

Bernie Sanders declares willingness to “work with Trump”

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In the wake of Donald Trump’s electoral victory Tuesday night, Senator Bernie Sanders’s office proclaimed his willingness to “work with” Trump once he takes office.

Stating that Trump “tapped into the anger of a declining middle class that is sick and tired of establishment economics, establishment politics and the establishment media,” Sanders went on to say:

“To the degree that Mr. Trump is serious about pursuing policies that improve the lives of working families in this country, I and other progressives are prepared to work with him. To the degree that he pursues racist, sexist, xenophobic and anti-environment policies, we will vigorously oppose him.”

In an interview yesterday on CNN, Sanders repeated this point, stating that he intends “to work with President Trump on those issues where he will in fact work for the middle class and working families in this country.” He later said, “If he is serious about creating jobs in America and not in China, I will work with him,” and “I hope very much that he will work with progressives to create a tax system that asks billionaires and multinational corporations to pay their fair share of taxes.”

One might imagine the response of Senator Sanders to Attila the Hun sweeping into Europe with his mounted hordes: “I will work with you to the extent that you help the people, but I will oppose you when you rape and pillage!”

The notion that Trump is going to do anything to “improve the lives of working people” is a fantasy. He is a right-wing billionaire committed to cutting taxes for the rich, eliminating corporate regulations, slashing social programs and other reactionary policies. Wall Street’s verdict on a future Trump administration was provided on Thursday, with markets soaring to record

levels.

This is the outcome of Sanders’ “political revolution” against the “billionaire class”—an offer to cooperate with the fascistic Trump. Eighteen months after Sanders announced his candidacy, his statement on Trump punctuates a critical experience for the working class.

The self-proclaimed socialist won 13 million votes and 23 states in the Democratic Party primaries. Though he secured just under half the delegates, Sanders conceded the nomination to Clinton in Philadelphia and falsely claimed that the convention had ratified the “most progressive party platform in history.”

In reality, his capitulation came without a political price tag—he won no concessions from Clinton, who ignored the issue of social equality during her general election campaign, ran the most right-wing election campaign and ensured Trump’s ability to present himself as an opponent of the status quo.

In the weeks and months that followed the convention, Sanders traveled across the country chastising his former supporters for voting for third-party candidates and insisting that they support Clinton, whom he had previously condemned as the candidate of Wall Street.

Sanders’ current volte-face in relation to Trump has been just as quick as his previous pivot in relation to Clinton. Only a few short days ago, Sanders was insisting that a vote for Clinton was necessary because “Donald Trump would be a disaster for the future of this country.” Not 24 hours had passed since polls closed before Sanders had offered to help Trump impose his disastrous policies on the American and international working class.

Sanders’ pledge is not the product of a political

mistake or miscalculation. Rather, it reveals the pro-capitalist, anti-working class character of his campaign and his entire political career.

In Sanders' two-paragraph pledge, the Senator uncritically notes that "Trump tapped into the anger of a declining middle class," which is tired of "seeing decent paying jobs go to China," among other things. Sanders' diplomatic language reveals the parallels between his proposals and those of Trump.

Both Trump and Sanders are nationalists who rail against China and other countries for "stealing our jobs." Both pit American workers against immigrants and blame the latter for bringing down wages. Both speak in a vaguely oppositional manner about living standards, but both have nothing to say in opposition to the capitalist system or the American war machine. On this basis, Sanders holds out hope that Trump might be "serious about pursuing policies that improve the lives of working families."

To the extent Sanders is prepared to oppose Trump, it is on the very narrow basis of racial and environmental politics: If Trump "pursues racist, sexist, xenophobic and anti-environment policies, we will vigorously oppose him."

But by pledging his support for Trump on economic issues, Sanders is paving the way for capitulation on the most basic questions of democratic rights related to issues like abortion and same-sex marriage. The very fact of Trump's election is proof that the defense of these democratic rights cannot be entrusted to the Democratic Party, which will turn on a dime on these issues if political expediency so dictates.

Sanders' groveling capitulation to Trump shows the sham character of American democracy. From start to finish, the presidential election was an eighteen-month-long compendium of lies and diversions aimed at deceiving the working class and channeling social opposition behind one of several pro-corporate candidates.

A cabal of media and finance giants wasted billions of dollars to manipulate public opinion with lies and false promises. TV audiences were subjected to an endless cycle of meaningless election coverage by networks staffed by affluent pundits who know nothing about social reality in the United States. Any political viewpoints outside of the Democratic and Republican campaigns were blacked out entirely. It is entirely

fitting that Donald Trump emerged from the ashes of this degrading spectacle.

In the aftermath of the election of Trump, Sanders and the Democratic Party will once again make appeals to workers and youth to follow them into the Democratic Party and oppose the new administration through the loyal minority. Sections of the Democratic Party establishment, led by figures like Sanders and Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren and backed by political idiots like Michael Moore, will proclaim that the Democratic Party is being "transformed" and "pushed to the left."

Lies, lies, and more lies. The degrading debacle of the last 18 months has proven that the American political system is set up to muzzle the working class and tie it to the parties of its capitalist exploiters.



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