

**The Joe Rogan Experience #1330 - Bernie Sanders**

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**Joe Rogan**

And we're live. Hello, Bernie.

**Bernie Sanders**

How are you, Joe?

**Joe Rogan**

Wonderful. Pleasure to meet you.

**Bernie Sanders**

Nice to meet you.

**Joe Rogan**

It's exciting to have you here, man. And it's obviously an exciting time for you. You know, presidential campaign is up in full swing. Do you - do you get frustrated by the time constraints of the debates?

**Bernie Sanders**

Absolutely. It's - you shouldn't even call them a debate. What they are is a - you know, reality TV show in which you have to come up with a soundbite and all that stuff. It is demeaning. It's demeaning to the candidates and it's demeaning to the American people. You can't explain the complexity of health care in America in 45 seconds. Nobody can.

**Joe Rogan**

But why is it still done that way? Have you tried to - let's pull this thing. Bring it right there. There you go.

**Bernie Sanders**

You know, I think the DNC is in a difficult position. They have 20+ candidates and they want to give everybody a fair shot, which is the right thing to do. And then if you're going to have 10 candidates up on the stage, what do you do? But there are other ways that we've got to do it, because the issues facing this country are so enormous and in some cases so complicated. Nobody in the world can honestly explain them in 45 seconds. And then that would encourages people to do is to come up with soundbites and do absurd things. If I yelled and scream on the show - I took my clothes off - it would get a lot of publicity, right? But if you give a thoughtful answer to a complicated question, it's not so sexy for the media.

**Joe Rogan**

Well, you don't even have a chance to give a thoughtful answer. Like Tulsi Gabbard went after Kamala Harris and then Kamala Harris had about 12 seconds to reply to it. It was so ridiculous to - to have something that's such an important issue. Did you or did you not put all those people in jail for marijuana? Did you laugh about it? Did this happen? Did that happen? All these different things? Was evidence withheld?

**Bernie Sanders**

Right.

**Joe Rogan**

That's a - these are long conversations.

**Bernie Sanders**

But it takes us to another issue and that as a nation, we do a pretty bad job in analyzing and discussing the serious issues facing our country. And I hold the media to some degree responsible for that. You know, other countries, what they do is they say, Joe, you want to run for President? I'll tell you what. Your party in the general election - we're going to give you a certain amount of time, hours on television, and you use those hours any way you want. You want a 15 minute discourse - you remember Ross Perot?

**Joe Rogan**

Yes.

**Bernie Sanders**

And people used to laugh at Ross Perot because he used to get up there with a chart and all this stuff. And the media made fun of him. But in fact, he tried in his own way to explain his point of view to the American people. And we need serious discussion on serious issues.

**Joe Rogan**

Well, he had the - because he was so rich, he had the ability to buy airtime on network television, which is pretty unprecedented. He just bought a chunk of airtime and then plead his case.

**Bernie Sanders**

But you know what goes on in other countries? You don't have to buy that time. What the obligation is, if you are a network, you're going to make that time free and available to candidates.

**Joe Rogan**

Do you think that that's something that could be viable in America? I mean, could - could you convince CBS and NBC and ABC to go along with something like that?

**Bernie Sanders**

No. You couldn't convince them. You'd have to pass legislation to make that happen.

**Joe Rogan**

But everyone's online today. I mean, the entire country is essentially getting email and Facebook and all that jazz. Like, why bother doing it in this particular medium that has an inherent time constraint?

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, you're right. I mean, the Internet has revolutionized politics. And in many ways - good ways. We use our social media, our email list, which is very large. Every day, we're sending out stuff and other candidates are doing it the same way. But television still has a very important role to be playing.

**Joe Rogan**

I'm sure it does. But I mean, the ability to discuss things in long form like you can do online, like you can do right here, right now.

**Bernie Sanders**

Right.

**Joe Rogan**

You can't get that on television.

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, you could. I mean, if you had -

**Joe Rogan**

Could you?

**Bernie Sanders**

Sure you could.

**Joe Rogan**

You'd have to - they would have to interrupt you every 15 minutes or so -

**Bernie Sanders**

No, no, no, no, no. What I'm saying about is - is and what goes on in other countries. If I'm not mistaken - I don't hold me to this - I think in the UK, if you're a member of the Labour Party, you're a candidate, here's 30 minutes of time and you do with it as you want. You want to speak 30 minutes on health care, whatever it may be, you can do that.

**Joe Rogan**

Really?

**Bernie Sanders**

Yeah.

**Joe Rogan**

And they don't interrupt with commercials?

**Bernie Sanders**

No, no, no, no. That's the law that they are given - this is the candidate's opportunity to speak at length to the people of the country.

**Joe Rogan**

What are - what are the misconceptions of you? Because here's - here's the - if you go to the knee-jerk conservative reaction, you talk to people who are not interested in anyone that wants to be a democratic socialist and they hear the name Bernie Sanders, the negative implications are that you are somehow or another going to take their money. Right?

**Bernie Sanders**

Right.

**Joe Rogan**

Is that annoying to you?

**Bernie Sanders**

Yes, it is. Of course it is. And also that I'm Mr. Maduro. I'm a dictator. I love dictatorships and all that stuff. And the truth is, Joe, that if you look at the issues that I campaign on and what I believe on, they are really not terribly radical. They exist in many countries all over the world. For example, just we can start on health care, if you'd like. Is the idea that health care is a human right, not a privilege, a radical idea?

**Joe Rogan**

I don't think it is.

**Bernie Sanders**

It's not. And the truth is, we are the only major country on Earth. Many people don't know this. We're the only major country on Earth not to guarantee health care to all people as a human right. And yet we end up spending almost twice as much per capita on health care. The function - and you can argue with me if you want - but the function of the current health care system is not to provide quality care to all. It is to make tens of billions of dollars in profit for the drug companies and the insurance companies. That's the function. If you go to Canada - and I live 50 miles away from the Canadian border - you have major heart surgery. You're in the hospital for a month. Do you know what the bill is when you get out?

**Joe Rogan**

Zero.

**Bernie Sanders**

You got it. You go to any doctor you want. You don't have to take out your wallet. And yet they guarantee health care to all of their people and they spend 1/2 of what we spend. That's kind of what I want to do. And I don't think that that's terribly radical. We have a program now which everybody knows. It's called 'Medicare'. It was started by Lyndon Johnson back in 1965. It is a popular program. All that I want to do over a 4 year period is to expand it. Today, eligibility age is 65. I want to take it down to 55, 45, 35, everybody - over a four year period. That's about it. And I want to expand benefits to include dental care, hearing aids, and eyeglasses as well. That's about it. Not too radical.

**Joe Rogan**

That doesn't sound radical at all. Now, when you say that they that Canada spends less, obviously they have less people. You mean less per capita?

**Bernie Sanders**

Yes, half per capita.

**Joe Rogan**

Half per capital?

**Bernie Sanders**

Exactly, per capita. And the quality of care is as good or better. Do they have problems? Yeah, they have problems. Everybody has problems. But overall, the health care experts will tell you the quality of care there is as good or better than it is in our country.

**Joe Rogan**

So what's the hurdle?

**Bernie Sanders**

Okay, I'll tell you exactly what the hurdle is. The hurdle is exactly the same thing as in every other aspect of our lives. It's the power of money. All right, listen to this. Over the last 20 years, the drug companies alone have spent \$4.5 billion in 20 years on lobbying and campaign contributions. That's what we're up against. The knowledge - and I mark my words - within a short period of time, you will see TV ads in California all over this country demonizing Bernie Sanders. He wants to do this terrible thing to you. He wants to do that. They have unbelievable amounts of money and politicians are frightened of that power. Give you one example: Back in 2016, I got involved here in a little way with an effort on the part of the nurses to control the cost of prescription drugs in California. You may recall that effort.

**Joe Rogan**

I do.

**Bernie Sanders**

It was a ballot item in one state here in California. Do you know how much the drug companies alone spent to defeat that effort? They spent \$131 million on one ballot item in one state. All right. Last year, the top 10 drug companies made \$69 billion. A week ago, I went to Canada with a number of Americans who are dealing with diabetes. We bought insulin in Windsor, Ontario, for 1/10 of the price - 10% of the price - same exact product being charged in America. So you got drug companies that are engaged in collusion and in price fixing - who are incredibly greedy. And the result is many elderly people, many working people simply cannot afford the medicine they need. This is - it's unbelievable. And the reason for all of that stuff is we are the only country in the world that does not negotiate with the drug companies. They can charge you any price they want. And that has to do with the fact that we don't have a national health care program. Medicare is not negotiating, etcetera.

**Joe Rogan**

Is this something that can really be implemented inside of 4 years?

**Bernie Sanders**

Yeah, surely.

**Joe Rogan**

It's an enormous endeavor.

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, I want you to think back - think back Joe. In 1965, you had Lyndon Johnson as President. And by the way, this idea of national health care - this has been talked about literally since Teddy Roosevelt. This is not a new concept. Health care is a human right. This is what Teddy Roosevelt was talking about. That's what FDR was talking about. Harry Truman was talking about it. Kennedy was talking about it. Kennedy got killed. Lyndon Johnson picked up the mantle. And their idea was, according to people in their administration, we'll start with the elderly who are most impacted by health care costs and sickness will start. And they did. In 1965, without the technology we have today, they implemented Medicare, 19 million people, elderly people, signed up in the first year. So if you could start a brand new program and have 19 million people sign up with a technology that is way, way behind where we are today, why can't we over a four year period simply expand that program? I don't think it's such a difficult operation.

**Joe Rogan**

So when you talk about the drug companies and the lobbyists and the enormous amount of money that they spend, is this - does this exist anywhere else other than the United States - lobbyists on that level?

**Bernie Sanders**

No, no, of course not. And the reason, you know, in Canada, what you have is you have a national health care program and so forth, and they sit down and A: they negotiate with the drug companies. They have their own approach. But every other major country on Earth says to the drug companies, "Of course you can't charge us any price you want. This is a reasonable price. Tell me what your profits are, what your expenditures are. This is the price." For us, you can walk in - you know, if you have an illness, you can walk into the pharmacy tomorrow and the price has been doubled. And you say to the pharmacist, "What happened?" They said, "They just raised their prices." They could do it any day they want to, any price they want.

**Joe Rogan**

Now, lobbyists are in general - when people talk about lobbyists it's an unattractive term. We think of it in terms of a negative. We don't - we don't think of, "Oh, thank God, there's lobbyists." We think, "Wow, there's someone with enormous amounts of money using that money to gain influence on politicians. And it shapes regular people - it shapes our lives mostly in a negative way. This is the way most people look at it. I'm not saying it's correct. Why - why do we have that system in place? Like, why do we have lobbyists? Why is it legal for someone to spend exorbitant amount of money - exorbitant amounts of money to affect our civilization - to affect the way our culture works?"

**Bernie Sanders**

Now you're taking us into a whole new area.

**Joe Rogan**

Yeah.

**Bernie Sanders**

Alright, let's look. Alright, can I?

**Joe Rogan**

Yes.

**Bernie Sanders**

Let me detour and I'll come back.

**Joe Rogan**

Please do.

**Bernie Sanders**

Alright. Today in America, you got 3 people owning more wealth than the bottom half of the American society. You don't see that on television too much do you?



**Joe Rogan**

No you don't.

**Bernie Sanders**

3 people. You got the top 1% owning more wealth than the bottom 92%. Listen to this. This is a statistic we recently saw - came from the Federal Reserve. Over the last 30 years, the top 1% has seen a \$21 trillion increase in their wealth. The bottom half of America has seen in \$900 billion decline in their wealth. So what you have in America today is a relatively small number of incredibly wealthy people. And I deal with these guys every day. People say, "Oh, are you talking about rich?" You don't know what rich is, what multi-billion dollar operations are - incredible power over our society. And if you are the pharmaceutical industry and last year, 10 companies made \$69 billion in profit. You're sitting around right now saying, Alright, that's great. How do we do better next year? What strategy do we have? We put a lot of ads on. We're going to work with other - during the CNN debate that I participated in recently. In the debate, right in the middle of the debate, the drug companies and the insurance companies had an ad telling how bad so-called - how bad Medicare for All would be. So they - they're smart guys. And they use their power over politicians. They use their power over the media. They spend billions of dollars on advertising - on media - to make sure that they make as much as they can in profit. But it's not any different with Wall Street. It's not any different with the fossil fuel industry or the prison industrial complex. These guys have wealth, they have power, and they could care less about the needs of working people in this country. And that's the dynamic of American politics right now. And in our campaign. Look, we're taking them all on. And I know it makes a lot of people uncomfortable, but we are taking on all of these entities and all of their wealth and all of their power. And that's what a political revolution is about.

**Joe Rogan**

So the real problem seems to be that they have this strategy of unlimited growth, not that they're not providing medication that people need to save their lives. I mean, it's obviously important to have pharmaceutical companies.

**Bernie Sanders**

Absolutely. Of course. Of course.

**Joe Rogan**

Right. So there's good that they provide. But the business aspect of it is where the problem lies, right?

**Bernie Sanders**

Right. Look, they have great researchers, but if you check how they even spend their money, you know, they will tell you this - all of their money on research and develop - we're tackling cancer, we're tackling diabetes, Alzheimer's. The truth is, of course, they are. But the bulk of their money is going off into what we call "me-too drugs". They make modest changes in the drug, which really doesn't improve people's well-being, in order to make profits. So the answer is yes. We need

obviously vigorous research and development. And by the way, your tax dollars, all of our tax dollars often goes to that research and we don't get the benefit of it in terms of lower prices.

**Joe Rogan**

So it's just - it's a business model issue.

**Bernie Sanders**

Exactly.

**Joe Rogan**

It's - it's a greed issue.

**Bernie Sanders**

You got it.

**Joe Rogan**

And how would one stop that? When you're dealing with this, the kind of influence that you're talking about. With \$69 billion in a year - I mean, the resources they have - how would you stop that?

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, that is kind of what we call the \$64,000 question. You know, and I'll tell you what I think. This is what I believe. If you think back on American history and you think about the real changes that have taken place in society, you think about the labor movement and working class people standing up. And saying to their employers, "We're not going to be treated like animals anymore. You can't hire and fire us. You can't work us, you know, 15 hours a day. We deserve dignity." And you think about the growth of the labor movement - of millions of people beginning to stand together and fight. You think about the civil rights movement, you know. And it wasn't just Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. It was, again, millions of African-Americans and their white allies saying, "We're going to end segregation and racism in this country." I think about the women's movement. 100 years ago, women in America didn't even have the right to vote. Think about the gay rights movement. Think about the environmental. The only way that change takes place is when ordinary people come together and stand up and fight and say that the status quo is not working. And that's what I believe. And that's what we're trying to do. So the message of our campaign is: It's us, not me. Because I can't do it alone. Let me be very honest with you, if I were elected President tomorrow, I can't do the things that I would like to do - that I'm campaigning on - unless millions of people were working with me to tell the corporate elite that they cannot get it all.

**Joe Rogan**

So how would that be implemented? Let's say you become President. You're going to become President? What do you think?

**Bernie Sanders**

I think we got a shot at it.

**Joe Rogan**

You got a shot. Alright, President Bernie, what do you do? You get in there. What do you do?

**Bernie Sanders**

Okay, first of all, you make a very clear - you make it clear to the American people what your agenda is. And I appreciate the opportunity to talk about an agenda. And in more than 12 seconds. What does that mean? We're going to fight for Medicare for All. We're going to raise the minimum wage to a living wage. We are going to deal with education in a profound - profound way - because I worry about what's going on in education today. Everybody knows that the ages of 0 through 4 are the most important years for human, intellectual and emotional development, right? Every psychologist will tell you that. And yet we have a totally dysfunctional early childhood system. You pay - we pay our child care workers starvation wages. You get working class families cannot find affordable, quality child care. You've got our public school systems all around this country - and many of them really being challenged right now. Teachers are underpaid. Teachers are working 2 or 3 jobs. You've got kids who can't afford to go to college. And here's something that is just unbelievable: kids who have gone to college - leaving school with \$50,000, \$100,000 in debt. Unbelievable. These are issues that we have to deal with. And I will deal with them. And we are going to substantially improve the quality of education in America. We're going to cancel student debt by imposing a tax on Wall Street speculation. Alright, so you've got to deal with education. You've got to deal with climate change. You know, the truth is that Donald Trump is dead wrong. Climate change is not a hoax. It is a very, very dangerous reality for our country and the rest of the world. Scientists tell us we have less than 12 years to transform our energy system away from fossil fuel or there will be irreparable damage, alright? So those are - and health care, of course, for all. So those are some of the major issues - criminal justice, immigration reform. You lay it on the table and you say, "These are the issues that we are going to focus on." And you rally the American people around those issues. And you tell people like Mitch McConnell, who represents a very poor state in Kentucky, that "Mitch, if you are going to oppose raising that minimum wage to at least 15 bucks an hour, I will be in Kentucky as President of the United States. And we're going to have a rally because you're going to have to stop representing -" And I hope, by the way, that Mitch McConnell is not the leader. I hope the Democrats can gain control over the Senate. But if he is, we'll put enormous pressure on him to do what the people want. Every idea, Joe - here's the bottom line on this thing. Every idea that I've just talked to you about is supported by a majority of the American people. These are not radical ideas.

**Joe Rogan**

Well, let's - let's take these one step at a time, because you mentioned a lot of important things there. Let's go with the minimum wage thing. Now, the argument that I've heard about the minimum wage being raised to \$15 an hour is that they are entry level positions for high school kids - for people that are just getting their feet wet in the marketplace. They're learning how to work. They're learning - they're making some money after school - that they - that if you charge or if businesses have to pay \$15 an hour to people like that, to entry level people, that they won't be able to stay open.

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, first of all, they will be competing against – you know, if you're a business and I'm a business and both of us have to raise our wages at the same level, we both have the same burdens so it's spread across. That is what my conservative colleagues will tell you. The truth is – I don't have the numbers right in front of me – that while it certainly is true that young people do work at McDonald's and the minimum wage jobs, a significant and a majority of the workers are not kids. They are often – and I've met them at McDonald's – they are workers who have children themselves. When we – we worked very hard to raise the minimum wage at Amazon and at Disney, we put pressure on both of those companies and they did the right thing. And when you talk to the people at Amazon who got that raise, these are not kids. These are people in their 30's. These are these are ordinary adults who cannot make it on 12 or 13 bucks an hour. So I think the argument that, "oh, they're all kids", is not really quite accurate.

**Joe Rogan**

Well, not even that all – they're – they're all kids, but that if they are kids, what would you think about making a minimum wage for someone who's under 18 that's different from a minimum wage of someone who's a legal adult?

**Bernie Sanders**

I'm not – I'm not for that. I think we do it. And – and look, many of these young people have their own needs. I just talked to a young woman last night who is working, going to college, working full-time, trying to take care of her family as well. So I think – look, the minimum wage has not been raised in 10 years. It is now \$7.25 an hour, which is clearly unacceptable. The cost of housing California all over this country is rising fairly rapidly. People can't afford health care. They can't afford college. I don't think it's asking our employers too much to pay at least \$15 an hour minimum wage.

**Joe Rogan**

Now, I'm glad you brought up Amazon because one of the things that always freaks me out is when I find out that enormous corporations that make billions of dollars have tax loopholes where they literally pay no money. How is that possible? And how do you stop that?

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, it's the same thing as the drug companies. How is it possible that we pay 10 times more for insulin in this country and for other drugs than they do in Canada or countries around the world? And the answer is: it's power. So what is – what is the goal of major corporations in America? It's to be deregulated as much as possible. So in some cases, they can pollute our water, our air, our environment. It's also not to pay any taxes. Trump campaigned, as I recall. He said, "My tax plan is not going to benefit the wealthy. It's going to benefit working people." Well, it turns out over 10 years, 83% of the benefit at the end of 10 years goes to the top 1%. That's what these guys do. I remember – I'm the – called the "ranking member" on the Budget Committee in the Senate. And some guy came forward representing – I don't know – one of the big business organizations. And this is their agenda. Their agenda was to cut Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid, and to do

away with all corporate taxes. So what you have right now, that's that's what greed is about. They want it all. So as you indicated, you have a company like Amazon owned by Jeff Bezos, who happens to be the wealthiest guy in America, worth about \$150 billion. Amazon paid zero in federal income taxes. And it's not just him. Dozens of corporations paid nothing or very, very little. And on top of all of that, you got these guys able to stash all over the world trillions of dollars, trillions of dollars in the Cayman Islands, in Bermuda, in Luxembourg and other tax havens. That is insane. And that has got to end.

**Joe Rogan**

Yeah. How is it legal to do that? Why is it legal?

**Bernie Sanders**

Joe, it is legal because they make the laws.

**Joe Rogan**

Right.

**Bernie Sanders**

Alright, you know, that is what - you're touching now on the heart and soul of the tragedy of American politics. How does it happen, that on issue after issue, the American people, the working class of this country want something, nobody pays any attention to it but billionaires want something and it gets done. And that has to do with a corrupt. political system. So right now, if you are the Koch brothers or some multi-billionaire, you say to the leadership of the Republican Party - and in some cases to the Democratic Party - "Hey, guess what? We're prepared to put hundreds of millions of dollars into your campaign." Hundreds of millions of dollars coming from 1 or 2 people. "And here is my agenda: I want tax breaks. I want a trade system which will enable me to shut down in this country and go to China or Mexico and pay people their two bucks an hour. I want to be able to do more pollution because I don't like all of this money I have to spend preventing pollution of the air or the water. That's what I want you to do. And by the way, I'm worried about the deficit, so you may as well cut Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid." How many Americans actually believe that we should give tax breaks to billionaires and cut Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid? Very few. That is - talk to Mitch McConnell. Get Mitch on the show. That is exactly what he believes.

Joe Rogan

Well, that's ridiculous, right? And it seems that if you just took away those tax breaks, the enormous amount of money that would come from those corporations having to pay their fair share would take care of a lot of the expenses of all these things that you're proposing.

**Bernie Sanders**

Exactly.

**Joe Rogan**

How - like, okay, let's talk about the education because the idea of free education is a wonderful thing for people. I mean, the idea that you get out of college and you're in debt - in an insane amount - that you might have 10, 20 years where you have to pay it back. And I know many people that are in that.

**Bernie Sanders**

Joe, there are people who are getting their Social Security checks garnished right now. It's not 10 or 20 years. In some cases, it's literally a lifetime.

**Joe Rogan**

Now, a lot of that is I mean, it's got to in some way be preventable by what we're talking about here.

**Bernie Sanders**

Absolutely.

**Joe Rogan**

And is that how you would pay for it? I mean, how would you -

**Bernie Sanders**

I'll tell you exactly how would pay for it, okay? And we pay for every idea that we have. We pay for it and we pay for it by understanding that today we have massive levels of income and wealth inequality. And we have, in many cases, the wealthy and large corporations paying nothing or very little in taxes. Here is the issue in terms of education: 40, 50 years ago - you were an average American working class person, you graduated high school - especially if there was a union around - you can go out and get a job and make it into the middle class. You could own your own home. You could send your kids to school. You lived a pretty good life. You made it in the middle class. 40 or 50 years later, there's an explosion of technology. There's a growth in unfettered free trade. And it is clear now that most people to make it into the middle class are going to need a higher education. That's college, or maybe it's technical training in order to become a skilled worker. It is insane to me to deny working class people and lower income people the opportunity to get that education because the cost of college has soared. So all that I say is that 100+ years ago, the American people said that we should have free public education. I went to a public school. My parents didn't pay a nickel, went to kindergarten. I went through the 12th grade - pretty good education in Brooklyn, New York. All that I'm saying is the world has changed and a high school degree is not good enough anymore. So expand that concept through college. Now, guess what? 50 years ago, do you know how much the University of California, a very great university cost in terms of tuition?

**Joe Rogan**

How much?

**Bernie Sanders**

Virtually free.

**Joe Rogan**

What's it now?

**Bernie Sanders**

I don't know, but it's pretty high. It is high. It's thousands and thousands of dollars. So you had great universities like the University of California, City University of New York State colleges all over this country where tuition was virtually free. And then what happened - for a variety of political reasons - states and the federal government started cutting back on higher education and put more and more burden on the student with higher and higher tuition, which is where we are today. So all that I'm saying is in the year 2019, 2020, if our working class kids are going to go out and get the jobs that are out there, they need a - they need a higher education, which should be tuition free in terms of the cancellation of debt, which is my view. You got 45 million people who are dealing with debt. I'll never forget this. This is where it really hit me. I was in Burlington, Vermont, and I had a meeting on an issue. And a young woman comes up and she says - she's a doctor. She graduated medical school. She's very happy. She's practicing in a community health center, loves what she's doing. She said, "Bernie, I've got to tell you, though, I am \$300,000 in debt for having gone to medical school." I couldn't believe it. I was in Iowa, a young woman, \$400,000 in debt. This is not unusual for medical schools and dental schools. And, you know, ordinary people, \$50,000, \$100,000 for going to college or getting a master's degree. We promised these young people - we said, "Go to college, go out and get an education. You'll get decent paying jobs." Well, the answer is they have not been able to do that. So what we have proposed in one piece of legislation - or two actually - is to make public colleges and universities tuition free, cancel all student debt in this country. That will cost \$2.2 trillion, a lot of money over a 10 year period. We do this through a tax on Wall Street speculation, which will bring in \$2.4 trillion. We bailed out Wall Street 11 years ago. And by the way, these are crooks on Wall Street who engaged in illegal behavior. Taxpayers against my vote bailed them out. If we can bail out Wall Street, you know what? We can cancel student debt and provide public colleges and universities tuition free.

**Joe Rogan**

When you say a tax on Wall Street speculation, what exactly do you mean?

**Bernie Sanders**

It will be a tax on all of the - every sale - of a tax. People buy and sell stocks and bonds all of the time - we have a very modest tax on that. And by the way, it will have an impact on speculation by cutting back on the high frequency trading which we now see.

**Joe Rogan**

So you would just - there's no current tax on this?

**Bernie Sanders**

Correct.

**Joe Rogan**

So you would put a small amount and that would do the job? That would finance -

**Bernie Sanders**

That would raise more than enough money. It's a very small tax. It exists -

**Joe Rogan**

When you say small, how much?

**Bernie Sanders**

It depends on the nature of the transaction, but it's less than one half of 1%.

**Joe Rogan**

Really?

**Bernie Sanders**

Yeah.

**Joe Rogan**

And that would cover?

**Bernie Sanders**

Yeah. Because the amount of stocks being sold, bought and sold. And this is not again a new idea. It's being done in countries all over the world.

**Joe Rogan**

What about the - here's one of the darkest things about student loans is that if you go bankrupt, it doesn't matter. You still owe that. And that's kind of crazy. I mean, if you have a serious medical issue, if you're held up, whatever happens to you that's awful, you go bankrupt. Most of those things are resolved, but not student loans.

**Bernie Sanders**

Right. I mean, again, this talks to the - and that has to do with bankruptcy law, which was passed against my vote. And while you're on bankruptcy, and I should have mentioned this before, when you talk about the health care system, half a million Americans every single year go bankrupt because of medical bills that they can't pay. But you're right. With student, I talked to this guy in Nevada. I'm never forget it. Guys says: "Bernie. You know, I'm all in my -". Guy's in his 50s. And he said: "You know, I've been paying off my student debt for years. I'm going nowhere because the interest rates are high and I feel very much, which is the case that they will start garnishing, taking away my Social



Security checks, taking money away from me." So people are carrying this burden. The result is that they can't, in many cases, get married and have kids. They certainly can't buy a home. They can't buy a car. They are really crushed by this debt. And what was their crime? What did they do? They tried to get a higher education. I think that's pretty crazy.

### **Joe Rogan**

And a lot of them, when they do this higher education, they're 18 years old. Imagine making a decision when your brain isn't even fully formed. It's going to affect you for the rest of your life.

Bernie Sanders

You got it. Yeah. Exactly right. And you talked to these kids. How much debt do you owe? What kind of interest rates you're paying? I really don't know. They just told me to sign up. That's all right.

### **Joe Rogan**

Now, right now, we are a week, not even a week out, just a few days away from two mass shootings in a row. And whenever these things happen, there's all these people that want action, but nobody knows exactly what to do. There's calls for gun control. There's calls for mental health reform. There's calls for - I mean, what if anything can be done to stop these things from happening? And how have you sat down and tried to come up with some sort of a solution? And is there a solution?

### **Bernie Sanders**

Look, I would be lying to you if I told you I had a magical answer. I don't. And this is such a horrific situation. I - you know, we were in - we had a town meeting - we were in Nevada, actually, in Las Vegas, when El Paso happened. And we did a town meeting and I said, "Let's take a moment of silence to remember the victims and pray for the survivors." Literally the next day. Another part of Las Vegas, I have to do it again. And I said, "I can't believe that just yesterday we did this and I have to do it again." This is - I don't know what the words, you know, my friend Beto O'Rourke was saying, "You don't know what words - what can you say? It happens again and again. Who can imagine some lunatic walking into a school or a mall or just on a nightclub area and taking out an assault weapon and shooting down people? And that we almost become to accept this as a normal part of American life is incredible. It's just totally demoralizing." Alright, so here's what I think. There's no magical answer. But let me tell you what I think. First of all, this is the reality. The reality is that today as we speak, there are approximately 400 million guns in America today. We have more guns than we have people. We have between 5 to 10 million assault weapons. And an assault weapon, as you know, is a military style weapon designed to kill human beings kind of rapidly. So that's - and then on top of that, we have - again, nothing to be proud of - but, you know, we have a number of mentally unstable people, people, whatever reason are walking in the streets, they're suicidal, they're homicidal. That's the mix that we have. I think the answer is - and I'm not the guy to invent all these ideas, but here's some of what we have to do. First of all, if you want on a gun in America, you have got to, we have got to know that you are a stable person. And that means that we need to expand the background checks that currently exist. Okay, so we've got to know: Did you beat up your wife? Have you committed crimes? Etcetera, etcetera. What is the state of your mental health? Number 2, we have to make that universal. Number 2, right now, there is a background check if you walk into a gun

show - into a gun shop - but you can buy guns in various states at a gun show and you don't have to do any of that. You and I go to a gun show, you sell me a gun. I don't have to - and, you know -

### **Joe Rogan**

Right.

### **Bernie Sanders**

I don't have to do that. Third of all, I can today legally walk into a gun show, pass the background check and buy a dozen guns, walk out and sell them to criminal elements, who will use them for bad things. So I think those are issues that most Americans believe we have got to deal with and we can. Fourthly, I happen to believe, and I believe this for 30 years, that we should not be selling or distributing assault weapons in this country. They are weapons of mass destruction in a sense. They kill people rapidly as we saw. And thank God, by the way, when we talk about both Dayton and El Paso - thank God, cops were there very, very quickly, and did an incredible job. Because if that guy had walked into the nightclub, there could have been dozens and dozens more people killed within a few minutes time. I happen to believe, A, that we should not be selling or distributing assault weapons in this country. That's my view. Period. So I believe in a ban on assault weapons. And I think we have got to begin thinking about - when we have 5 to 10 million assault weapons, which is more than the US military has - we have to think about a strong licensing procedure in terms of who owns these assault weapons. So that's some of what I think. There are many other things, but those are some of the ideas that are out there.

### **Joe Rogan**

Now, the legal gun owners who are law-abiding citizens who would never in a million years think about going around shooting people, but they love guns. They hear this kind of stuff about like banning assault rifles, banning assault weapons. They don't even like the term 'assault weapons', right? They like to refer to them as their individual names for whatever they are. These people feel like this is an inexorable part of being an American. You should be able to own a gun. It's written into our Bill of Rights. It's written into our the way this country is founded. It's the second amendment. What do you say to those people that don't want to give up their guns, and they want to protect themselves? They feel like these guns are viable options to protect themselves from criminals.

### **Bernie Sanders**

I understand that. And Joe, as you may know, I'm a Senator from the state of Vermont. And the state of Vermont is one of the most rural states in America. Every fall, we've got a whole thousands and thousands of people around the woods hunting. And it's something that's part of our tradition. I believe in it. I believe in the Second Amendment. But all that I ask of the gun owners, and you're absolutely right, 99.9% of gun owners would never, in a million, billion years, think of doing these horrible things. But in the moment that we are living in, I think that we're all going to have to make some concessions to the reality of what is going on. And that is that there is a small number of - call them what you want - depraved people who are prepared to do that. In Australia, you remember that terrible New Zealand, I'm sorry, the terrible shooting at the mosque. And they move pretty

quickly in an aggressive way. So, you know, I wish I can say in the best of all possible worlds, yeah, you know, you can own any weapon you want and so forth and so on. We're not living in the best of the world possible worlds. We're living in a world where we're shocked every day by horror.

**Joe Rogan**

So, I agree we are living in a terrible situation. I mean, there's hundreds of mass shootings a year now, which is insane. And if you look at the number and comparison to the rest of the world, it's crazy. Like a big one in another country is like 3 mass shootings in a year. We had more than 270.

**Bernie Sanders**

Right.

**Joe Rogan**

It's crazy. But how would you implement something like this?

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, the idea of banning assault weapons has been done. In 1994, we banned assault weapons. I believe - I believe it was for 10 years. That ban was undone by Republican majority. And it didn't - you know - I'm not suggesting, by the way, that anything here - that if you banned assault weapons tomorrow that would radically change everything, but we have got to do the best that we can do. And again, I prefaced my remarks by telling, I don't have a magical solution. You got hundreds of millions of guns out there. You have people who should not be owning these guns who get set off by God knows what and do terrible things. All we can do is the best that we can do but to say we can't do anything, I think is a real disservice to the American - Now, I'll take something else that bothers me. You know, in addition to the horror of seeing people lying on the street, dead - is what this is doing to the children of this country. And I think we underestimate that. I have 7 grandchildren. And for them and for kids all of this country, you're going to see that falls coming, kids coming back to school, you're going to see in schools all over America - drills. Alright, this is what you do if somebody walks into the school. Alright, you're going to hide under here. You go over there. Kids - a couple of months ago, I was in Iowa. This guy is about 6'2". Big guy - probably a football player. And he says, "Senator Sanders, I got to tell you that the young people in my school are increasingly frightened, terrified about what could happen in the school." Think about what this - the trauma - the trauma of - of what this gun violence is doing. So I think we're all - as Americans, there ain't no easy answers here. But that we're all going to have to come together and figure this one out and do the best that we can.

**Joe Rogan**

Now, would that mean forcibly removing these guns from people's homes?

**Bernie Sanders**

I don't think you're going to have the FBI knocking on somebody's doors and taking their - that's not what we do in America.

**Joe Rogan**

If we have 400 million guns already out there.

**Bernie Sanders**

Yeah.

**Joe Rogan**

And building more every year. Right now, as we speak, gun manufacturers are making - manufacturers are making more guns. This is happening right now. So if those guns already exist, there's more than enough.

**Bernie Sanders**

Oh, yeah.

**Joe Rogan**

How would you stop?

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, again, I think - Look, I do think there should be a ban on assault weapons. So that means that manufacturers would not be able to produce or sell those weapons -

**Joe Rogan**

To American citizens, but not to the military, obviously.

**Bernie Sanders**

Right. Obviously.

**Joe Rogan**

Yeah.

**Bernie Sanders**

Okay. So, you know, and your point is well taken. If you have 400 million guns out there, you know - So I think there are approaches. No one has any magical solution, but I've given you - I'll tell you something else that I didn't mention. And that is the role of gun manufacturers. Is that if you are a gun manufacturer and you are selling a hell of a lot of guns to a gun store in an area which normally you would not think - I mean, these guys know - you know, what cities buy - what towns buy - how many guns? And if suddenly there is a tremendous demand, you got to be thinking, "and be why is

this gun store buying so many guns? Doesn't reflect the population in the area." You got to deal with that issue with the gun owners. You have to take some responsibility.

**Joe Rogan**

Besides the guns -

**Bernie Sanders**

The gun manufacturers, I'm sorry.

**Joe Rogan**

Right. Right. But besides the guns, the gun manufacturers - the other gigantic issue is mental health.

**Bernie Sanders**

Yeah.

**Joe Rogan**

The only way any of this ever happens is someone has to be insanely mentally depraved. This is the only way. And many of them are medicated. And many of them are on pharmaceutical drugs and they have been since they were children, including amphetamines, like Adderall, and Prozac, and all this different stuff that has varied effects on the human brain. What could be done and what would you have done to analyze this, to find out what the cause and effect are, and to try to figure out what - what role and how much these drugs are responsible?

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, 2 things. Let me respond - respond first by saying, it goes without saying that we have a mental health crisis in America - before we even talk about drugs. And for whatever reason - you know - there are a whole lot of people = and the nature of our healthcare system - getting back to healthcare is - I just talked to women. Literally last night. And we had a town meeting. And she said - this is unbelievable. She said, "Bernie, I was in Las Vegas when the terrible shooting took place." Okay. "And now I am -" And I can understand this perfectly. "I'm seeing Dayton and I'm seeing = watching television - El Paso and I'm getting a PTSD reaction." Alright. And that's totally understandable - If you were in a place where people who are shot down. "And I'm trying to get counseling. I can't find it." I remember a guy called up - a woman called up my office in Burlington for a month. And she said, "I'm worried about my husband. What he my brother was. His brother, what he might do to himself or somebody else. We're looking for mental health counseling. We can't find something that we can afford." So we need above and beyond gun violence. We need - and that's why I believe in Medicare for All. Mental health is healthcare. You break your arm that's a health issue - that's a medical issue. Mental health is a medical issue. And we have got to make mental health counseling available to all people in this country when they need it, not six months from now at a price they can afford it and under Medicare for All that would be free. So that's number 1. Number 2 - your point about studying the impact of drugs on people's behavior and

possibly resulting in violence. Absolutely deserves to be studied. We should be studying the impact of drugs. In my view - this is a layman's view - you know, not a psychiatrist - I worry very much that we are over-medicating kids in schools. You know, we have this deficit - the deficient issue. You know, kids are running around and they're active. You know, when I was a kid, people used to run around and they were active. You know, they weren't they weren't drugged up.

**Joe Rogan**

Yes.

**Bernie Sanders**

So I worry about that whole business, but your point is well taken. I think we need to study this issue and make sure that these drugs, in fact, are not causing kinds of reactions that we will regret later.

**Joe Rogan**

Now on the subject of drugs, marijuana is obviously a big issue in this country. And we've seen many states make it recreational, including this one. What do you think could be done and what should be done to have this across the board - especially federally? You know, there's a guy that I have on the podcast coming up soon. His name is John Norris and he wrote a book on the cartels growing marijuana illegally all over this country and selling it, especially particularly in California now because it's a misdemeanor - because it's legal recreationally - and selling it with all sorts of horrible pesticides on it - all sorts of like very - in fact, deadly chemicals. All of this because it's not federally legal because we can't have sanctioned licensed companies doing an ethical job of growing something that any responsible law-abiding person should be able to consume.

**Bernie Sanders**

Okay. Let me say this. When I ran for President - for the Democratic nomination in 2016 - I talked about a broken criminal justice system which ends up having - in the United States - more people in jail than any other country. We have more people in jail than China does, which is a communist, authoritarian country. And what I call for then and I call for now is the legalization of marijuana in America. Right now, you have a federal law. It's called "The Control Substance Act". Here's heroin. Here is marijuana. They are at the same level. That is insane. Heroin is a killer drug. You can argue the pluses and minuses of marijuana, but marijuana ain't heroin. So we have to end that. And that's what I will do. As President of the United States, I believe we can do that through executive order and I will do that. Second of all, what we have now is a number of states - and I'm very proud - I talked about it during 2016 - what seemed kind of radical. The need to legalize and decriminalized marijuana - very radical idea 4 years ago. It is spreading all over the country. And by the way, it blows my mind to drive through Nevada - I think here even in California, you see signs of corporations: "Buy our marijuana."

**Joe Rogan**

Yeah.

**Bernie Sanders**

4 years ago people were getting arrested for doing that, right? Their lives being destroyed.

**Joe Rogan**

Oh, particularly in Nevada. There was life sentences given out in the 70's.

**Bernie Sanders**

Can you believe that? And now you have corporations selling the damn product that people went to jail for. So I think ultimately, we've got to legalize marijuana - and what's good news in a sense - is some communities, some cities are expunging the records. So if you were arrested - have a criminal record for selling marijuana - that is being expunged and that is the right thing to do. You know, we can argue about the pluses and minuses. I'm not a great fan of drugs. Other people - you know, I've smoked marijuana a couple of times - didn't do much for me. Other people - I guess, have different impressions.

**Joe Rogan**

Just a couple times?

**Bernie Sanders**

That's right, Joe.

**Joe Rogan**

It didn't do much for you?

**Bernie Sanders**

Yeah, it made me cough.

**Joe Rogan**

Where you getting it?

**Bernie Sanders**

I don't know. It was in Vermont - northern Vermont.

**Joe Rogan**

That's the problem.

**Bernie Sanders**

Maybe. Yeah.

**Joe Rogan**

Maybe get it from here. It'll do something for you.

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, it made me cough a whole lot. Alright, but I gather other people have had different experiences, correct?

**Joe Rogan**

For sure. Yeah. I certainly have. The other problem is, of course, with illegal drugs comes - you get this horrible cycle. Particularly in inner cities, where you have people that are incarcerated for illegal drugs - illegal drugs seem to be the only way out. The hard drugs - when we're talking about cocaine and all these other drugs - how does one stop that? And would you ever consider legalizing all drugs or decriminalizing all drugs?

**Bernie Sanders**

No, not at this point. No, I wouldn't. But you're touching on a real tragedy.

**Joe Rogan**

Yes.

**Bernie Sanders**

And when we talk about criminal justice in America - we have over 2 million people in jail. They are disproportionately African American, Latino, and Native American. And here's what I think. I think in the wealthiest country in the history of the world, what we have got to do - instead of building more jails and locking up more people, we really do have to invest in our young people - especially young people in distressed communities. What does that mean? If we can - and we can do this with the proper amount of resources - make sure the kids are not dropping out of school. If you drop out of school today - you know, say you drop out in your second or third year of high school - you don't have an education - you don't have any job skills. What are you going to do with your life? And the answer is you may well do drugs. You know, or you'll get in trouble self-destructive activity - or destructive activity. And you're gonna end up in jail. It makes so much more sense from a humane perspective, protecting our people. As well as a financial situation. We're spending \$80 billion a year to invest in these kids - what does it mean? It means making sure they get the education that they need - paying attention. Having good schools. Making sure that they get the jobs that are out there. Doing job training. There was a principal in a school in southern Vermont, I'll never forget what she said - it was a working class school - and she said, "Bernie, I love these kids, I am not going to let them drop out." And she had a mentoring program just watching the kids who are mostly at risk so that they would not end up going through the cracks and getting into trouble. That's what we should be doing as a nation. And when we do that, we invest in the kids, we get them jobs, we get them education - the likelihood is that - the likelihood of them falling in the bad ways is significantly reduced.

**Joe Rogan**

All those things sound great. The uncomfortable reality about drugs, though, is that when drugs are illegal, criminals sell them. And there's obviously a need for drugs in terms of - not necessarily a



need - but a demand for drugs. There's a demand for drugs in this country that's absolutely fueling Mexican cartels and illegal drug runners inside this country. I mean, there's - there's a lot of that. How do you curb that if drugs are illegal?

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, you're raising a deep question.

**Joe Rogan**

Yes.

**Bernie Sanders**

Alright. So the question essentially that you're asking is, what is the cause of the opioid epidemic? Yes?

**Joe Rogan**

That's one -

**Bernie Sanders**

Heroin?

**Joe Rogan**

That's one aspect of it. But the opioid epidemic is interesting because there's so much of it that's coming legally.

**Bernie Sanders**

Right.

**Joe Rogan**

That's not the drugs cartels. That's the pharmaceutical industry.

**Bernie Sanders**

You're right. But the heroin is illegal.

**Joe Rogan**

Yes.

**Bernie Sanders**

Alright. Now you're asking, this is a very, very deep question, which we don't talk about terribly much. Why is it that so many of our people are turning to drugs - to alcohol, by the way - and I don't mean to drink a night, but I mean serious alcohol problems - and tragically, to suicide. We now have for the last 3 years something that is a historical never happened before in modern history. And that is our life expectancy is actually going down. And this is hitting all over the country, but it's

especially hitting rural areas. And what the doctors are saying is that these are "diseases of despair" - despair. So you're in West Virginia - you're in rural Ohio - or any place in Vermont, any place. And the job you used to have earning a decent living is now in China. Your kid can't afford to go to college. Maybe you can't afford health care. You've got nothing to look forward to. Under that scenario, drugs become - alcohol becomes - a way out. In the worst case, suicide. So I think what we're talking about is: why is this happening? It's often in rural areas - in urban as well. And how can we - how can we reestablish hope and optimism in the American people? And that gets back to a whole lot of other issues. It means if people have health care as a right. That will certainly play a role on this thing. They walk into the doctor when they need. But it also means that people need decent jobs that pay them a living wage. That means we have to rebuild rural America. We have to rebuild the depressed communities in urban America. It means that we have to have a great educational system. And people say, Oh, that's great, Bernie. That's utopian." It is not utopian. This is something that in the wealthiest country in the history of the world, we can afford. And we should be doing rather than giving a creating a situation where Amazon pays zero in federal income taxes. So to answer your question - that's a deep question. And again, I'm not here to tell you I have all the answers. But there are a lot of people out there who have basically given up hope. And for those people, I guess drugs is the alternative.

### **Joe Rogan**

So what you're saying essentially is that if we can do something to mitigate despair, then we'll do something to at least stop some of the demand for these these illegal drugs.

### **Bernie Sanders**

I believe that is the case. Look, if I am optimistic, if I'm excited about going to work tomorrow, and I'm seeing my kid doing great in school, and you know, when I get sick, I can go to the doctor's office and have a sense of community. My downtown is not all bordered up because businesses have left. But we have a community. Yeah, the strong likelihood is there will be less "diseases of despair" and drugs than we are currently seeing.

### **Joe Rogan**

Now, when we're talking about impoverished communities and chronically - when you're talking about cities like Baltimore, parts of Chicago and Detroit - that have just been in a terrible state of despair for long periods of time, and it doesn't seem like there's a way out. The people that are born there, the people that live there - they live in this state of - of despair. What can be done to resolve all these terribly impoverished communities and bring them up to a standard where these kids that grow up there - that they feel like there is an out, that they do have an opportunity, and why is this not addressed? When we talk about making America great, wouldn't like - fixing the worst parts of the country be the primary concern? The less people that grow up in a terribly disadvantageous position from birth, wouldn't that be an important thing? And what can you do to resolve that?

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, Joe, I think you said it better than I can. I think you're right. When we talk about what it means to live in a great society, a great nation that we're proud of, I'm afraid there are some people who have incredible wealth and power who say, "You know what's great is that we're seeing a growth in the number of billionaires in America, isn't that terrific? And we got one guy who's worth \$155 billion, how great? Oh, by the way, we're building more nuclear weapons. And we're spending \$750 billion a year on the military, isn't that extraordinary? And by the way, just see the yacht that that billionaire has. It's three miles long, isn't that great?" Your point is that we have to - I think as I understand what you're saying - we have to redefine what being a great nation is about. We are not a great nation when we have 40 million people living in poverty and in despair. We're not a great nation when we have massive levels of income and wealth and equality - when 87 million people can afford to go to a doctor today. So to answer your question, I think that as a nation, we have got to focus a great deal of attention on those distressed communities. Often they're African-American, often they're Latino, often they are rural, white communities. And that means making sure that the kids, they get the quality education that they deserve. Making sure that we're creating good paying jobs in those communities. I voted against NAFTA, permanent normal trade relations with China, and other trade agreements because I knew that those agreements were written by corporate America with the goal of shutting down plants in this country and moving abroad. And the result of that has been the loss of millions of good paying jobs and the complete destruction of communities all across this country - in the South and all across this country. So we have got to rebuild those communities. We have got to bring high-tech jobs, not just to Silicon Valley, but to rural America again. I don't have magical answers, but the goal is we will not, under a Sanders administration, turn our backs on distressed communities. We will rebuild those communities. We will build the millions of units of affordable housing that we need. Now think about what it means to a community now where people are living in terrible housing or housing they cannot afford. When we put young people to work, rebuilding their own communities - will that become an indication of hope and optimism? I think it will.

**Joe Rogan**

We're talking about so many deeply important issues. And all of them that will be under the control or at least the direction of the one person who winds up becoming the President of the United States. Is it an impossible job? I mean, it seems like being the President, you are managing so many different aspects of our economy, our culture, our safety, our environment, international communication, and it's so - it's so in depth. How does one person do a job like that?

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, one person doesn't do it. And you certainly don't do it by tweeting every other day - major policy issues.

**Joe Rogan**

I think it tweets a lot more than every other day.

**Bernie Sanders**

What you do - and this is the way any sane President operates - is you need to be working with the smartest men and women from all walks of life who understand these issues. Every issue we have touched on Joe is enormously complicated. And I can send out a 20-word tweet on it, but that doesn't solve it. Unlike Trump, we will bring together the best and most knowledgeable people in this country to address the housing crisis, to address the issue of these "diseases of despair". We didn't even touch on climate change and then the future of the planet. How do we lead the world in transforming our energy system and creating the kind of jobs that we need? How do we revitalize American democracy? So that instead of suppressing the vote, we're getting more young people involved in the political process. To answer your question, it is not a one-person job. Anyone who thinks it is, is dead wrong. You need the help of a very strong administration that knows the issues that comes from the ranks of the working class. And this is the promise I will make. My administration, unlike Trump, is not going to be filled with billionaires - who are basically very often greedy type people who - it is going to be filled with the best people, often from the working class itself, from the trade union movement, people who are going to help us create policies that work for workers and not just the billionaires class.

**Joe Rogan**

Now, we're getting to the end of your hour here. So, climate change is obviously an enormous issue for our country and for the world. What could be done and what do you think you can do as President that can somehow or another slow down this process?

**Bernie Sanders**

First of all, we have to have a President who, unlike Trump, believes in science. And I do. And what the scientist are telling us, as I mentioned earlier, is that we have fewer than 12 years to transform our energy system or else there will be irreparable damage done not only to our country, but to the world. Now, climate change is not just an American issue. So, we could do tomorrow, all the right things, but if China and Russia and India and the rest of Brazil and Africa does not do the right thing. You know, we're not going to make the progress we need. So, here is what we have to do in my view. Number 1, we have to tell the fossil fuel industry that they're short-term profits - and they make a whole lot of money - their short-term profits are not more important than the future of this planet. I don't think that's a hard sell to make. You cannot keep producing a product which is destroying the planet in the United States and around the world.

**Joe Rogan**

So, by saying that you're saying you would have to move - we would have to move consciously away from fossil fuels.

**Bernie Sanders**

Absolutely, no if's, but's, and maybe's.

**Joe Rogan**

And if we do that, how do you tell the fossil fuel companies to tell them you can't sell fossil fuels anymore?

**Bernie Sanders**

There are a variety of ways to do that, but that is the bottom line. And by the way, in the midst of that, we do what we call is a "just-transition". The guy out on the oil rig today simply wants to feed his family. And the coal miners today want to feed their families. And we're not going to leave them. I'm a pro-worker. Probably the strongest pro-worker record of any member of the Congress. So, it is not my intention to throw these guys out on the - and women - out on the street and ignore the pain that they will go through. We are proposing billions of dollars to rebuild those communities and make sure that those guys and women get new jobs. So, we're not just discarding people in the fossil fuel industry, but ultimately the product that they are producing, which is now carbon emissions, is destroying the planet. So, we have to move away from fossil fuel in a very bold way into energy efficiency. Right now, in my own state of Vermont and all over this country, there are buildings which are incredibly wasteful. We don't have the windows. We don't have the insulation. We don't have the roofing, the doors that we need to keep the buildings warm in the winter and cool in the summer. And we can create just an incredible number of jobs just retrofitting our buildings. Second of all, we need to move very aggressively to sustainable energies like wind and solar. In California, you're doing a good job. With wind, Iowa is doing good job. Texas - doing a good job. We got to do much more. Solar - there is incredible potential out there. Price of solar has dropped in recent years. And we have not only transformed the energy system in our own country, we have to lead the world in working with Russia and China. Because in this issue, we are in it together. And here's my dream. And maybe - this may be a utopian dream. The world right now is spending a trillion and a half dollars on weapons of destruction designed to kill each other. And maybe, just maybe, if we had a kind of leader, and I hope to be that leader who says to the world, instead of spending a trillion and a half dollars killing each other, maybe we will use those resources to transform the global energy system and save the planet for our kids and our grandchildren. That's the goal that I have.

**Joe Rogan**

Well, these ideas sound great, but in the competitive environment of global politics, how would you convince Russia or China or any of these countries to do something that would put them in some sort of a competitive disadvantage?

**Bernie Sanders**

Well - and the answer is, Joe, if we do not do that in 50 or 100 years everybody's going to be -

**Joe Rogan**

Right.

**Bernie Sanders**

At a terrible disadvantage. And look, I'm not, you know, I'm saying, you know, I'm not telling you that tomorrow it's going to happen. But you've got to make the case. These people -

**Joe Rogan**

Right.

**Bernie Sanders**

You know, Putin is a dictator. I dislike him intensely, you know, Xi and China, very authoritative and so on and so, but they're not crazy people. And presumably they have concern about their kids and their grandchildren. This is a planet under the siege. You know, I don't want to become a science fiction. You've all seen the movies, the media racing toward earth. We're going to blow up the Earth. What do we do? Well, we got to get together. This is in a sense, what that is about. You know what I think about? In 1941, after Pearl Harbor. Alright, we were faced with a war in the east with China, a war in the west, in Europe, with Hitler. Within 2 years, the United States had transformed its economy to address and win the war basically in 2 or 3 years by reindustrializing them. We can do it. We can lead the world. That's what we have to do.

**Joe Rogan**

So in your eyes, we have to look at the economy almost as if the same kind of threat - or excuse me, the environment - as is if it's the same kind of threat as Nazi Germany and act together.

**Bernie Sanders**

Look, if you asked the defense department, you asked the CIA, you asked defense people all over the world. Tell us what the great national security threat is. You know what it is? It is climate change.

**Joe Rogan**

There's a lot of people that are skeptical of this. How would you convince? I mean, this is a big part of the problem.

**Bernie Sanders**

Yes.

**Joe Rogan**

There's a narrative that you hear from a lot of people that, oh, you know, climate change is not a proven science and climate change is a hoax. I mean, this is something that's repeated over and over again. And I'm sure some of it has to do with lobbyists and some of it has to do with merchants of doubt that go out there and see the world with disinformation to try to increase their profits

**Bernie Sanders**

Yes.

**Joe Rogan**

And continue the practices that they're currently enjoying.

**Bernie Sanders**

You know, Joe, when I'm thinking back, and I don't know if all you listen is - you know I remember this because I'm older than the most - but I can remember tobacco and cigarette ads on television. Remember?

**Joe Rogan**

Yes.

**Bernie Sanders**

Doctor guy dressed in a white flock, smoking away. This is a great cigarette. It'll improve your health. They lied. The tobacco industry knew exactly what was going on. And the fossil fuel industry is lying right now. And the President of the United States is either too stupid to understand what the scientist are telling us or he is lying as well. Climate - look, I am not the scientist. This is not my idea. I listen to the scientist. The debate is long over. Climate change is real. My God. Look at what's happening around the world. The great worst, you know, July was, I think the warmest July or warmest month in the modern history of the world. The Arctic ice is melting. Heat waves in Europe. Alright, just look out the window at what's going on. So this is not Bernie Sanders talking. This is the scientific community. Climate change is real. It will only get worse if we do not act boldly to cut carbon emissions.

**Joe Rogan**

Well, we just did an hour, sir. So I'm going to let you go because I know you got very important things to do. One last question. If you got into the office and you found out something about aliens - if you found out something about UFOs - would you let us know?

**Bernie Sanders**

Well, I tell you, my wife would demand that I let you know.

**Joe Rogan**

Is your wife a UFO nut?

**Bernie Sanders**

No, she's not a UFO nut. She says: "Bernie, what is going on? Do you have any access to records?"

**Joe Rogan**

You don't have any access?

**Bernie Sanders**

I don't. Honestly, I don't know.

**Joe Rogan**

Okay. You'll let us know though?

**Bernie Sanders**

Alright. I'll be on the show. We'll announce it on the show. How's that?

**Joe Rogan**

Please.

**Bernie Sanders**

Alright, you got it.

**Joe Rogan**

Please do.

**Bernie Sanders**

Thank you, sir. Appreciate your time.

**Joe Rogan**

Joe, thank you very much.

**Bernie Sanders**

Thank you very much.