

# Ted Cruz Hands Out a Surprising Critique of Monday Night's Debate

U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) is often referred to as a “gifted debater,” but that really isn’t the half of it.

In 1992 he won both the U.S. National Debating Championship and the North American Debating Championship. Then, three years later, he was a semifinalist in the World Universities Debating Championship.

So, when someone asks him to critique a debate—as nationally syndicated radio host Hugh Hewitt did during Tuesday morning’s show—he’s going to give an expert opinion. What he had to say, however, about Monday night’s debate between Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump and his Democratic counterpart, Hillary Clinton, got a lot of people’s attention.

“Well, last night, I thought it was a very strong debate,” he said. “I thought Hillary did not have a good performance. I think throughout the night, she was tired, she was formulaic. The entire debate from Hillary was more Washington as usual. And every proposal she advanced was another big government solution that isn’t working, that is failing.

“I thought Donald had the strongest debate performance he’s had in this election cycle. I think he really went after Hillary, which was a good thing. And I think he drew strong contrast, particularly on taxes, and on regulation and on law and order, and on the disastrous Iran deal. And so I thought it was a good debate night.”

Hewitt pointed to the “conventional wisdom” analysis of the debate, which suggested Clinton had “trounced” Trump, particularly in the latter half. He asked Cruz to address

those analyses and to provide his own commentary.

"You know, anyone who is swooning at Hillary's performance last night, that's a pretty good indication that you're a card-carrying member of the liberal media, especially in the first half hour," he said. "I think Donald very much had the upper hand over Hillary. Hillary was tentative and had no real answers. She was on the defensive the entire time.

"And the biggest thing is her answers, they sounded old and tired, and I don't mean that in a comment on her health. I mean it on a comment on her ideas. Her ideas are rehashed 1960s Great Society, big government programs. And to me, they did not rise to the occasion remotely.

"Now of course, the media is going to hyperventilate at how terrific she is, because that's what they do. You know, the idea that they focus on the birther issue I find thoroughly amusing because, unless you are in a college faculty hall, or the newsroom of a major newspaper, I don't think there are a whole lot of voters in this country that give a flying flip about the birther issue.

"And so if the media thinks that was the takeaway from last night, I think that shows just how disconnected they are from working men and women who've been hammered for seven years under the Obama economy and are looking for something different. And if all Hillary cares about is screaming you're a racist, you're a racist rather than actually providing real solutions to the challenges facing working men and women, I don't think that's a good debate night for her."

Hewitt asked why Trump didn't force a conversation about the Supreme Court, and Cruz suggested the line of questions from moderator Lester Holt didn't really afford the opportunity to do so. He said, however, it is the biggest distinction between the two candidates.

"[A]s you know, the developments last week were a major reason

why I made the decision to vote for Trump in November, because on Friday, he put out a list of 21 judges, and a couple of important things," he said. "One, as you noted, he put my friend and colleague, Mike Lee, at the top of the list. Senator Mike Lee, I think, would make an extraordinary Supreme Court justice to replace Antonin Scalia.

"But secondly, and this was the most important part of the list, and much of the media missed this, when he put it out, he explicitly committed that the only people he would consider are the 21 names on the list. Previously, they had put out a list of 11 names, but there had been no commitment other than these are among the people we will look at.

"On Friday, they locked themselves in and said these 21 are the only ones up for consideration. That was a major new development, and it was a major new development exactly along the lines of what I had urged in Cleveland, which is that I wanted to see our nominee defend freedom, defend the Constitution, and the Supreme Court is going to be right at the crossroads of determining whether the Bill of Rights remains vibrant in protecting our liberties, or whether it is rendered a dead letter by a Hillary Clinton judicial activist Court."

Cruz also made an offer the Trump campaign just cannot refuse. Asked by Hewitt if he would be willing to campaign on the GOP nominee's behalf, or to assist with future debate prep, the senator said he had already made that offer.

"I will do whatever I can to defeat Hillary Clinton," he said. "My heavy focus this cycle, in addition to defeating Hillary, is on preserving a Republican majority in the Senate, and I am working hard to help my colleagues get re-elected.

"I'm working hard to raise money for them, to help turn out conservatives in their state. And then I'm also working hard in the state of Texas to turn out conservatives, because if

conservatives stay home this cycle, we could see really bad results on down-ticket ballots, on judicial races, on state rep races.

“I don’t want to see that happen. So I’m going to do everything I can to urge conservatives to come out and vote, even if they may not be thrilled at the candidates on the ballot. I’m urging them to come out and vote anyway, because the consequences of staying home, I think, are really quite significant.”