

Mike Bloomberg's Debate: Pay No Attention to the Man Behind the Curtain

by Barbara Boyd

Feb. 20—Bathed in the glow of the hologram he created in a barrage of ads costing well over \$350 million in Super Tuesday states, Sir Mike Bloomberg made his debate premiere yesterday after the Democratic National Committee changed the rules for him. In the hologram, Mike is in a plaid shirt, working man's khakis, involved in the most warm fuzziness possible. Wednesday night, as in the climactic moment in the Wizard of Oz, the curtain was pulled back and the spell was broken, revealing a snarling arrogant toad of a man, imperiously trying to simply stare down the multiple attacks against him, making responses best described as wooden.

Hammer and tongs, the extant candidates attacked Bloomberg on identity politics issues, his obvious racism (stop and frisk, the 2008 financial crash resulting from the demise of red-lining), and his feral sexism (the non-disclosure agreements lurking out there from female employees abused at Bloomberg LP, including the expectant mother, of whom Bloomberg demanded to know whether she was going to "kill it"). Bloomberg really had no answers and refused to release anyone from the non-disclosure agreements.

Tellingly, however, Bloomberg's attacks on coal miners and his attacks on farmers and machinists, were not raised by the other Democratic primary candidates, since all of these mini-Obamas agree with the Green New Deal and the deindustrialization of the economy. Nor did they raise Bloomberg's euthanasia comments about healthcare (95-year-old prostate cancer patients shouldn't be treated), since none of their remedies involve the medical and scientific infrastructure necessary to expand the population and increase lifespans, or the absolutely necessary "de-financialization" of medical care.

Over at *The American Conservative*, Matt Purple has written a great [takedown](#) of the would-be American Bonaparte, calling him "the smirking id of America's elites."

"Now Bloomberg is running for President, and his years of behaving like a crossing guard drunk on the power of his reversible stop sign have come back to haunt him," Purple writes. He lampoons Bloomberg's

numerous harassments of the common folk of New York City, parading under the rubric of public health measures, writing:

Bloomberg effectively turned the police into a task force on petty vice, sending them to write up people for harmless offenses (a move their union loudly protested). In a 2004 piece for *Vanity Fair*, Christopher Hitchens set out on a crime spree across New York where he tried to break as many of these enforced regulations as possible. This meant not just lighting up in a bar, but sitting on a milk crate (\$105 fine for a Bronx man), feeding pigeons (summons for an 86-year-old), and riding a bike without both feet on the pedals. Strangely, though considered crimes against humanity in Bloombergistan, these particular infractions had nothing to do with public health. What they did have to do with was fines, which were then used to fill city coffers, authoritarianism in the service of deficit cutting. This enabled Bloomberg to boast about his fiscal responsibility even as he presided over a hefty expansion of the city's budget.

Noting Bloomberg's target of completely shutting down the coal industry, Purple writes:

Most progressives who rail against fossil fuels at least make some attempt to empathize with the laborers their schemes would displace (think the Obama-era attempt at a "blue-green alliance," for example). Not Bloomberg. It's that callous indifference that makes him truly unique. I'd sooner vote for a stalk of celery with googly-eyes attached (not that one would be able to tell the difference).

This was the reality of last night's performance. But, we are not in reality, and it will not end there. Stay tuned folks, as we now have the right tone for taking this on.