

Sanders meets with Clinton to discuss support for her presidential campaign

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Shortly after the close of polls in Washington, DC, the final contest in the Democratic presidential primary process, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders met for two hours Tuesday evening with the party's presumptive nominee Hillary Clinton. As expected, Clinton won by a wide margin, capturing 78.7 percent of the vote.

The meeting was the latest indication that Sanders is planning to wind down his campaign and throw his support behind Clinton. Last week, he went to the White House to meet President Barack Obama, who officially endorsed Clinton shortly afterward.

Despite losses in last week's primaries in California and New Jersey, Sanders has yet to formally concede to Clinton and may not officially drop out of the race until the Democratic National Convention at the end of July. However, he has sent clear signals that he is no longer challenging Clinton for the nomination.

In recent days, Sanders has stopped talking about lobbying superdelegates—elected officials and party operatives, who overwhelmingly support Clinton—to switch their allegiance in order to overcome her lead in pledged delegates and achieve an upset victory at the convention. He has also virtually dropped his criticisms of the former senator and secretary of state. “When we started this campaign, I told you that I was running not to oppose any man or woman, but to propose new and far-reaching policies to deal with the crises of our time,” Sanders declared in an email to supporters sent out on Tuesday.

The email announced a live Internet meeting to be held Thursday night at which Sanders is to discuss with his supporters the next stage in his “political revolution.” The hollow and cynical character of this euphemism is becoming increasingly clear. Sanders’ “political revolution” is revealed to be nothing more than a means of channeling popular opposition to the

economic and political system back behind the Democratic Party. The next stage of this “revolution” will begin with support for Clinton, a corrupt defender of the status quo who is widely despised for her Wall Street ties and war-mongering. She will be portrayed as the “lesser evil” in the ensuing “anybody but Trump” campaign.

Following Tuesday's meeting with Clinton, press releases from both campaigns declared their mutual support for party unity in the general election. The Clinton camp described the meeting as “a positive discussion about their primary campaign, about unifying the party and about the dangerous threat that Donald Trump poses to our nation.” It noted that the two “agreed to continue working on their shared agenda, including through the platform development process for the upcoming Democratic National Convention.”

“Senator Sanders and Secretary Clinton met in Washington on Tuesday evening and had a positive discussion about how best to bring more people into the political process and about the dangerous threat that Donald Trump poses to our nation,” the Sanders campaign statement read.

It continued: “Sanders congratulated Secretary Clinton on the campaign she has run and said he appreciated her strong commitment to stopping Trump in the general election.” Noting their “common ground” on issues such as the minimum wage, campaign finance reform, health care and higher education, the statement added, “Sanders and Clinton agreed to continue working to develop a progressive agenda that addresses the needs of working families and the middle class and adopting a progressive platform for the Democratic National Convention.”

This love note to Clinton came less than a day after

Sanders held a news conference and pledged to fight for a “fundamental transformation” of the Democratic Party at the convention and beyond. In the course of the primary process, Sanders won wide support from young people and workers who were attracted by his talk of “democratic socialism” and his denunciations of social inequality and the “billionaire class.” But now, as he prepares to complete his political mission of smothering social opposition and anti-capitalist sentiment and blocking the emergence of an independent political movement of the working class, it is increasingly impossible to conceal the dishonesty and cynicism of his enterprise.

Many workers and youth who rallied behind Sanders will come to see his campaign as proof of the impossibility of transforming the Democratic Party, one of the two main parties of Wall Street and the military/intelligence establishment, into an instrument of progressive change, and the essentially reactionary role of all those who claim otherwise.

As indicated by the reference in the Sanders campaign statement on the meeting with Clinton to bringing “more people into the political process,” a major consideration in Sanders’ withholding of a formal endorsement of Clinton and his pledge to fight for progressive planks in the party platform to be adopted at the convention is a desire to promote the illusion that the convention, and the party itself, can be shifted to the left by pressure from below.

In this connection, Sanders has called for the resignation of Democratic National Committee Chairwoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz and reform of the anti-democratic superdelegate system, which gives unelected officials a huge say in the selection of the party’s presidential candidate. In fact, such procedural and personnel debates are meaningless sideshows, as is discussion on the party’s platform. As Sanders well knows, it has been many decades since the official campaign platforms adopted by the conventions of the two big business parties had any bearing on the policies actually pursued.

Sanders enjoys considerable support within the Democratic Party establishment for these maneuvers. Earlier on Tuesday, he attended the weekly luncheon of the Democratic caucus in the Senate for the first time in months. He addressed his fellow Democratic senators and was greeted with standing ovations.

“I have total confidence that Bernie’s going to be on board, doing the right thing, saying the right thing, putting all of himself into this campaign,” Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown told the media afterwards. “Of course, everybody wants him to do it sooner, rather than later, but the timetable’s up to him.”



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