
From the Campaign Trail to the White House: Economic Advisors to the Candidates

Sam Clovis, David Kamin

INTERVIEWER: *John Harwood*

IN THE day's next session, John Harwood returned to the stage to lead an in-depth policy conversation with advisors to the Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump presidential campaigns about their candidates' ideas for meeting the nation's fiscal and economic challenges.

Sam Clovis

Sam Clovis, representing the Donald Trump campaign, emphasized economic growth as an essential part of reducing the nation's long-term debt. Clovis argued that meaningful debt reduction could be accomplished without addressing the projected growth in entitlement spending, but said that a Trump administration may reconsider that view, and be open to putting entitlement reform back on the table once more is known about economic growth in the future. "Right now we're not going to touch anything because we can't predict the [economic] growth," which, he said, "puts time back on the clock."

Clovis also discussed Trump campaign proposals to "strengthen the military, to ramp up infrastructure, to protect entitlements, and to cut taxes." Pushed by Harwood on whether relying on growth is enough to put the long-term debt on a sustainable path, given additional spending priorities and commitments, Clovis said, "It is quite possible for us to grow the GDP out past our debt, which is a substantial achievement economically."

Clovis closed by saying, "Donald Trump will tell the American people the truth, and it may not be what they want to hear. But I'll guarantee you, the American people will

rally behind that because they'll know it's for the best of the country. And it's for them, their neighbors, their friends, our allies.... [This is] what will make America great again."

David Kamin

Next, David Kamin outlined Hillary Clinton's fiscal and economic policy platform. "Long-term fiscal sustainability is a major priority," Kamin said, noting that Clinton has put forward a plan "that does not add to the deficit and fully pays for itself."

At the same time, Kamin emphasized that the Clinton campaign is committed to other major economic priorities, such as "raising incomes of middle-class Americans" and "making sure that the very highest-income Americans, and also corporations, play by the rules."

Kamin argued that given the current low-interest rate environment, it makes sense to make investments in our future now, identifying areas such as infrastructure spending, student aid, and paid family and medical leave as economic priorities included in Clinton's plan.

Asked about reforms to control spending, Kamin noted that the growth of healthcare costs is a key driver of spending growth. He said that Clinton's plan "would double down on what we have accomplished over the last several years when it comes to healthcare costs," under the Affordable Care Act.

Summarizing Clinton's approach, Kamin said, "She's ready to put forward a vision for this country that she thinks is going to grow incomes and also be fiscally responsible. That is the vision she is putting forward and that she is going to fight for."

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