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Bernie Sanders makes it official: He's running for president

By John Wojcik

Bernie Sanders, the self-described “democratic socialist” senator from Vermont, announced on the steps of the U.S. Capitol yesterday that he was running for the Democratic Party’s nomination for the presidency. Sanders, who has repeatedly won election to the Senate as an Independent has nevertheless caucused with that body’s Democrats.

During his announcement, he launched a blistering attack on the electoral system in this country, insisting that it has been captured by the super rich and the top one percent of Americans. Standing before the dome of the nation’s most cherished symbol he declared that the 2016 elections would be a “defining moment” for the nation’s middle class.

“The major issue is how do we create an economy that works for all of our people rather than a small number of billionaires,” Sanders declared.

During his announcement, he castigated both the Koch brothers and the U.S. Supreme Court for their respective roles in squelching democracy, saying that they have “unleashed unlimited outside money into elections.”

“We now have a political situation where billionaires are literally able to buy elections and candidates. This is our reality right now,” he said.

Wall Street has never been endeared to the



senator because of his repeated calls for and support for financial regulations on the big firms and banks.

Fossil fuel companies have him on the top of their enemy lists because of his warnings about the threats posed by climate change.

That triple message - taking money out of politics, curbing the excesses of Wall Street, and the need to save the planet, when combined with his passionate calls for closing the wealth gap, is

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immensely popular with progressives across the country and could pose a real challenge for what is presumed now to be Hillary Clinton’s clear advantage in the coming Democratic primaries. Sanders has been drawing large crowds in early caucus and primary states, including Iowa and South

The focus must be on helping America's middle class.

Carolina.

Regardless of their preferences, leading Democrats welcomed Sanders into the race, saying essentially that his candidacy will encourage debate and help draw the line between Republicans who back the rich and Democrats who support policies that benefit the majority.

Even Hillary Clinton tweeted: "I agree with Bernie, the focus must be on helping America's middle class. The GOP would hold them back. I welcome him to the race."

Sanders has also come out strongly against the Trans Pacific Partnership trade deal and the Fast Track proposal backed by Republicans, some Democrats and the Obama administration. He has been asked to deliver remarks to the coming AFL-CIO convention in New Hampshire.

Sanders have called for increases, not cuts in Social Security benefits and single payer or national health insurance, cutting out the role of private insurers. All of these positions make him popular among progressives.

Some have urged him to run as an independent, considering his long history of challenges to

both major parties on a number of issues. Sanders says he will not be a Ralph Nader type "spoiler," however, pulling votes from a Democratic nominee in November that could tip things in favor of a right-wing Republican.

His decision to run is seen as a victory for Progressive Democrats of America, which has been urging him to run for many months and has been arguing that he can make the case for independent and progressive politics in the Democratic primaries.

If 80 to 90 percent of the people in this country vote, if they know what the issues are and make demands based on that knowledge, Washington and Congress will look very different from the Congress currently dominated by big money and dealing only with the issues that big money wants them to deal with."



John Wojcik is co-editor of Peoplesworld.org

King and his radical vision: a study for today

By Sam Webb

I have heard - and rightfully so - the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s name and words referenced in the wake of the murder of Freddie Gray and subsequent events in Baltimore.

In this spirit, it would seem worthwhile at this moment to study in some detail how MLK and his coworkers drew the clergy and trade unions into the civil rights movement of their time; how they transformed an initiative that was local in its origins into a movement that was national (even international) in scope; how they reached and changed people, especially white people in the South as well as the North, who were considered unreachable and unchangeable by many; how they allied themselves, despite many pressures from within the movement not to do so, with allies that were unreliable and not in the struggle all the way; how they developed a legislative, electoral, and political dimension to their activity to complement their grassroots initiatives; how they resisted pressures to narrow down the movement to

only those who were fully on board and disposed to the most militant forms of action; how they pressed their vision, agenda, and tactics, while at the same time maintaining unity and cooperation among the diverse actors in the civil rights coalition; how they interacted with the Kennedy and then Johnson administrations, not to mention Congress, at each stage of the civil rights struggle; how they created a range of entry points to allow people with different levels of commitment and understanding more than one way to participate in the struggle against racism.

In short, how they (with great courage, creativity, and confidence in the American people) scaled up and out their movement to the point where it became, I would argue, the most notable and successful movement (it brought down a century old system of brutal and humiliating racist oppression and exploitation) of a mass, progressive, and radically democratic character of the 20th century.

Nonviolent mass civil disobedience was at the core of MLK and his coworkers vision and strategy that would well serve today's emerging movements for racial justice (and justice generally).

Baltimore prosecutor brings murder, manslaughter charges against six police



Combined Sources

Just hours before the scheduled start of a huge march and rally by the Baltimore United Coalition here, the state's attorney, Marilyn Mosby, announced multiple criminal charges against six police officers in the killing of Freddie Gray. The 25-year-old man was arrested and thrown into a police van, emerged with a severed spinal cord and larynx and died several days later.

The charges were announced as thousands prepared to join peaceful rallies and marches in Baltimore, continuing a week of demands for justice in the latest police killings that have sparked protests in cities across the nation.

The charges were announced a day after the police had completed their own investigation into Gray's death and had submitted their findings to the State's Attorney.

Mosby told the press that her office decided to file the serious charges after having conducted numerous interviews of witnesses, reviews of medical records and examination of the route taken by the driver of the police van. She said that the decision also came after review of the police department's own report and an autopsy that concluded Gray's death was the result of homicide.

Mosby said the investigation answers one of the big questions concerning Gray's death, the issue of

exactly when the fatal injuries occurred. She said those injuries occurred after he was shackled and thrown into the van, without any restraints to protect him.

Mosby also charged that police failed to obtain medical care for Gray even though it was "abundantly evident" that he was in serious distress.

She said that the charges against the officers who arrested Gray are not an indictment of the entire police department, telling reporters that several of her aunts and uncles and her late grandfather were all police officers. "The actions of these officers will not and should not in any way damage the important working relationships between police and prosecutors," she said, "as we continue to fight together to reduce crime in Baltimore."

When Mosby announced the indictments the crowd assembled near the War Memorial downtown cheered and broke out into applause.

Rep. Elijah Cummings said. "I think a message has been sent by our state's attorney that she treasures every life, that she values every person."

President Obama, hearing the indictments, said, "What I think the people want more than anything else is the truth. That's what people around the country expect."

The officers are charged with second degree murder, manslaughter, and assault.

A May Day greeting of hope

By Communist Party USA

On May Day 2015, the COMMUNIST PARTY USA greets our comrades and friends worldwide in the promise of:

A WORLD WITHOUT WAR, in which the billions spent on armaments are instead spent on human needs, and in which human blood and treasure cease to be expended in violent conflicts which produce mountains of dead and armies of refugees.

A WORLD WITHOUT EMPIRES, in which all nations sit down together in amity to solve the common problems of humanity without resorting to military interventions, threats, economic pressure and unilateral sanctions.

A WORLD WITHOUT EXPLOITATION, in which our labor will serve our own needs and that of humanity, instead of those of a handful of corporations and super rich individuals.

A WORLD WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION AND OPPRESSION by race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender and gender preference, in which we call all work as brothers and sisters for a better future for humanity.

A world in which the natural environment is protected for the future and not devastated in the name of corporate profit.

A world of cooperation, justice and socialism!

Inicia AFL-CIO campaña “¡Adelante!”

Gonzalo Salvador

La AFL-CIO, la central sindical más grande de EE UU, lanzó una iniciativa nacional para la asistencia migratoria llamada “¡Adelante!”, cuyo objetivo es localizar, movilizar y organizar a trabajadores inmigrantes para que puedan tener poder en sus lugares de trabajo e impulsar a sus comunidades por medio del apoyo a los inmigrantes que califican para los programas de DACA, DAPA y la ciudadanía de EE UU.

“¡Adelante!” consistirá en entrenar a trabajadores que son miembros de sindicatos y en equiparar los salones de reunión de los sindicatos a través de todo el país para que los trabajadores inmigrantes y sus familias puedan reclamar sus derechos en el trabajo por medio de los programas de DACA y DAPA establecidos por la acción ejecutiva migratoria. Esta iniciativa también alentará a que residentes legales permanentes (LPR) que califiquen soliciten a la ciudadanía de EE UU.

“Las acciones ejecutivas establecidas por el Presidente Obama fueron lo correcto, pero todavía queda mucho por hacer. Con el lanzamiento de la iniciativa ¡Adelante! seguiremos con nuestra labor”, aseguró el Presidente Richard Trumka de la AFL-CIO.

La iniciativa nacional de asistencia migratoria “¡Adelante!” fue lanzada después de un entrenamiento de tres días en Washington, DC, que reunió a más de 200 miembros, líderes y empleados de 23 diferentes sindicatos, provenientes de 27 estados. Durante este evento los participantes recibieron preparaciones prácticas que les

ayudarán a regresar a sus comunidades y poder ayudar a las personas que califican para los programas de DAPA, DACA y la ciudadanía de EE UU.

“Aprendimos mucho en las sesiones informativas y en los entrenamientos. Los temas fueron muy diversos desde sobre cómo DAPA y DACA protegerá a los trabajadores y avanzará los derechos de los trabajadores, hasta las maneras para identificar a personas que calificarían a estos programas y ayudarlos con el proceso de solicitud”, explicó Ildefonso Magaña, un organizador del Sindicato Internacional de Pintores Unidos (IUPAT, por sus siglas en inglés) quien viajó a la capital del país desde Phoenix, Arizona. “Se sentía la energía en todas las sesiones. Hay mucha emoción y estamos contentos que vamos a regresar a nuestras comunidades para ponernos a trabajar inmediatamente”.

Además, Working America, la organización comunitaria afiliada con la AFL-CIO, lanzará su proyecto “¡Adelante con Working America!”, una iniciativa que ofrecerá a los trabajadores inmigrantes la oportunidad de unirse al movimiento laboral y recibir beneficios legales, consultoría de crédito, tarjetas pre-pagadas con la opción de emitir remesas, y acceso a descuentos para servicios dentales y oftalmológicos. Los miembros de “Adelante con Working America” que paguen cuotas también podrán solicitar para recibir el “Subsidio ¡Adelante!” de \$250 aplicables al coste de la solicitud de la acción diferida.

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