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## Mayor Sanders Takes Helm in Burlington

### He Calls for Tax Increase, Pledges to End 'Cronyism'

By ALAN ABBEY  
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Bernard Sanders became Burlington's 37th mayor Monday with a call for a special tax increase vote in June and renewed pledges to bring disenfranchised groups into city affairs.

His inaugural speech repeated campaign themes, such as opposing the Medical Center Hospital expansion plan, the southern connector highway and the waterfront condominiums, he used to unseat five-term incumbent Gordon Paquette.

A new call Monday — which received enthusiastic applause — was his pledge to place Central Vermont Railway property on city tax rolls, as a way to raise new revenues without further burdening homeowners. A railroad official called Sanders' efforts "misinformed," because some railroad land already is taxed.

The crowd of 250 at City Hall interrupted his speech a dozen times with applause, but most aldermen, and a group of businessmen in the audience, sat through it in silence.

Sanders said his administration will be successful if people get involved in city affairs. "There has been far too much cronyism in City Hall...and people outside of a small inner circle have not been involved," he said. "I intend to change that."

He will create an advisory council of representatives from community groups, unions, public housing residents, senior citizens, youth, women and "concerned citizens."

The property tax is "regressive and unfair," he said, because it affects low- and moderate-income homeowners "who simply cannot afford to pay more." He created a committee to investigate new forms of taxation.

However, he will ask for new taxes this year because not doing so would mean "serious consequences to our city in terms of a significant reduction" in services.

A "substantial increase" in taxes, while he explores ways of saving money and finding new sources of funding, is not needed, he said.

That left him with a request for a "bare-bones" tax increase "to maintain it in silence."

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Free Press Photos by IRENE FERTIK

Sanders takes oath administered by City Clerk Frank Wagner, as Sanders supporter John Bartlett looks on.

## Inauguration of City's New Mayor Flavored By Sanders' Low Profile

By JOHN REILLY  
Free Press Staff Writer

It wasn't hard to pick Mayor Bernard Sanders' brother out of the crowd at Burlington City Hall Monday.

The man in the dark suit seated next to Sanders' 11-year-old son Levi shares with his brother black horn-rimmed glasses, a mop of curly hair, and a common ideology. The only striking difference is their accents.

Seven years as a social worker in Oxford, England, have given Larry Sanders' speech a British flavor, while a stint of equal length in Vermont has not altered Bernard's native Brooklyn inflections.

Larry Sanders flew across the Atlantic

Ocean to see his brother's inauguration as Burlington's mayor, but Levi admitted he would have preferred to spend the afternoon outdoors, "playing hoops."

The young Sanders and his father share a passion for the game of basketball.

When asked if he, too, would have preferred spending the afternoon playing hoops, the mayor said, "No, I made up my mind a long time ago." City Hall is where he wanted to be Monday, reveling in the triumph of what a few months ago seemed an impossible dream.

Yet Sanders pointed out in his inaugural speech that his election is merely a first step, and that his dream is still a long way from realization.

To the obvious pleasure of the mixed

crowd of young and old, affluent and less prosperous, conservative and liberal, Sanders renewed his campaign pledges to promote the interests of the city's underclass and youth, while striving to preserve a healthy downtown business district.

Thomas Racine, vice chairman of the Downtown Burlington Development Association, said he had been worried by Sanders' election because of the mayor's socialist ideas. But Racine said the association met with Sanders last week and was comforted.

"The key thing is, he wants to cooperate. There are fundamental differences, but any differences can be worked out," said Racine, proprietor of Bertha Church.

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LARRY SANDERS, CENTER, FLEW FROM ENGLAND FOR INAUGURAL ... behind City Treasurer Lee Austin, left, is Bernard Sanders' son, Levi

# New Mayor Pledges to Bring 'Outsiders' Into Government

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tain the same level of city services as last year." It will be "substantially less" than the 65-cent increase voters rejected in March, the mayor said.

Breaking with a stand long held in city government, Sanders said he may place separate items on the ballot for departments seeking new equipment "which voters can choose or decline as they see fit."

Applause punctuated his criticisms of each of the development projects so important to city business leaders and former Mayor Gordon Paquette.

The Medical Center, he said, "should be developing ideas as to how we can significantly lower the cost of medical care," not looking at a \$77 million expansion plan.

He said a new plan for the southern connector can be devised to solve downtown traffic problems and be acceptable to South End and Lakeside residents.

He won the most applause for his call to "create in an open and democratic manner, a development plan which will enable the waterfront to be enjoyed by all of our people, and not just the rich with their condominiums."

He said he will create a task force to investigate city police, who have been hit by resignations and low morale.

He praised the early work of groups he has established to look at youth and elderly problems, and promised to bring more arts programs to Burlington.

He opened the speech with attacks on "giant banks and multinational corporations" who control economic development in the United States, and hold most of the nation's wealth.

"In the long run we are going to need major and fundamental changes in the economic structure of this country before the city...is going to significantly improve its standard of living."

He closed it, though, with a nod of friendship and offer of cooperation to city businessmen. He is op-

posed to the proposed Pyramid mall in Williston, supports downtown development and does not want to convert Church Street "into a cow pasture," he said.

He told aldermen his election, and the victories of Terrill Bouricius and Sadie White, two supporters of his, in aldermen's races were not flukes. "I think that the people of this city want change and that they voted for change. I intend to bring about change."

He reminded people national attention has been focused on Burlington because of his election victory. The country can be shown, he said, "that ordinary people, working together, can recapture that certain quality, that sense of purpose which we seem to be lacking today as a nation."

If the country regains its "democratic and egalitarian" spirit in the next 20 years, Sanders said, "maybe the political pundits will point back to Burlington, Vermont, 1981, and say, 'That's where it all began.'"

After Sanders finished his speech, nine aldermen elected William Blanchard, D-Ward 5, as president, and placed former president Joyce Desautels, D-Ward 1, and Allen Gear, R-Ward 4, on the Finance Board, which the mayor chairs.

Bouricius and Mrs. White were sworn in. Aldermen Richard Wadhams Jr., Allen Kieslich and Robert Paterson were absent; Maurice Mahoney Jr. arrived late.

The nominating speech for Blanchard by Alderman Richard Hammond, D-Ward 3, summarized the defiance many Democrats and city politicians have been voicing.

He said Blanchard, a strong Paquette backer, was needed, because only "10 citizens decided we needed a change" in city politics. Sanders beat Paquette by 10 votes out of more than 9,200 cast.

The cool reception was echoed by other aldermen and city officials who praised Sanders' speechmaking abilities, but said they disagreed with his beliefs and plans.

Blanchard said he does not agree with the mayor that nationwide, rich people are getting richer and poor people are becoming worse off.

"If that was true, not so many people would want to be moving into Burlington."

He said, though, he will be the "liaison" between the mayor and the board.

Alderman Robert Sweeney, D-Ward 4, who was named to the taxation committee, said he will be happy to work on studying new ways of raising taxes. "I don't know how far we'll get," he conceded.

Sanders supporters such as Greg Packan, an attorney and co-chairman of the mayor's youth committee, and Lakeside's Joan Beauchemin were more excited by the inaugural speech than aldermen were.

"He kept to his point of view, but was very conciliatory," Packan said. "That will be very necessary from this point on."

Mrs. Beauchemin said the new mayor "covered all his bases. The idea of the task forces are real exciting possibilities."

Standing between Sanders' supporters and foes, Lindol Atkins, president of a city employees' union, said, "If he can do (what he wants), more power to him. It's a rough road to hoe, but he has a lot of smarts."

Former City Assessor John Fitzpatrick was skeptical of Sanders' plans to tax the railroad. He wondered whether the amount raised would be worth it, considering the legal fees the effort to win the taxes will take.

Railroad general manager Phillip Larson, reached by telephone in St. Albans late Monday, said Sanders is "misinformed" about its land.

Taxes are paid on 20 of the railroad's 30 acres of Lake Champlain shorefront property by leaseholders, mostly oil companies, he said.

Another 10 acres is taxed by the state, and Burlington receives a portion of those funds, Larson said. They total about \$2,200 a year. A third parcel of railroad land is leased to Burlington for \$1 a year as the "park and ride" lot for downtown workers.

He has written Sanders to discuss the matter, he said.

## Brother Crosses the Atlantic To See Sanders Inaugurated

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"I think he struck a good balance," said Vermont Legal Aid lawyer James Dunn. "He recognized the need to keep the downtown vital, but he also realized there are a lot of people who have been shut out of the governmental process. I'm encouraged to see he wants to bring those people in."

Given to chamois shirts and sneakers, Sanders marked the occasion by donning a suit. Old friend and political adviser John Franco, a public defender, said it was the first time he had seen Sanders wear one. Yet the mayor kept the inauguration informal,

walking in almost unnoticed and unaccompanied before the ceremony.

Also decked out for the occasion in a new sport coat, tie and slacks was public housing advocate Richard Sartelle, a close Sanders adviser during the campaign who was named Monday as Sanders' executive assistant, to be paid out of the mayor's salary.

Linda Niedweske, Sanders' campaign manager, was named appointments secretary.

Sanders assumed no special prominence in the Contois Auditorium to deliver his speech. He stood deep in the corner, shunning the stage and leaving aldermen the focus of attention at their table in the room's cen-

ter.

Even so, the bright lights and lenses of television and still cameras and film crews were trained on him throughout, as they have been since his startling victory March 3. He will be on the NBC-TV "Today Show" this morning about 8:15 in an interview taped two weeks ago in Chicago.

"I must say I didn't" think he had a chance for victory, Larry Sanders said. "I think he's perfectly capable, though."

"I'm involved in a lot of things Bernard was talking about — health, children, the elderly," said the social worker. "It's the same fight in England. These problems face the whole world, not just Burlington."