

Candidate

Tom Steyer, a philanthropist and former hedge fund manager, is one of the candidates seeking the Democratic nomination for president. His campaign has spent more on advertising in Nevada than the other Democratic frontrunner have spent on their entire national campaigns.

Most of the other Democratic candidates are in New Hampshire tonight, yet you just launched a bus tour in Gardnerville. Why are you focusing so much on Nevada?

Yeah, well I think all the four, like, primary states are important. Nevada is the first really diverse state, you know. It's a state where I've spent—literally that's 43 years ago when I first came here. And I worked here, and I've been organizing here through NexGen since at least seven years ago. We're in almost every single college campus. And with our partners in labor, we knocked on 500,000 doors in Nevada in 2018. And I ran Question 6, which was 50 percent clean energy by 2030 in Nevada in 2018. So, I spend a lot of time politically in Nevada.

Would you say you're pretty familiar with the political climate in Nevada?

You know, I've been here for the flip. We've been organizing the whole time to push for Democratic governor, Democratic state senate, Democratic state legislature, Democratic senators,



PHOTO/MATT BIEKER

Democratic Congress people. We've been here the whole time and so, you know, I do feel more akin because that, definitely.

What elements of your platform resonate with Nevadans?

Well, one thing that definitely resonates here is I'm not one of the people who's for a Medicare for all. OK. You know, I'm one of the people who believes we should have a public option as part of the Affordable Care Act and let the people who have negotiated for their health care through their employment keep their health care through the employment if they think that's better. Believe or not, that's a pretty big Nevada issue. That's very different from, you know, I think Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, for instance. I'm talking about a 10 percent tax cut for everybody who makes less than 250,000

bucks. That's something I think people here care about. There's a pretty hefty Latino population in Nevada. I have a long history of working on immigrant rights. ... And I've spent millions of dollars trying to represent and protect fair immigration policies. I've spent over \$3 million hiring lawyers to represent people under threat of deportation. ... There's a whole bunch of specific Nevada issues like Yucca Mountain, which, if you live in California, you know what Yucca Mountain is, you have an opinion about that.

Commentators have referred to you as a billionaire who bought his way into the race. How do you feel about that?

Look, the only way that anyone's going to do well in this race is by having a message that resonates, and having people trust him or her. Those are the only two things that really matter. And so I think the idea that you can buy something, you know, votes, is not true. You either have a message that resonates with people, or you don't. I think if you look at my history, I've tried to see the biggest problems and then try and go as hard as I can after them in terms of time and energy and work and money, and that's all I'm doing. Americans, last I checked, we're a super hardworking and competitive group of people. ... Do I think rich people should pay their share? Yes. I took the Giving Pledge to give most of this money away while I'm alive. □

NOTES FROM THE NEON BABYLON

BY BRUCE VAN DYKE

Follow the money

My rant last week about people perpetually screwing up the word “asterisk” was one of the finest examples of “get off my lawn” journalism you’re gonna find anywhere. Really top notch crabberly. Thank you.

Back in October, we all knew what was gonna happen—Libtards and Deplorables alike. The House was gonna impeach Trump. Check. The case would be beyond solid. Check. Moscow Mitch was gonna railroad it on the fast track to Whitewash City. Check. The Senate, with its 52 card-carrying members of Cult 45, would acquit Prez Capone. Check. In the entirely predictable melodrama, there was only one surprise. The fella from Utah.

Was the Big Story last week Romney’s vote to convict? Where one Republican dared to look at the case, dared to see that it was a total slam dunk and dared to vote

accordingly? How dare he?! Expel this imposter! Or was the bigger story the fact that 52 Retrupmlican senators went full tilt Ostrich? That 52 senators failed utterly and chose, once again, to grovel at the foot of Trump, history, honesty and oaths be damned?

Of course I like Bernie. And Liz. And Pete. And Joe. But let’s admit they all have their Achilles’ heels. They have their strengths, no doubt. But there are soft spots. Yes, Hillary beat Trump’s ass by 3 million votes. And, yes, a black guy won the thing. Twice. So we can indeed make some headway, despite America’s various dumbass prejudices.

I wonder, though, if it’s Mike Bloomberg who scares the fuck out of Dipshit. Is it possible that “Little Mike” just might ... be the guy? The ReDuplicans have their billionaire (a fake one, for sure). OK, with Bloomberg, we got *our*

billionaire, and he’s the real Don Steele. Indeed, our billionaire could put The Trump Organization in a friggin’ trash compactor. Forbes estimates Bloomberg’s fortune is \$62 billion. That’s what’s known as *real* money.

Let’s not dismiss the other billionaire. Tom Steyer has some genuine cred, seeing as he was calling for Dum Dum’s impeachment long before anybody else. He was as horrified by Twitler as you and I, and he did something about it. That counts. And ... he was right.

Yes, they’re buying their way into the Game. If that’s the way it is, that’s the way it is. Just because a guy is a billionaire doesn’t mean he’s *automatically* an asshole. Chances are very good, yes, but it’s also somewhat possible that he’s a decent, reasonable human being. Hey, it could happen! And their money is now having a real impact. Here it comes. □



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