

# The New York Times

LECTION 2016

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Political News, Now.

1:48 pm ET

By **Ashley Parker**

## Republican Candidates Assail Iran Agreements

1:48 pm ET

**Ashley Parker**

News of the diplomatic thaw with Iran provided the Republican presidential candidates with more fodder to attack both President Obama and Hillary Clinton over the weekend on the campaign trail and on Sunday talk

shows.

On Saturday, the United States announced that, in compliance with the Iran nuclear deal, it was along with European nations releasing roughly \$100 billion in Iranian assets, as well as lifting oil and financial sanctions on Iran. Iran released five American prisoners, including a reporter for The Washington Post, in exchange for the release of seven Iranians.

Republicans were quick to portray the exchange as a sign of weakness, a sentiment they continued to express Sunday in television interviews, while the Democratic candidates took a tone of cautious optimism about the developments.

Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, appearing on CBS's "Face the Nation," said that the freed Americans were not prisoners, saying they had violated no laws and instead were being held as "hostages." He also expressed concern that the exchange created a bad precedent.

"The President has pardoned them in exchange for a release of hostages," he said. "It proves once again that now nations and enemies of America around the world know there's a price for Americans."

Mr. Rubio also criticized the way Iran had handled an incident involving American sailors whose boats had drifted into Iranian territorial waters in the Persian Gulf, leading to the crafts' seizure by Iran.

Though Iran quickly released the Americans, Mr. Rubio said that the way the country treated the sailors while in captivity — putting them on their knees, making the female sailor wear a burqa, releasing video of them in captivity — was "a huge propaganda score."

"They're not our allies," Mr. Rubio said. "They're not our friends."

On the same program, Gov. John Kasich of Ohio similarly said, "I'm sort of sick to my stomach about it," referring to the Iranian nuclear deal.

Speaking on “Fox News Sunday,” Senator Ted Cruz of Texas said he was grateful for the release of the Americans — “Praise God that the prisoners are coming home,” he said — but was critical of how the administration handled the exchange, saying it set a “dangerous precedent.”

“This deal is a problematic deal,” Mr. Cruz said, “and it reflects a pattern we have seen in the Obama administration over and over again of negotiating with terrorists, and making deals and trades that endanger U.S. safety and security. The result of this — every bad actor on earth has been told go capture an American. If you want terrorists out of the jail, capture an American and President Obama is in the let’s make a deal business.”

Donald J. Trump, on ABC’s “This Week,” refused to give Mr. Obama credit for the prisoner exchange. “I said that if I got in, it would happen immediately,” he said.

Mr. Trump went on to say that the agreement would not have been up to his standards.

“This should have happened years ago,” he said. “We’re giving them \$150 billion. This shouldn’t be happening now. And I understand that in addition to the \$150 billion, they’re getting hostages, also, or they’re getting some prisoners released.”

The Democratic candidates offered a different message. Mrs. Clinton, a former secretary of state under Mr. Obama, said she believed Iran was less of a threat after the nuclear deal and that the prisoner exchange and the broader Iran agreement were “mutually reinforcing.”

“I have said for a long time that I’m very proud of the role that I played in getting us to the point where we could negotiate the agreement that puts a lid on Iran’s nuclear weapons program,” she said on NBC’s “Meet the Press.”

“But I’ve also said that the way we’re going to hold them accountable is to

have consequences when they do anything that might deviate from the agreement or continue to flout the kind of sanctions and mandates that the U.N. Security Council has put on, including on missiles,” she added.

On the same show, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont offered praise for both the nuclear deal and the prisoner exchange.

“Clearly, we have many, many issues and many concerns with Iran,” Mr. Sanders said. “But, clearly, also, we want to improve our relationships with this very powerful country. I think the agreement to make certain that Iran does not get a nuclear weapon was a huge step forward. The fact that we had this prisoner release today was a good, important step forward.”

On “Face the Nation,” Mrs. Clinton dismissed the Republican concerns as “just typical political rhetoric.”

“The real issue here is, if you’re committed to making the world safer and to show strong American leadership, you have to engage in patient persistent diplomacy with people who are not your friends,” she said. “So I’m proud of the role that played in the Iranian agreement and I’m delighted that Americans are coming home safe from Iran.”

Heading into the Democratic debate Sunday night, Mr. Sanders also cleared up an issue that Mrs. Clinton’s allies had raised on the campaign trail by saying he planned to release his medical records.

“Thank God, I am very healthy,” Mr. Sanders said on CNN’s “State of the Union.” “We will get our medical records out the same way that Secretary Clinton has gotten her records out. It is not a problem.”

And coming out of the most recent Republican debate, where Mr. Trump and Mr. Cruz went after one another in their most fierce and visceral exchange yet, Mr. Trump continued to criticize his rival. The two lead the Republican field in most polls.

“Look, the truth is he’s a nasty guy,” Mr. Trump said of Mr. Cruz on ABC’s “This Week.” “He’s a nasty guy. Nobody likes him. Nobody in Congress likes him. Nobody likes him anywhere once they get to know him.”

On “State of the Union,” Mr. Trump offered a similarly personal attack, calling Mr. Cruz “strident, and not a nice person.”

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6:37 pm ET

By Yamiche Alcindor

## Bernie Sanders Supporters Invoke Martin Luther King Jr.

6:37 pm ET

By Yamiche Alcindor

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. — On the eve of Martin Luther King’s Birthday, three black supporters of Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont sought to present his stances on race and the economy as the heir to the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Cornel West, a prominent scholar; Killer Mike, an Atlanta rapper; and the former Ohio State Senator Nina Turner praised Mr. Sanders during a 50-minute conversation with him on Sunday that was streamed live and filmed at a Marriott Hotel here. They spoke about King’s last days organizing with union workers and planning a venture he called the Poor People’s Campaign. The four went on to say that Mr. Sanders’s proposed ideas to protect the working class, break up large commercial banks, raise the minimum wage to \$15 and reform police departments illustrated an extension of King’s vision.

Mr. West said that Mr. Sanders’s bid for the presidency illustrated a focus

on the well being of working class people that had not been seen since the Rev. Jesse Jackson ran for president in the 1980s. He added that Mr. Sanders comes from what he called the “vanilla side of the country,” is sensitive to what he called “chocolate folk,” and is willing to confront Wall Street in a way other longtime politicians will not.

“It is a very unique moment and there is a real sense in which it could very well be America’s last chance for the legacy of King to be addressed in a serious way,” Mr. West said of Mr. Sanders’s possible ascendancy to the White House. “And it is a fascinating thing: It could be a brother from Brooklyn” who is leading the effort.

On Sunday morning, Mr. West, Ms. Turner and Mr. Sanders attended a church service in Charleston at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church, where nine people were fatally shot in June. During the service, the Rev. Dr. Norvel Goff Sr. called for more focus on the poor. Mr. West said Mr. Goff’s words spoke directly to the purpose of Mr. Sanders’s campaign.

“He is not just a figure in a museum. He is part of a very rich tradition, a tradition of a people who have been terrorized, traumatized, and stigmatized for 400 years but still keep dishing out unbelievable courage and vision and most importantly, love and justice,” Mr. West said of King. “We were sitting at the church today in Mother Emmanuel Church and they were reading the words of Martin Luther King Jr. and it just made you shake and quiver. And I said to myself, this is what the Sanders campaign is about.”

Mr. Sanders spoke briefly at Emanuel A.M.E. Church, where he sat in the first row, nodding and clapping.

“I think that while it is enormously important that we honor the life and work of Dr. King, it is even more important that we fulfill his vision and keep that struggle and that fight going until we have a nation in which we have broken down racism and a nation in which all of our people — not just a few, but all of our people — can enjoy dignity and a decent standard of living,” Mr.

Sanders said to the packed church. “And that’s what I would hope our mission together is about.”

On Sunday afternoon, Mr. Sanders also reminded those watching online that King was assassinated after he had started to talk about the Vietnam War and was in Tennessee to help workers at the time of his death. He also said that people too often forget that King was working on a march for poor people’s rights that included organizing blacks, whites, Latinos and Native Americans.

“He made this point all the time: Of course you want to break down segregation,” Mr. Sanders said of King. “You have the right to go to any school you want to go to. But then he asked, what does that matter if you don’t have the money to go to that school? And that takes him then to the whole issue of income and wealth inequality. He says, ‘How can it be that in a country of so much wealth, that so many people have so little.’”

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2:36 pm ET  
By **First Draft**

## Verbatim: Debbie Wasserman Schultz Says Democratic Debate Schedule Was Intended to ‘Maximize’ Exposure to Voters

2:36 pm ET  
By **First Draft**

I did my best to make sure, along with my staff and along with our debate partners, to come up with a schedule that we felt was going to

allow for the — to maximize the opportunity for voters to see our candidates.”

— Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz of Florida, the chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee, responding on CNN to criticism from some in her party that the Democratic debate schedule, which has included weekend forums, gives an advantage to Hillary Clinton.

Fri. Jan. 15 20 Po t

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