

Hillary Clinton endorses Joe Biden

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On Tuesday, Hillary Clinton, the Democrats' 2016 presidential candidate, endorsed the party's presumptive 2020 candidate Joe Biden. The official endorsement took the form of a 50-minute split-screen video event, the same format as the one used by Bernie Sanders on April 13 to complete his capitulation to the long-time senator from Delaware and vice president under Barack Obama.

Coming one day after the endorsement of Biden by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, the event signaled the alignment of all factions of the Democratic Party behind the long-time political factotum for the corporate elite and the military-intelligence establishment, who was the most right-wing of the major contestants in this year's Democratic primaries.

The event was billed as a "Women's Town Hall" on "The Impact of COVID-19 on Women." Biden introduced Clinton as "the woman who should be president of the United States right now."

The emphasis on gender politics was in line with the efforts of the Democratic Party to distract attention from the COVID-19 crisis' exposure of the unbridgeable chasm separating the interests of the working class from those of the capitalist ruling elite.

Strikes and protests by workers against the drive to force them back to work are growing under conditions where tens of millions recognize that the ruling class did nothing to prepare for the pandemic and has focused its response on utilizing the public health and economic catastrophe to protect and increase its own profits and wealth, at the cost of untold thousands of lives. The Democratic Party has supported this criminal policy, voting unanimously for the multi-trillion-dollar Cares Act bailout of the corporate-financial oligarchy.

But the feminist focus had an added significance, coming in the midst of a simmering scandal involving allegations by a former Biden aide that the then-senator sexually assaulted her. The accusation, unsubstantiated and dating back to an incident that allegedly occurred 26 years ago, has exposed the hypocrisy of the Democratic Party's #MeToo campaign.

That operation, underway for more than three years, has mobilized more privileged layers of the middle class around a hysterical witch hunt based on the insistence that charges by women of sexual harassment must be believed and accepted as fact, and the accused men turned into pariahs without any presumption of innocence or due process.

However, now that the target is the party's choice for president, #MeToo leaders, the entire Democratic leadership and media outlets aligned with the Democrats such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, CNN and NBC have either buried the story or exonerated Biden. That includes Sanders, Elizabeth Warren and the dozen or so women on Biden's short list to be named as his running mate.

There are, however, elements in and around the Democratic Party, including some former officials in the Sanders campaign and pseudo-left Sanders promoters who are demanding that Biden be removed as the party's nominee. Recently, for example, Claire Sandberg, the national organizing director for Sanders's presidential campaign tweeted: "There is simply no moral justification for Biden to continue as the presumptive nominee. Out of respect for survivors and for the good of the country, he should withdraw from the race."

This controversy has added to an already existing crisis in the Democratic Party, fueled by widespread popular hatred and contempt for Biden among working people and especially among youth, many of whom backed Sanders but are not inclined to vote for a man who supported the wars in Iraq, Libya and Syria and helped oversee the 2008-2009 bailout of Wall Street.

There was no mention during the video event of the sexual allegations against Biden by either the candidate or Clinton, both of whom avidly backed #MeToo and embraced its slogan of "Believe women."

After declaring that she was "thrilled to be part of your campaign," Clinton focused on the impact of the pandemic on women, pointing out that eighty percent of all health care workers in the US are women. "It is having

a disproportionate impact on the front lines on women working, on women caring for others, on women holding down the home as we go through this together,” she said.

Both she and Biden hypocritically complained that “too much money has gone to the wrong people”—big corporations instead of small businesses and workers—ignoring the full support of the Democratic Party for the massive corporate bailout.

Neither of them mentioned the current drive to force workers back to work under conditions of a continuing rise in COVID-19 cases and deaths with neither testing nor safety measures in place to protect workers from the ravages of the disease. Biden published a column in the *New York Times* headlined “My Plan to Safely Reopen America” on April 12, one day before Sanders endorsed him.

Clinton praised Biden for his ability as a senator to “bring people together to solve problems.” This invocation of Biden’s ability to forge a bipartisan consensus in Washington is in line with calls from both the *Times* and Republican opponents of Trump to establish a “national unity” government, with Biden as its figurehead. Pro-war reactionaries including Max Boot, a neo-conservative advocate of the 2003 invasion of Iraq, Michael Gerson, a speechwriter for George W. Bush, and Steve Schmidt, John McCain’s campaign manager in 2008, have published commentaries on this theme, making clear the right-wing character of a future Biden administration.

The endorsement of Clinton is the culmination of two weeks during which the most prominent representatives of the so-called “progressive” wing of the party—Sanders, Elizabeth Warren and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez—have dutifully lined up behind the Biden-Clinton-Obama party leadership.

Clinton had the distinction in the 2016 campaign of becoming the second most hated presidential candidate in US history, second only to Trump. She ran as the candidate of Wall Street and the military-intelligence establishment, attacking the fascistic Trump with the fantastic claim that he is a stooge of Putin and the Kremlin. This was overlaid with the promotion of racial and gender politics, combined with undisguised contempt for the “white” working class, which she condemned as a reactionary mass of Trump fanatics, a “basket of deplorables,” in her memorable phrase.

This, compounded by Sanders’ capitulation to Clinton after having won 13 million votes by appealing to anger over social inequality, enabled Trump to exploit popular

disgust with the Obama years and the political establishment as a whole.

In January and February of this year, when Sanders was surpassing Biden in the polls and winning the initial Democratic caucuses and primaries, Clinton became the chief attack dog of the Democratic Party, the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* in a concerted campaign to sabotage Sanders and resurrect the collapsing campaign of the semi-senile Biden.

In an interview with the *Hollywood Reporter*, she accused Sanders of undermining her 2016 campaign and said: “Nobody likes him, nobody wants to work with him, he got nothing done... It’s his online Bernie Bros and their relentless attacks on lots of his competitors, particularly the women.”

Asked if she would support Sanders if he won the nomination, she declined to do so. Only after angry protests did she relent and say she would support Sanders if he won the nomination.

She continued to attack Sanders in the following weeks for his “extreme” positions, while the Democratic Party mobilized the Congressional Black Caucus to ensure Biden victories in primaries in the South where the party’s constituency is dominated by more conservative, older African American voters.

Clinton’s endorsement, while never in doubt, nevertheless underscores the reactionary character of both the Biden campaign and the Democratic Party as a whole. It also exposes the bankruptcy of the entire premise behind the Sanders campaign—that the Democratic Party can be transformed into a party of progressive social reform, or possibly even socialism.

Since Sanders’ shelving of his campaign and capitulation to Biden, this “left” version of the increasingly discredited “lesser evil” argument has taken the form of claiming that Sanders and his supporters can push Biden to the left. This is the mantra of the Democratic Socialists of America, Socialist Alternative and other pseudo-left groups that continue to promote Sanders in an attempt to block the emergence of an independent political movement of the working class.



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