

Sanders heaps praise on the “billionaire class’s” chosen candidate

Jerry White—SEP (US) candidate for president
27 July 2016

Bernie Sanders’ ringing endorsement of Hillary Clinton at the Democratic National Convention Monday night was an exercise in deceit and cynicism aimed at painting the candidate of Wall Street and the Pentagon as a champion of ordinary working people.

Listening to his servile remarks, one might be forgiven for asking why Sanders ran against her in the first place. From the beginning, however, the Sanders campaign was a political trap aimed at corralling growing anger and opposition and channeling it back into the Democratic Party. The fundamental mendacity of his campaign is fully exposed in the concluding act.

In the primaries, Sanders won popular support for his call for a “political revolution” against the domination of the “billionaire class.” He is now telling his supporters to back a woman who epitomizes the incestuous relationship between the two big business parties and the “billionaire class” of financial and corporate elites.

Confronting skeptical supporters among his own delegates—including many who had booed him earlier in the day for calling for a vote for Clinton—Sanders tried to argue that his “political revolution” had pushed the Democratic Party and Clinton herself to the left. Later Sanders worked the convention floor with DNC officials—who had waged a dirty tricks campaign against him—to whip his delegates into line before Tuesday, when he moved for the nomination of Clinton by acclamation.

In a convention speech laden with demagoguery, Sanders deliberately concealed the actual record of the Democratic Party. He said nothing about the criminal wars conducted by Obama and his former secretary of state, Hillary Clinton, which have destroyed Iraq, Libya, Syria and other countries.

While claiming the Democrats have adopted the

“most progressive platform in history,” Sanders avoided any mention of the platform’s insistence that the US “continue to have the strongest military in the world” or its criticisms of Trump from the right for failing to confront “Russian aggression.” The platform marries the Democrats’ identity politics with imperialist aggression, declaring that the US will militarily intervene anywhere in the world to protect “the rights and opportunities of women and girls” (left unsaid, of course, is that this excludes US allies).

Instead, Sanders focused on the questions of social inequality that had won him widespread support. The election, he said, was about “ending the 40-year decline of our middle class” and the “grotesque level of income and wealth inequality that we currently experience, the worst it has been since 1928. It is not moral, not acceptable and not sustainable that the top one-tenth of 1 percent now own almost as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent, or that the top 1 percent in recent years has earned 85 percent of all new income. That is unacceptable. That must change.”

Sanders skipped over the fact that in these “recent years” it is the Obama administration that has been in power. Obama’s pro-corporate policies—from the Wall Street bailout and “quantitative easing,” to the halving of autoworkers’ wages and the shifting of health care costs onto the backs of workers under Obamacare—have resulted in the greatest transfer of wealth from the bottom to the top in US history.

Instead, Sanders thanked “President Obama and Vice President Biden for their leadership in pulling us out of that terrible recession,” which Sanders said was the product of “eight years of Republican trickle-down economics.”

The rest of his comments consisted of sycophantic praise for Clinton, who according to Sanders

“understands” that no one working 40 hours a week should be living in poverty; that “we must raise the minimum wage to a living wage” and that “we have to invest in education and jobs for our young people, not more jails or incarceration.”

In fact, the Clintons have championed the destruction of the federal welfare program, law-and-order measures that have filled the jails and encouraged police killings, and embraced “school reform,” which has been used to destroy public education and promote for-profit charter businesses.

While Sanders sought to paint the Democratic Party as the “inclusive” pillar of opposition to the neo-fascistic Trump, the truth is that the billionaire demagogue is exploiting the political disaffection generated by the anti-working class policies of the Democrats. The fixation on race, gender and other identity politics by the self-satisfied upper middle class base of the Democratic Party, and their insulting claims that things are “pretty darn good” (Obama), have created the conditions for the rise of Trump.

Workers and young people must draw political lessons from their experience with the Sanders campaign.

The Socialist Equality Party warned from the beginning that Sanders is no socialist. His criticism of the “billionaire class” was combined with support for Obama’s wars and promotion of economic nationalism. His campaign has been aimed at refurbishing the image of the Democratic Party and subordinating workers to its program of war and austerity.

My running mate Niles Niemuth and I are running in the elections to provide a genuine socialist alternative to both parties of big business and their presidential candidates, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump. The Democratic Party has never been a party of working people and will never be.

The working class needs its own party, and that party is the Socialist Equality Party. Our campaign is aimed at building the revolutionary leadership and laying the foundation for a powerful political counter-offensive of the working class, in the United States and internationally, to put an end to capitalism and the war, social inequality and the danger of fascism that this bankrupt system is spawning around the world.

We call on all workers and youth to support our campaign and make the decision to join the Socialist

Equality Party.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact