

The Most Dangerous Answer at Last Night's Debate

First of all, Democrats, thank you. I know we've had our differences over the years, but last night you did your nation and indeed all of humanity a service when you ritually humiliated Michael Bloomberg. I don't think I've ever seen a debate floor get mopped quite like that. By the end, Bloomberg was like that guy from *Airplane*, with all the others standing in a line waiting to land a blow.

That being said, it wasn't actually Bloomberg who was responsible for the worst soundbite of the night. That would be Bernie Sanders. When asked by Chuck Todd what he would tell the workers who would be displaced by his proposed ban on fracking, he said:

What I tell these workers is that the scientists are telling us that if we don't act incredibly boldly within the next six, seven years, there will be irreparable damage done not just in Nevada, not just to Vermont or Massachusetts, but to the entire world. Joe said it right: this is an existential threat. You know what that means, Chuck? That means we're fighting for the future of this planet.

Even Bloomberg seemed stunned by Sanders' answer, retorting that "we're not going to get rid of fracking for a while" and agreeing with Amy Klobuchar that it was a "transition fuel." Sanders did claim that his Green New Deal would create millions of jobs in renewable energy, some of which could presumably replace those lost in a fracking ban. But that's government pixie dust, as opposed to real employment in the here and now.

The absolute best you can say about renewables is that it will take many years before they're in any position to create that

level of economic activity—and that's *really* a stretch. Meanwhile, one study, conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers and (admittedly) commissioned by the American Petroleum Institute, [estimated that 10.3 million jobs](#) in the United States are dependent on fracking. The fracking boom was probably the biggest component of the economic recovery following the 2008 recession. So lucrative is it that some towns in upstate New York, where fracking is illegal, have [contemplated seceding](#) to Pennsylvania, where it's legal. Fracking has made the United States the number one oil and natural gas producer on earth, unbalancing some lousy foreign despotisms, including wretched Saudi Arabia. It's also, as Oren Cass has noted, done far more than solar power to [bring down America's carbon emissions](#).

Prohibiting fracking wouldn't just be bad for both the economy and the climate; it would be cruel. It would snuff out a glimmer of hope for workers in deindustrialized states like Pennsylvania. Yet Sanders, that avowed champion of the lunchpail, wants to ban it so he can run around in his green cape. So does Elizabeth Warren, prattling on about "environmental justice."

Donald Trump is going to win 40 states, isn't he?

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