

Sanders endorses Biden: The “political revolution” that never was!

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On Monday afternoon, Bernie Sanders ended his second presidential campaign, not with a bang, but a whimper. The Vermont senator formally endorsed Joe Biden in a livestreamed discussion on the coronavirus pandemic.

The event was a groveling display on the part of Sanders, who did not make a single criticism of Biden.

The central theme of Sanders’ remarks was the call for unity. The imperative, he said, is for “all of us to work together to do what has to be done not only in this moment, but beyond.” The “unity” that Sanders is calling for is a unity of the political establishment, representing the ruling class, against opposition from below.

The social anger among workers and youth to the response of the ruling class to the coronavirus pandemic threatens revolutionary upheavals. Under these conditions, Sanders issued what amounted to a call for a national unity government around Biden. “Today I am asking all Americans, I am asking every Democrat, I’m asking every independent, I’m asking a lot of Republicans to come together in this campaign to support your candidacy, which I endorse.”

The two jointly announced a number of “task forces” to unite their campaigns and provide Sanders with the threadbare fiction that he is “influencing” the program of the Democratic Party and pushing it to the left.

Sanders and Biden heaped praise upon each other and stressed that there is little that separates them politically. Biden said that “people are going to be surprised that we are apart on some issues, but we are awfully close on a whole bunch of others.” Reading from the same script, Sanders directed the conversation to “some of the areas that I think we are actually fairly close.” Later he conceded that he and Biden “may disagree a little.”

Both Sanders and Biden are, in fact, in agreement on the basic framework of ruling class policy. Sanders’ last act before suspending his campaign was to vote for the massive bailout of Wall Street and the corporations that passed with the unanimous support of Republicans and Democrats in the Senate. The so-called CARES Act includes \$450 billion for corporate bailouts and another \$450 billion to back the US Federal Reserve’s unlimited transfer of money to Wall Street.

Sanders nodded as Biden issued mild criticisms of the Trump administration’s handling of the bailout, while asserting, “It is not about the legislation. The legislation has been good. It is about how it is being implemented.”

Biden went on to complain that “the biggest best-connected firms are getting assistance as fast as they can ask for it.” This, however, was the entire purpose of the legislation, rammed through using the coronavirus pandemic as a pretext.

Sanders replied that “Joe” was “absolutely right.” He added that if corporations are going to get a massive bailout, there needs to be greater “transparency,” a meaningless phrase. Sanders’ proposal for additional action in response to the coronavirus pandemic includes a further handout of hundreds of billions to major industries.

Sanders said nothing about the coordinated campaign to force workers to risk their lives by going back to pumping out profits, which Biden backed in an op-ed column published in the *New York Times* on Monday.

The Sanders endorsement does not come as a surprise. The entire purpose of his campaign was to prevent social and political opposition from breaking free of the Democratic Party. As in 2016, but now under far more explosive social and political conditions, Sanders is exposing himself as a political

hack for the Democratic Party and revealing his “political revolution” to be a cynical fraud.

Sanders is part of a broader campaign underway to mobilize the Democratic Party behind Biden. On Monday morning, the *New York Times* published an interview with Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, in which the congresswoman pledged her support for Biden and declared obsequiously, “I want to respect his win, he won because of his coalition building, he won because of his service, he won for a lot of different reasons.”

Ocasio-Cortez, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), did not include among her list of reasons the fact that Biden is the chosen candidate of Wall Street and the military.

While many workers supported Sanders out of a mistaken belief that he is a socialist, groups like the DSA and Socialist Alternative, and individuals like *Jacobin* magazine editor Bhaskar Sunkara, promoted his campaign as part of their own efforts to maintain the political authority of the Democratic Party.

The DSA and Sunkara backed Sanders not despite his opportunist politics, but because of them. They are now quickly maneuvering to position themselves as advisors to a Biden campaign. On Monday, *Jacobin* published an article by Branko Marcetic headlined, “I literally wrote the case against Joe Biden. But I’ve got some free advice for him.” The article urged Biden to adopt a “left” program in order to win the support of young people.

“If Biden and Democrats of his generation,” Marcetic writes, “could cravenly sell out their principles for political expediency and pretend to be something they’re not once, they can do it again, only for the good. For the first time in a long time, the direction things are heading mean the politically expedient thing is also *the right thing* to do.”

For such people, no argument in the service of the Democratic Party is too cynical or dishonest. Representing privileged sections of the upper-middle class, they are as terrified of the political radicalization of workers and youth as the Democratic Party itself. They are worried above all by the growing political influence of the *World Socialist Web Site* and the Socialist Equality Party, whose criticisms of Sanders and the DSA have once again been confirmed.

Workers and young people must draw the political conclusions from this experience. One is struck in the

end by how vacuous and empty Sanders’ campaign, for the second time, has turned out to be. It does not have the character of even a genuine movement for social reform.

Sanders’ entire political career, including that stage waged under the banner of “political revolution,” has ended in a fawning endorsement of the most right-wing candidate in the Democratic Party. He is completing his integration into the political system as events are demonstrating to millions the bankruptcy of capitalism and the need for real revolutionary change. It was all so predictable and inevitable.

The only genuine socialist campaign in the 2020 elections is that of the Socialist Equality Party. Our campaign is based not on futile hopes of transforming the Democratic Party, of performing a form of political alchemy that has failed a hundred times before, but on the construction of a movement in the working class to prepare and lead the struggle for socialism in this era of revolution.

For more information on the SEP’s election campaign and to get involved, visit socialism2020.org.



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