

On “This Week” news show, Sanders urges supporters to vote for Biden

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In his first nationally televised Sunday interview since ending his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination, Bernie Sanders once again urged his supporters to vote for former Vice President Joseph Biden. He claimed that Biden, a central figure over nearly 50 years in the Democratic Party’s ever more pronounced shift to the right, could be convinced to adopt a progressive agenda.

In the course of his eight-minute interview on ABC’s “This week with George Stephanopoulos” program, Sanders repeated the standard party line in support of the return to work in the midst of the still uncontained and deadly coronavirus pandemic. Without offering any serious criticism of the criminal policy of the Trump administration, which is now being implemented by Democratic as well as Republican governors across the country, or offering any genuine alternative, Sanders declared that “the crisis that we face is opening the economy safely.”

He made no mention of polls showing a large majority of the population in opposition to a premature “reopening,” or the wave of strikes and protests by workers rejecting the alternative of returning to work without any protection against the virus or losing their jobs and being cut off of unemployment benefits.

Millions of workers in the US and around the world are experiencing the indifference to human life of capitalist governments, which are knowingly condemning workers to sickness and death in order to resume pumping out corporate profits. Under these conditions, two words that were not uttered by the supposed “democratic socialist” Sanders were capitalism and socialism.

Also unmentioned was the multitrillion-dollar handout to Wall Street known as the CARES Act. Senate Democrats, including Sanders, voted

unanimously in favor of what Sanders himself called “corporate welfare.”

Stephanopoulos, a former aide to Bill Clinton, asked Sanders if he would vote in the Senate for the so-called Heroes Act passed on Friday by the Democratic-controlled House of Representatives. The \$3 trillion “relief” bill is a fraud. Not only does it fail to provide adequate relief for the more than 35 million workers who have been laid off over the past two months, the Democrats passed it in the knowledge that the Republican-controlled Senate will not approve it.

While not explicitly endorsing the legislation, Sanders commended House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, saying, “I think what Pelosi did in the House, it is significant, it is important. I have some disagreements with it, and I want to see the Senate improve upon it.” How Sanders expects the Senate to “improve” upon legislation that Senate leaders and Trump have both declared “dead on arrival” was left unsaid.

Moving on from the bill, Stephanopoulos asked Sanders to comment on statements by Republicans that Joseph Biden and the Democrats have not been sufficiently “tough on China.” With a smile on his face, Sanders jumped at the chance to embrace the anti-China campaign that is in reality being carried out by both parties.

Echoing a series of campaign ads by Biden, Sanders attacked Trump for being “soft” on Beijing. Trump, he said, “used to talk about President Xi being a great leader and a good friend of his.” He doubled down on the demonization of governments in the cross hairs of US imperialism, attacking Trump for calling “probably the worse dictator in the world,” North Korea’s Kim Jung-un, “a wonderful human being.”

The main political purpose of the interview became clear when Stephanopoulos brought up a memo

released this past Friday by Sanders' former campaign chair Jeff Weaver. Weaver, who launched a pro-Biden Super PAC after Sanders quit the race, warned in the memo that a "significant portion" of Sanders supporters are "currently unsupportive and unenthusiastic" about a Biden presidency.

That millions of Sanders supporters, many of whom thought they were supporting a candidate who would fight for their interests against rapacious billionaires, would be "unsupportive" of Biden, a hustler for credit card companies and Wall Street banks, is hardly surprising. Sanders, however, disputed Weaver's assessment, saying that "at the end of the day, the vast majority of the people who voted for me ... will be voting for Joe Biden."

Sanders offered his "good friend Joe" some advice for winning over his supporters. "I think what Joe is going to, and he's beginning to move in that direction, is to say to those working class people, say to those young people, say to those minorities: Listen, I understand your situation. You know, I understand that you're graduating college with tens and tens and tens of thousands of dollars in debt. I understand that you don't have any health insurance. I understand that you're working at a job that is paying 12 bucks an hour and you can't get by on that, we gotta raise that minimum wage ... to a living wage."

In other words, do not actually offer anything substantive or real. Biden simply needs to spew out empty phrases of "understanding." That Sanders thinks some insulting window dressing from a career capitalist politician will be sufficient to win over his supporters gives some insight into what the Vermont senator really thinks of those who volunteered their time or donated their hard-earned wages to his campaign.

Sanders continued, "Joe and his staff understand that. I think they are going to reach out to our supporters and come up with an agenda that speaks to the needs of working families, of young families, of minority communities."

In reality, any words of "understanding" from Biden and whatever "agenda" emerges from the Biden task forces joined by Sanders backers, such as Democratic Socialist of America member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, will be dead letters, forgotten as soon as they are adopted.

The only agenda that speaks to the needs of working

families in the US and around the world is the revolutionary socialist program advanced by the Socialist Equality Party and our candidates for president and vice president, Joseph Kishore and Norissa Santa Cruz.



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