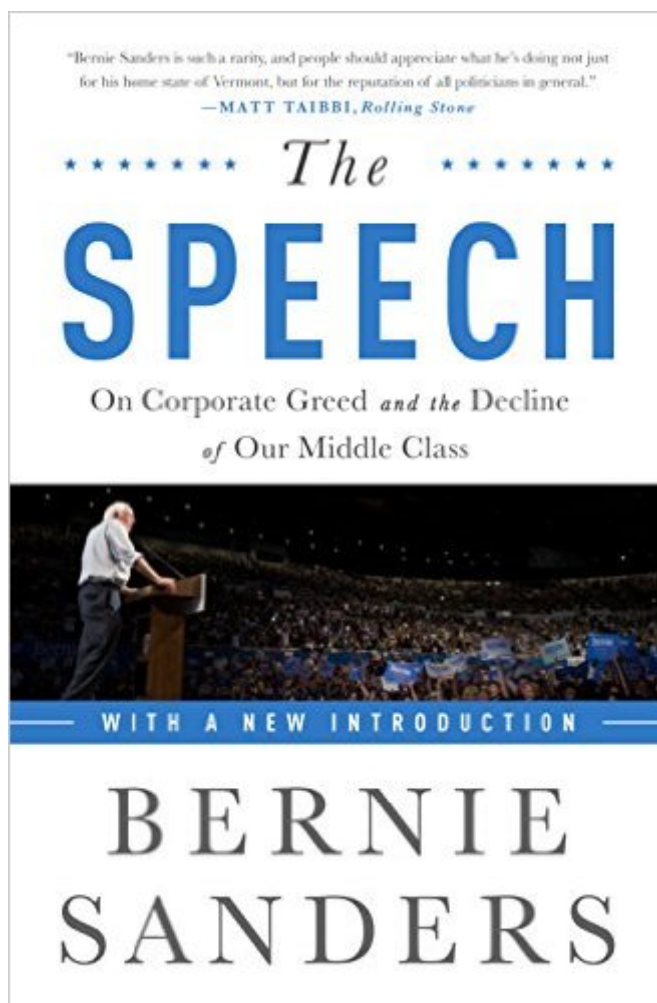


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The Speech: On Corporate Greed And The Decline Of Our Middle Class



Synopsis

On Friday, December 10, 2010, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders walked on to the floor of the United States Senate and began speaking. It turned out to be a very long speech, lasting over eight and a half hours. And it hit a nerve. Millions followed the speech online until the traffic crashed the Senate server. A huge, positive grassroots response tied up the phones in the senator's offices in Vermont and Washington. President Obama reportedly held an impromptu press conference with former President Clinton to deflect media attention away from Sanders' speech. Editorials and news coverage appeared throughout the world. In his speech, Sanders blasted the agreement that President Obama struck with Republicans, which extended the Bush tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires, lowered estate tax rates for the very, very rich, and set a terrible precedent by establishing a "payroll tax holiday" diverting revenue away from the Social Security Trust Fund, threatening the fund's very future. But the speech was more than a critique of a particular piece of legislation. It was a dissection of the collapse of the American middle class and a well-researched attack on corporate greed and on public policy which, over the last several decades, has led to a huge growth in millionaires even as the United States has the highest rate of childhood poverty in the industrialized world. It was a plea for a fundamental change in national priorities, for government policy that reflects the needs of working families, and not just the wealthy and their lobbyists. Finally, Sanders' speech-published here in its entirety with a new introduction by the senator-is a call for action. It is a passionate statement informing us that the only people who will save the middle class of this country is the middle class itself, but only if it is informed, organized, and prepared to take on the enormously powerful special interests dominating Washington.

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Customer Reviews

Update July 2015: Please see my original (and somewhat lacking in substance) review at the end of this postI remember the day I bought this book from the Strand in NYC - I had no idea who Bernie Sanders was at the time. Four years later, this book and the man behind it have me more excited about politics than I have ever been in my entire life. Why am I excited? Because I believe Bernie is a truly different breed - and from what I've seen over the past few weeks, I believe that Bernie can win the Presidency in 2016. Bernie is genuine and honest. He says what he means and means what he says. He is the polar opposite of focus-grouped-to-death candidates who have to constantly give canned answers and talking points lest they contradict the party line or themselves. Bernie cares about the issues, not the soap opera that national politics has become (see Donald Trump's entire campaign). Go watch videos of him on the talking heads' shows. He absolutely does not take the bait when anchor after anchor tries to get a sound bite out of him. He has said he's never run a negative ad in his political career and doesn't plan on it in 2016 - because he cares about the ISSUES. Bernie has refused to accept money from Super PACs and has made repealing Citizens United one of his top priorities. He is committed to getting big money out of politics and returning power to average American voters. Bernie has a long, established career of fighting for working families and veterans as the Mayor of Burlington, and as a Congressman. He has proven that he can get elected, and that he can work across political divisions to get work done, because he focuses on issues that most Americans agree with.

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