

Biden appeals to Republicans for “unity” as voters repudiate Trump

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On Saturday evening, Democratic Party candidate Joe Biden delivered a victory speech composed of platitudes and clichés. Its central message was the necessity to unite with Republicans in the formation of a new government.

His speech followed the declaration Saturday morning by the major news networks that Biden had defeated Donald Trump to become the 46th president of the United States.

The election was, above all else, a massive popular repudiation of Donald Trump and his catastrophic mishandling of the pandemic, which has so far cost the lives of nearly a quarter-million Americans.

On Saturday, large demonstrations broke out in cities across the country, where tens of thousands of people chanted anti-Trump slogans, shouted from their apartment windows and cheered passing postal service workers, who are credited with delivering mail-in ballots despite sabotage by the Trump administration. Demonstrations also took place in Germany, the UK, France and Canada.

The corporate media and Democratic Party are fast at work to create a false narrative of the significance of the election that has nothing to do with reality.

The first component of the post-election narrative is that what the American people want is “unity” between the Democrats and the Republican collaborators with the fascist Trump.

In his nationally televised speech, Biden proclaimed: “I pledge to be a president who seeks not to divide but unify.” He added: “I am a proud Democrat, but I will govern as an American president. I will work as hard for those who didn’t vote for me as those who did. If we can decide not to cooperate then we can decide to cooperate. And I believe this is part of the mandate given to us by the American people.”

A Saturday morning CNN roundtable focused on the supposed power of Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, who the commentators declared had “veto power” over a Biden administration’s cabinet appointments. There is a flurry of comments in the bourgeois press about the close personal relationship between Biden and McConnell. It is almost as if over 75 million people voted for Biden only for Mitch McConnell (who won just 1.2 million votes in his re-election to the Senate) to become president!

The second element of the narrative is that racial identification determined voting patterns. The corporate media is advancing a racist narrative, blaming “white people” in general and “white workers” in particular for the fact that the election was closer than expected. The outcome is being interpreted in racial terms, accompanied with the inevitable declarations of the “historic” nature of the fact that Kamala Harris is to be the first African American and Indian American woman to serve as vice president.

As the *World Socialist Web Site* has analyzed, it is socio-economic factors, not race, that determined the outcome of the election. An estimated 6.4 million more white people—composed largely of workers—voted for Biden in 2020 than for Hillary Clinton in 2016, a figure that accounts for almost the entire popular vote margin. In contrast, Trump won over one million more votes from African Americans and 5.5 million more votes from women than in 2016, though the majority in both categories backed Biden.

The third part of the narrative is that the association of the Democratic Party with socialism cost its candidates millions of votes.

Former Ohio Republican Governor John Kasich, who endorsed Biden, spoke at the Democratic National Convention and is on the short list for a cabinet

position, said on CNN yesterday, “Now is the time for Democrats, and I believe Joe Biden will do this, to begin to listen to what the other half of the country have to say. There is no socialism in Joe Biden.”

He added, “The far left can push him as hard as they want, and frankly the Democrats have to make clear to the far left that they almost cost him the election.”

Kasich favorably cited the comments of Democratic Congresswoman Abigail Spanberger, who said Thursday that Democrats must “never use the word socialist or socialism again.”

Amidst the media hoopla over the “historic” election of Biden, the ruling class confronts an unprecedented social, economic, geopolitical and political crisis.

First of all, it is a long way to the inauguration. Trump has refused to concede the election and is pursuing his baseless pseudo-legal challenges of the vote. His aim is to create a narrative that, if he is removed from power, the election was stolen. However the crisis is resolved, it will be the basis of a further shift of the political establishment to the right.

The Democratic Party and the corporate media are presenting the election of Biden as a “new dawn” for American democracy. “The president did his best to undermine the nation’s democratic foundations,” the *New York Times* wrote in its editorial published yesterday. “They were shaken, but they did not break... It now falls to Mr. Biden to improve and safeguard these foundations, to help restore faith in our democracy and ourselves—to make America greater than ever before.”

Nancy Pelosi declared Saturday, “Today marks the dawning of a new day of hope for America.” Dana Millbank wrote an op-ed in the *Washington Post* headlined, “Our long national nightmare is over.”

For over a century, Americans have heard the same refrain every time power has transferred from a Republican to a Democrat, though, as Biden himself promised, “nothing” ever “fundamentally changes.”

The crisis of American democracy, however, does not arise out of the personal attributes of Donald Trump. Rather, Trump is himself an expression of a much deeper disease—capitalism.

Millions of workers and youth are looking for a way to address the crises that dominate the United States and the world—a pandemic that is spiraling out of control, mass unemployment, unending war, the growth

of authoritarianism and fascism, environmental degradation.

This cannot take place within the framework of the Democratic Party, as groups such as the Democratic Socialists of America and *Jacobin* magazine claim. *Jacobin's* David Sirota wrote on Friday that Biden’s victory was “undeniably good news.” It signaled that things “could change for the better,” he said, “if we’re willing to put in the work” by applying “pressure from progressives.”

The claim that a Biden administration will create “space” for social reforms is a lie. A Biden administration will be an administration of austerity and militarism, carried out in collaboration with the Republican Party and creating the best conditions for the further growth of the far-right.

The fight ahead must be directed to the development of a genuine socialist movement, independent of and in opposition to the Democratic Party and a Biden administration, based on the unification of workers of all races and nationalities against both parties of the financial aristocracy.



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