Al Gore - Democrat

While Al Gore is not currently in the race for the Presidency in 2008, there is
an active and vocal draft movement to convince him to run. The speculation is
that he's waiting to see how Hillary Clinton's campaign does, and if it looks
like it's wavering and he could do better, he can then enter. Late entry won't
hurt a high-profile candidate like Al Gore; he's had 8 years as Vice President
and a second career as an environmental activist, even producing his own movie
about global warming, so he's so much in the spotlight that he can hop in at any
point and not be behind. there's also some talk that he might become a Green
party candidate; certainly his ideas fit nicely with the party's. Hence, he's
worth including.

Al Gore was born March 31, 1948 in Washington, D.C. He was likely to aim for
politics since birth, having been the son of Albert Arnold Gore, Sr., the
Representative and Senator from Tennessee, and a mother who was one of the first
women to graduate from Vanderbilt University Law School. Growing up, he would
spend most of the year in Washington with his parents, and every summer would
return to Tennessee to work on the family farm growing hay and tobacco and
raising cattle. He graduated from St. Albans School and went on to attend
Harvard College. He graduated Harvard with a Bachelor of Arts degree in
government in 1969.

The same year he graduated, he enlisted in the United States Army. Even though
he opposed the Vietnam war at the time, he felt that it was his duty to serve in
the military nonetheless. Although his tour looked to be off to a cushy start
with his assignment as a military journalist writing for "The Army Flier", he
was eventually shipped to the front lines in 1971. After just five months, he
received a non-essential personnel honorable discharge due to his unit standing
down, and returned to his studies, this time to Vanderbilt University for one
year to finish out the terms of a scholarship.

He then spent five years as a reporter for "The Tennessean", engaging in a
little investigative reporting which led to the arrest of some corrupt local
councilmen.

Al Gore's first entry into politics came when Congressman Joe L. Evins retired
from Tennessee's 4th district, leaving an open seat which he ran for. He was
elected to this position, and won re-elections for Tennessee Representative
1978, 1980, and 1982. During his time in Congress, he served on the committees
for Armed Services, Commerce, Science and Transportation, Joint Committee on
Printing, Joint Economic Committee, and Rules and Administration. He also
chaired the committees on Surface Transportation and the National Ocean Policy

Study.

His most prominent act was when he introduced the Gore Bill, also known as the High Performance Computing and Communication Act of 1991. This was the critical turning point of technology legislation; it bridged the way from the Federal ARPANET to the modern Internet and eventually the World Wide Web. However, this is the bill which political commentators have since never ceased to jeeringly refer to as "when Al Gore created the Internet".

In a very real sense, this legislation actually did establish the modern web technology as we know it. It led to the development of the National Information Infrastructure, the creation of the high-speed fiber optic network which we have installed today, and gave us the National Center for Supercomputing Applications, which hired the programmers to develop the Mosaic project, headed by Netscape founder Marc Andreessen. Since Netscape's Mosaic spun off the Spyglass browser to sell to Microsoft, which it then developed into Internet Explorer, and Netscape also released Netscape Navigator, which went open source and became Mozilla which then in turn released Firefox and Thunderbird, and also since Netscape went on to become AOL, the America On-Line company, this act is in fact directly responsible for 99% of the programs we use to browse the web today. The Gore Bill, in a single act of legislation, gave us the wire in the ground, the network to run on that wire, and the software to use the network. If that isn't "taking the initiative in creating the Internet", then nobody can lay claim to doing better.

In 1984, the Tennessee Senate seat became vacant when Republican Majority Leader Howard Baker stepped down. Gore ran for and was elected to this office as well, and was to remain there until becoming the Vice President in 1993.

During his time as Senator, Gore twice attempted to get the U.S. government to pull the plug on support to Saddam Hussein, citing Hussein's use of poison gas, support of terrorism, and his burgeoning nuclear program, but was opposed both times by the Reagan and Bush administrations. The fact that he was to later see the developments of the Iraq war unfold under his protest must have been traumatic.

Be that as it may, he of course went on to serve as Vice President under the Clinton administration for eight years. He has since run for and been defeated for President in 2000, and has since been an activist for environmentalist causes. Regardless of whether he answers the draft for 2008 or sits it out a bit longer, American politics has not heard the last of Al Gore.

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