



THE BRONX, NEW YORK--Centrist_Marxist is holding a town hall in one of the poorer boroughs of New York City, moderated and broadcast by ABC7, in order to establish closer ties with the community and allow voters to get to know the Socialist politician better, and as part of a broader campaign swing through New York City. The town hall will be moderated by Bill Ritter.

"Hello, and welcome to ABC7's first town hall of the November 2019 campaign season. I'm Bill Ritter, and in this segment of 'Meet the Candidates,' we'll be allowing the voters of New York to get to know Centrist_Marxist, the Socialist candidate for Representative in the Second District."

"Thanks, it's great to be here to talk about my campaign!"

[light, scattered applause]

"Alright. Our first question comes from Twitter user @kautskyfan69. Who is your political role model, and why?"

"Oh, well, that's a really good question. There's Enrico Berlinguer, who led the Italian Communist Party to political success during a time of extreme turmoil, despite widespread conspiracies against it, there's Tony Benn, who gave principled opposition to the Iraq War, even when it was unpopular, and there's Olof Palme, the Swedish Prime Minister who pursued detente with the Soviet Union. But most of all, I think I'd have to go with Eugene McCarthy, who launched an anti-war campaign for president against a powerful incumbent in 1968, when everybody thought he would lose."

"What's a commonality you see in all of these 'role models'?"

"Hmm, I'd have to say... courage. The courage to stand up for what was right, even when people thought it couldn't be done, or it was too unpopular among the elite arbiters of respectable opinion. *[applause]* Oh, yeah, also, unlike my opponent's role model, Calvin Coolidge, they didn't pursue economic policies that led to the worst economic crisis in American history."

[laughs from the crowd]

"Uh, please keep disruption to a minimum. Alright, our next question comes from an audience member."

"Uhm, hi. Your opponent, SuperPacMan04 has been running on his opposition to the War on Drugs. What is your position on decriminalization of drugs, and how does it distinguish from PacMan's?"

"Well, PacMan talks about ending the War on Drugs as if he came up with the idea. As if he's the only person in the history of the country who thought that maybe, just maybe, we shouldn't be destroying our communities and society in order to fight a war that will never be won. It's ridiculous, quite frankly. I've been fighting for an end to the War on Drugs for just as long - if not longer! - than PacMan has. *[cheers and jeers mix, with cheers generally overwhelming the jeers]* But you know what I find interesting? The fact that PacMan's main policy plank is the one that was effectively ripped wholesale from the Socialist platform. It's almost like his 'opposition' to the War on Drugs is really a dishonest Trojan Horse to get New Yorkers to elect him for another term of defending elite interests."

[cheers continue]

"Please, God, stop clapping and cheering, you're drowning out the candidates. *[awkward laughter ripples through the audience as Ritter sighs]* Alright, alright. You can do this, Ritter. Our next question comes from @bigdickkasich - alright, who's picking these?! - who asks 'You're currently facing a 12-point gap in the

polls. Are you too radical for AC-2, or do you believe you can close this gap?'"

"Well, I wouldn't be running if I thought I was 'too radical,' whatever that means. This '12-point' lead of PacMan will evaporate at light-speed once ordinary New Yorkers catch wind of what he actually believes, and what I promise to do for them. For years, New Yorkers have gone without adequate relief for the housing crisis gripping our state, a situation I will remedy, if elected to Congress. For years, working New Yorkers have been stuck with declining labor unions - no longer, as I co-authored legislation to end Taft-Hartley, and, inspired by my visionary colleague, Mr. PGF03, to transition our economy to one based on cooperatives rather than a dictatorship of the bosses."

"What do you mean by 'a dictatorship of the bosses'?"

"What I mean is, we expect our country to be run democratically - by the will of the people, right? We wouldn't accept it if we didn't have a say over who the President was, right? But that's *exactly* how it is in the places we work every day. You don't get to vote for your boss, your boss is your boss because he inherited the business, or because he made a lot of money. At no point do you get a say. A cooperative economy would be one in which you *do* get a say, in which management is beholden to the workers, not the other way around."

[applaus, scattered 'whoop's]

"GOD DAMN-Never mind. Our next question comes from Alex Smith, a local teacher and member of the United Federation of Teachers."

"How, exactly, will your social housing and labor plans work?"

"Well, I'm glad you asked that. The Social Housing Act works through a mix of loans and grants, which will be given to local and municipal governments to build public, mixed-income housing on their own. Funding, of course, will be conditional on certain factors to ensure the projects will have a positive effect on the community as a whole, and each housing unit will subsidize poorer residents by charging wealthier residents market rate or higher prices. In effect, it's a sort of 'progressive rent model.' As for the labor plan, Taft-Hartley is the law that gives any state the right to pass Right to Work, which is one of the main culprits behind the decline of labor unions in our nation."

"Alright, a very complete answer. Thank you, Centrist_Marxist, for coming on tonight, and thanks to the audience for being a very... *respectful* crowd."

[enthusiastic applause and cheering from the audience as Centrist_Marxist waves back]

"You did it Bill. You made it."