism: further increases in the minimum wage, more federal funding of education, making "major investments" in various infrastructure projects, and rules making it easier for unions to coerce non-members to join.

Most observers are unfamiliar with where Sanders got these ideas. At age 23 Sanders joined the Young Peoples Socialist League, the youth wing of the Socialist Party USA, as well as the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) and the Student Peace Union. He also served as an organizer for the Student



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Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and worked for the communist-led United Packinghouse Workers Union.

A few years later he joined the Liberty Union Party (LUP) and ran for various offices on a platform that called for the nationalization of all U.S. banks and the public ownership of all utilities.

In the 1980s, he collaborated with various Soviet and East German “peace committees” who were protesting then-President Reagan’s deployment of nuclear missiles in Europe. He openly supported the Soviet Union’s “nuclear freeze” campaign designed to undercut support for Reagan’s military buildup.

In 1985, he traveled to Managua, Nicaragua, to celebrate the sixth anniversary of Daniel Ortega’s governmental takeover and installation of his Marxist-Leninist Sandinista dictatorship.

By 1990, Sanders was a leading member of Jesse Jackson’s National Rainbow Coalition, and the following year he founded the Congressional Progressive Caucus with the help of fellow revolutionaries Ron Dellums and Maxine Waters.

In 2007, Sanders and fellow-in-arms Senator Barbara Boxer proposed the Global Warming Pollution Reduction Act, which, according to an MIT study, would have cost the average American family more than \$4,500 a year.

Whether Sanders is running for president merely to “influence the debate,” or whether he has been informed by the powers that be that he will reap the accolades of major media and the Democratic Party should Hillary falter (thanks to unprecedented efforts by left-wing mouthpieces such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* to expose her machinations concerning her foundation’s finances) doesn’t matter. What does matter is that Sanders must not be underestimated or misunderstood. He is in the front ranks of those who wish to complete America’s transformation from a free country into an economic and political dictatorship

A graduate of an Ivy League school and a former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at www.LightFromTheRight.com, primarily on economics and politics.

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