

THE HUFFINGTON POST

Sanders Vows To Kill TPP If Elected. Will Clinton?

Dave Johnson

February 4, 2016

As the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) “free-trade” agreement was signed in New Zealand by representatives of the 12 participating countries, Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders strongly voiced his opposition and committed to doing what he can to kill the deal if he is elected president.

Rival Hillary Clinton has also stated opposition to the TPP, but will she also vow to kill it if elected?

Sanders Vows To Kill TPP

Saying that TPP follows in the footsteps of failed trade agreements like NAFTA, CAFTA, and Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) with China, Sanders promised to “fundamentally rewrite our trade policies to benefit working families, not just the CEOs of large, multinational corporations.”

He said that supporters of these agreements have sold them as creating jobs, but over and over again, they have been proven dead wrong.

President Bill Clinton sold NAFTA in 1993, saying it would create a million American jobs over a five-year period. Instead, NAFTA led to the loss of close to 700,000 jobs.

The conservative Cato Institute said that the trade deal with China would create far more export opportunities for America than the Chinese. Instead, the trade deal with China has led to the loss of 3.2 million jobs, and enormous, humongous and continuing trade deficits with that country.

Since 2001, nearly 60,000 manufacturing plants in this country have been shut down and we have lost over 4.7 million manufacturing jobs. If the workers find new jobs at all, they are usually lower-paying.

Sanders said at the press conference, “Trade is a good thing. But trade has got to be fair. And the TPP is anything but fair.”

Senders vowed to kill TPP if elected, saying, “As your president, not only will I make sure that the TPP does not get implemented, I will not send any trade deal to Congress that will make it easier for corporations to outsource American jobs overseas.”

Clinton Said She Opposes TPP, But Won't Lobby To Stop It

Secretary Clinton voiced her opposition to the TPP in October, saying, “I appreciate the hard work that President Obama and his team put into this process and recognize the strides they made. But the bar here is very high and, based on what I have seen, I don't believe this agreement has met it.”

However, Clinton also stated that she will not lobby against TPP, leaving many to wonder if her statement of opposition, coming just before the first debate, was serious or only for election purposes because of the unpopularity of the agreement. Then Chamber of Commerce President Tom Donohue said in a recent Bloomberg TV interview that he believes Clinton will switch to supporting TPP after the election. Inside Trade (paywall) reported that Donohue said that Clinton has publicly opposed the deal chiefly because Sen. Bernie Sanders opposes it. So the question is, will Clinton join Sanders in vowing to kill TPP if elected? Or will she change sides and implement it? From December's post, "Does Clinton Really Oppose TPP? There Is A Test For That“:

Millions of voters, betrayed and cynical, have simply given up on the system. They haven't gotten anything from the system in a long time. They don't vote and they don't believe the things politicians tell them.

Candidate Hillary Clinton might not need those voters to win the nomination and maybe not even to win the election. But if she wants “coattails” to bring in a Democratic House and Senate, be it in 2016 or 2018, she is going to have to earn their trust.

Democratic voters are skeptical of promises. They want to see proof. They want to see action. They want to see changes. Or they will just stay home. And the terrible mess we are in will continue and worsen.

So the gauntlet has been thrown down. Sanders has vowed to kill the TPP if elected. Clinton says she is opposed but has said she will not ask others to vote against it. But the TPP will be terribly destructive of jobs and wages. It will worsen the terrible inequality that is killing the middle class. Will Clinton vow to kill the TPP if elected?