



Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders Pack New Hampshire Arena For Democratic Lovefest

Anthony L. Fisher

February 5, 2016

On the heels of last night's bruising Democratic debate, where Hillary Clinton tried to paint Bernie Sanders as an in-over-his-head foreign policy neophyte, and in return, the Vermont senator strongly implied that the former Secretary of State was politically compromised by the millions of dollars she earned in speaking fees from Wall Street banking firms.

Held at Manchester's Verizon Wireless Arena, the organizers of the New Hampshire Democratic Party's McIntyre-Shaheen 100 Club Celebration said over 6,000 people showed up for the largest fundraiser in their history.

On the floor of the arena, where the minor league hockey Manchester Monarchs normally skate, about two hundred donors ate buffet-style dinners. In the stands, Clinton and Sanders supporters were seated on opposite sides of the arena and engaged in various competing chants, a spectacle which resembled a European soccer match.

We caught up with one of these esteemed donors, Ben & Jerry's ice cream co-founder Ben Cohen, who as denoted by his gray Bernie sweatshirt is a fervent Sanders supporter. Cohen told us about the special edition ice cream flavor called "Bernie's Yearning" he created to help raise funds for Sanders' campaign, and said he supports the senator because "he's the only guy who's going to shake up the system."

Cohen also indicated he would not support Clinton in the general election if she were the Democratic nominee because "she's part of the system that has created this government run by the corporations and ultra-wealthy." He said the fact that Sanders refuses to hit Clinton on her

key role in creating the failed state of Libya doesn't bother him at all and that it's more important for him to point out the distinctions between the two of them, rather than campaigning aggressively negative.

Upon realizing that he was speaking to a reporter from a libertarian publication, Cohen said that he "had no greater ally than the Cato Institute" in his years-long fight against Pentagon boondoggles like the pointless F-35 fighter jet. As the head of a group called Business Leaders for Sensible Priorities, Cohen even co-authored op-eds advocating for the cessation of funding for obsolete Cold War military programs with Cato Vice President for Defense and Foreign Policy Studies Christopher Preble. He said Cato "does some of the best work" on taking on the military-industrial complex and even though he disagrees with them on any number of economic issues, he says it's important to have allies wherever they lie on the political spectrum because "We need to find the areas we agree on and get that shit done."

After remarks from former New Hampshire Governor John Lynch, DNC Chair Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz (Fla.), and Congresswoman Ann McLane Kuster (N.H.), Bernie Sanders took the stage to thunderous applause. Through a gravely hoarse voice befitting a candidate days away from the nation's first primary, Sanders referenced the rancor of the previous night's debate, but made an effort at being a team player by offering, "On our worst day, we are a hundred times better than the Republican candidates on their best day."

The rest of Sanders speech was of the red-meat-to-the-faithful kind (\$15 minimum wage, student debt relief, Medicare-for-all, opposing free trade agreements). His supporters were thunderously loud, but at least three-quarters of them bailed following his speech, not sticking around for the night's closing speaker, Hillary Clinton.

When Clinton took the stage around 930 p.m., she noted the significant lead Sanders holds on her in the polls for New Hampshire's primary (which drew boos from the remaining Sanders supporters), but said she refused to give up on trying to win the state. Like Sanders, she also stuck closely to her typical stump speech, but her supporters (a good number of whom were applauding while seated in the media section) lapped it up and applauded with the thunder stix passed out by the campaign.