

# Why does Bernie Sanders Invoke A War Criminal as the Model of his “Socialism”?

Here we’re talking about Harry Truman of course.

In his speech on democratic socialism at George Washington University, Bernie invokes Truman on what his path and program represent, saying:

Meet @ the tables at Market Pantry  
(1<sup>st</sup> floor of hotel)

Thursday July 4th & Friday July 5th

6-7pm

President Harry Truman was right when he said that: “Socialism is the epithet they have hurled at every advance the people have made in the last 20 years...Socialism is what they called Social Security ... farm price supports ... bank deposit insurance ... the growth of free and independent labor organizations. Socialism is their name for almost anything that helps all the people.”

This is the same bloodthirsty criminal that dropped nuclear bombs on hundreds of thousands of civilians in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The same Truman who launched the Korean War, threatening China with nuclear weapons; who set the framework and doctrine to assert American dominance in the post WW-II world including military alliances like NATO, bringing forward the so-called “American Century” that has led to some of the greatest violence, suffering and immiseration of the Third World.

Yet, Bernie invokes Truman **favorably** without any mention of this war crimes – in a speech where the backdrop was *a sea of American flags, the universal symbol of genocidal wars and torture*, worn by the US Air Force as they drop bombs all over the world and the police pigs as they murder our youth!

Why? Because Truman upheld distributing the spoils of war and American victory more widely and evenly, touting universal health care and affordable housing, defending FDR’s New Deal and extending his own ‘Fair Deal.’ The social and economic measures of the New Deal, initiated by FDR and continued by Truman, were launched by the dominant section of the U.S. ruling class to prevent the collapse of capitalism at a time of crisis in the 1930s. It was designed to rescue and rationalize the banking system, to stimulate industrial production and job creation, and to establish new regulations and forms of government intervention in order to stabilize capitalism and restore profitability, at a time when **genuine** socialism was a very attractive pole in the world.

Truman’s program could be captured with the lyric from Bob Dylan’s song “Narrow Way”:

***“We looted and we plundered on distant shores ... Why is my share not equal to yours?”***

This is the same point of departure and narrow horizon of Bernie, the FDR-Truman-whisperer

## Distributing More of the Spoils of Empire to Social Programs is NOT Socialism!

Yes, Bernie may not be about waging war or dropping nukes. But does he talk about how the US is ‘looting and plundering on distant shores’? Does he talk about the US sitting atop a parasitic food-chain, feeding off the blood, sweat and tears of billions around the planet – in the vast global network of oil fields, mines, plantations, and sweatshops? Does he talk about the child labor and civil wars fueling the mining of minerals indispensable for laptops and smartphones? Does he talk about starvation pay, death-trap sweatshops and squalid slums feeding the wealth of the US every second, the conditions of the millions making those t-shirts and iPhones?

When Rana Plaza, one of these sweatshops in Bangladesh, collapsed in 2013, killing more than a thousand mainly women garment workers, as one commentator notes, “The screams of thousands trapped and crushed as concrete and machinery cascaded down upon them unleashed a full-spectrum shockwave, amplified by the anguished howl of millions around the world.” Does this “anguished howl” find expression in Bernie’s program? NO!

Instead, this is how he characterizes the choices:

... the difference between Donald Trump and me. He believes in corporate socialism for the rich and powerful. I believe in a democratic socialism that works for ***the working families of THIS country.***  
***[Emphasis ours]***

There is NOTHING – absolutely NOTHING – about the billions whose labor clothes, feeds, and enriches in what he calls the “wealthiest country in the history of the world.” Does Bernie talk about where this wealth comes from,

whether this needs to change? When he – correctly - rants about the howling inequalities between rich and poor, does he then go to the divide and lopsidedness of the world, between the rich imperialist countries and the poor Third World – with the former fundamentally parasitically **feeding off the latter?**

As a really simple example, take the cup of coffee you have in your hands right now. About 10% of the value leaves the US, back to the coffee exporting country with the actual farmer living off starvation wages, often less than \$1/day!

Yes, it is an indictment of this system that there is no adequate health care, education and jobs for the vast sections of the American poor. Bernie's proposal in funding universal health care and other social programs is to tax the profits of corporations and wealthy of this country. But does Bernie ever mention that **a disproportionate share of this wealth is from the "super"-profits extracted from the super-exploitation of millions and millions of people in the Third World?**

Or does he fundamentally accept the status quo, with a logic of 'let it keep flowing, but **my share has to be equal to yours**' in this country: sitting atop a global food-chain of super-exploitation, a planet of slums and sweatshops like Dante's seven layers of hell. Bernie calls for 'upward mobility' within this parasitic relationship and process.

Then, what happens then when people of the Third World are driven off their land by wars and poverty, by the effects of global warming, often from countries destroyed by US-led-and-dominated coups, wars and the economic workings of this system. Does Bernie welcome them with open arms? Au contraire, monsieur! As he said in another instance:

"If you open the borders, my God, there's a lot of poverty in this world, and you're going to have people from all over the world. And I don't think that's something we can do at this point. Can't do it. So that's my position."

To answer the question in the title: **Why does Bernie Sanders Invoke A War Criminal**

, **Harry Truman, as the Model of his "Socialism"**: Because no matter how much you talk about peace, and no matter your "good intent", if your "socialism" is based on re-dividing the spoils that come from dominating and exploiting the world, you **will** have to enforce these borders, secure these spoils, and wage war to defend and extend that domination and exploitation.

## **Stop thinking like an American, start thinking about humanity!**

Welcome to the Bernie movement: a toothless 'political revolution' which in double-speak is actually about mobilizing for paltry **reforms within the system**, the opposite of and an actual obstacle to an ACTUAL revolution which is **the overthrow of this capitalist-imperialist system**; a 'democratic socialism' that is wholly non-threatening and within the constraints of the system, **no different than Social Security really**, and as American as apple pie; and where all your anger, hopes and fears about the existential horrors confronting humanity, including the fascist Trump/Pence regime, are **safely channeled with a simple 'vote for Bernie.'**

Be real! We are facing an existential crisis, for billions on this planet.

**Let's get down to basics: We need a revolution. Anything else, in the final analysis, is bullshit.**

*Bob Avakian, excerpted from Basics 3:1, from the talks and writings of Bob Avakian (BA)*

There is a strategy to **MAKE** this revolution – and to **WIN**, and we are **ORGANIZING** right now on this basis. Learn more about the **Get Organized for an Actual Revolution** national tour and invite us your city and campus, go to [revcom.us](http://revcom.us).

Also at [revcom.us](http://revcom.us) is the **Constitution for a New Socialist Republic of North America**, authored by BA, a concrete and visionary blueprint for a REAL socialist society based on BA's breakthrough of the new communism, a whole new framework of human emancipation. This Constitution is a radically different vision and concrete blueprint of socialist society than that has existed before in history. BA has resolved a critical contradiction that has existed between the fundamentally scientific methods and emancipatory goals of communism - and aspects that ran counter to it in past theory and practice. For the first time in history, **this charts the pathway and process needed and possible for the emancipation of all of humanity.**

Bernie Sanders, and what he represents, is a horse-load of bullshit (BS)! Get off that cart, get with the REAL REVOLUTION!