Former President Bill Clinton visits Bend in support of Hillary

by Bruce Ewert

BEND, Ore. -- It's been over 40 years since a presidential candidate has visited Bend in search of votes. Monday night former President Bill Clinton spoke at an event at Bend High School in support of his wife, Hillary, who is locked in a fierce battle with Barack Obama for the Democratic nomination. (above) Former President Bill Clinton speaks in support of his wife, Democratic Presidential Candidate Senator Hillary Clinton. (below) Clinton poses with local resident Justin Novicky at Bend High School â€“ photos by Bruce Ewert. The event, attended by well over 1,200 people, was a rousing success. Bill spoke for about an hour and a quarter without notes, covering such topics as the Iraq War, veteransâ€™ support, the economy, mortgage crisis, health care and jobs.President Clinton made a great pitch for green jobs. He stated that "If America can beat the world to the Moon, why can't we beat them to a highly efficient car battery?!?" He promoted the idea of creating an educational program for green energy, with guaranteed benefits to companies that would hire them based on the utility savings. It made a lot of sense, as most green energy jobs will be in jobs similar to current construction jobs, like plumbing and electric.On Iraq, he stated that Hillary would start withdrawing troops at one-to-two brigades per month, similar to the rate Senator Obama has proposed. However, he noted that over 100,000 American contractors remain in Iraq, many of whom need protection, and also stated that Hillary planned to leave military installations in the north of Iraq, in the Kurdish region, in case Al Qaida becomes too strong. In this reporter's eyes, a few thousand Al Qaida are simply no match for tens of thousands from the Mahdi Army. So it seems that the Clintons are rather equivocal about a complete withdrawal.This was an event seldom seen in the history of Bend. President Clinton stayed around for almost an hour shaking hands and talking to the local citizens crowded in around the dais.One can only imagine the response if Senator Obama decides to stop in our little city. Is Bend becoming Democratic?

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