

Canada's union-backed NDP champions close ties with a Biden administration, opposition to China

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Canada's trade union-backed, ostensibly "left-wing" New Democratic Party (NDP) has signalled its support for expanding Ottawa's longstanding military-strategic partnership with US imperialism under a Joe Biden-led Democratic Party administration.

On Monday, all parties in the House of Commons unanimously supported an NDP-authored motion that congratulated Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris and invited the president- and vice president-elect to visit Canada at the earliest opportunity. The NDP motion also called for Biden to be accorded the privilege of addressing a joint session of the House of Commons and Senate, the upper house of Canada's parliament.

Biden won a clear victory in the popular vote and Electoral College, yet the outcome of the political crisis in the United States remains unclear. Trump has refused to concede defeat, and initiated steps to nullify the election results and orchestrate a coup so as to hold onto power at the head of an authoritarian regime.

Although the Trudeau government enjoyed a close working relationship with the Trump administration, and both before and since the election has avoided all comment on Trump's anti-democratic actions, it and the predominant section of Canada's ruling elite have enthused over the prospect of a Biden presidency. They were roiled by Trump's "America First" protectionism and trashing of NATO and other Western imperialist-led institutions and alliances. For them, Biden and his Democrats are far and away the better option to manage the affairs of world capitalism and to advance the partnership with Washington that underpins Canadian imperialism's predatory global interests (see: "Trudeau leads Canadian establishment in hailing Biden's election victory").

The fact that the NDP is taking a leading role in a ruling class charm offensive targeting the prospective Biden administration speaks volumes as to the class character and role of Canada's social democrats. Notwithstanding the New Democrats' occasional "left" posturing (as with their current promotion of a minuscule COVID-19 "wealth tax" on those with fortunes in excess of C\$20 million) and the "socialist" and even "Marxist"

rhetoric spouted by the pseudo-left groups that operate in and around the NDP, it is a party of Canadian imperialism. Just like the Liberals and Conservatives.

In embracing Biden, the New Democrats are embracing someone who for decades—as a senator, chair of the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and vice-president—has played a leading role in formulating US imperialist policy. This includes plotting and promoting the wars it has waged directly and through proxies in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and Syria. As Obama's vice-president, Biden was deeply involved in implementing the anti-China "Pivot to Asia" and the post-2014 NATO war build-up against Russia.

Moreover, as underscored by the events of the past four years, should Biden ultimately take office it will be with a ruling-class mandate to halt the deterioration in US imperialism's world position through great-power strategic conflict with Russia and China.

Working in close concert with sections of the military-intelligence apparatus, Biden and the Democrats have focused their attack on Trump, throughout his administration, on his purported failure to confront a malevolent Russia. When the Democrats impeached him late last year, they ignored all of his real crimes, including his incitement of police and fascist violence, persecution of refugees and immigrants, and use of the military to carry out his domestic agenda. Instead, their charges revolved around the claim that Trump prioritized his personal political interests over the longstanding US imperialist effort to harness Ukraine to Western strategic interests and use it as a staging ground against Russia.

With its invitation to Biden to address Canada's parliament as soon as possible, the NDP is giving its stamp of approval for US imperialist aggression, above all its war drive against Russia and China. This is politically revealing, but not surprising. For over two decades, the NDP has been a cheerleader for every US-led war in which Canadian imperialism has participated, from Serbia/Kosovo and Afghanistan to Libya and, since 2014, Iraq-Syria.

The last US president to address a joint session of the Canadian parliament was Barack Obama. In 2016, he invoked

the two countries' long history of waging war together and demanded Canada substantially increase its military spending. Soon after, the Trudeau government adopted a plan to hike military spending by over 70 percent by 2026, and in the intervening years it has further expanded Canada's involvement in Washington's military operations and regime-change intrigues around the world.

However, under conditions of global capitalist crisis, bitter commercial conflict, trade wars and intensifying geostrategic competition, Canada's ruling elite wants to go much further.

During last year's federal election campaign, the NDP denounced the Liberal government for failing to spend enough on defence and called for tens of billions of dollars to be invested in warships, fighter jets, and hi-tech weaponry. "Unfortunately, after decades of Liberal and Conservative cuts and mismanagement, our military has been left with outdated equipment, inadequate support, and an unclear strategic mandate," the NDP complained in its election platform. "We need to do better for Canadians in uniform and for the defence of our country. A New Democrat government will make sure that the troops have the equipment, training, and support they need to do the difficult and dangerous work we ask them to undertake" (see: "NDP advocates spending tens of billions on Canada's military").

In advancing Canadian imperialist interests and pushing for a military armed to the teeth and a "strategic mandate," the NDP is ready to collaborate with all manner of right-wing forces—from Trudeau and Biden to the right-wing Conservatives, whom they vilify as the embodiment of evil in their Sunday speeches.

On the same day the NDP presented its motion hailing Biden, it signaled that it will support a Conservative motion when it comes up for a vote, likely later this week, that calls for action against Chinese "foreign interference" in Canada and for the Trudeau government to make a decision within the next 30 days on whether Chinese-based Huawei will be allowed to participate in Canada's 5G telecommunications network.

Washington, the Liberals' opponents on the right, and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service have long been demanding Canada join the other members of the US-led Five Eyes signal communications spying network in banning Huawei. This is part of a broader campaign aimed at pushing the Trudeau government to fall into line even more fully behind Washington's bipartisan economic, diplomatic, and military-strategic offensive against Beijing—an offensive whose logic is a catastrophic military confrontation between the rival nuclear-armed powers.

Although the Conservative motion merely calls on the government to make a decision on the Huawei matter, NDP Foreign Affairs spokesman Jack Harris left no doubt about where his party stands. He denounced Chinese state interference and threats before adding, "There has been enough opportunities to understand what is going on and to recognize

that Huawei...is not something we really should be contemplating given the alternatives."

The NDP portrays both its criticism of China and endorsement of a potential Biden administration as aimed at promoting "democracy." Its parliamentary motion supporting Biden was aimed at showing "the very clear victory and strength of the American democratic process," NDP House Leader Peter Julian told CTV.

In reality, the subordination of the mass opposition to Trump's fascistic coup plotting to Biden and the Democrats can only lead to disaster. As the *World Socialist Web Site* has explained, the overriding concern of Biden and the Democrats is not Trump's refusal to accept his defeat and his conspiracy to cling to power, but that his anti-democratic scheming could trigger a mass movement from below. Attempting to prevent this, Biden has dismissed the significance of Trump's illegal actions and intrigues and is calling for cooperation with the very same Republicans who are enabling Trump's authoritarian power grab.

Even if Trump is forced to relinquish the presidency, the establishment of a right-wing, pro-war, pro-austerity administration under Biden would create the best political conditions for a further strengthening of Trump and the far right (see: "Stop Trump's conspiracy to nullify the 2020 elections").

Workers in Canada and the United States must join together in a common struggle against the reactionary Canada-US military-strategic alliance and the imperialist wars it has and will continue to foment and wage. An indispensable part of this struggle must be the defence of democratic rights against Trump's conspiracy to hold onto power by establishing an authoritarian regime. By their silence on his coup plotting, Canada's ruling elite have made clear that they would seek a modus vivendi with the would-be dictator should he succeed. Canadian and US workers must intervene independently into the political situation with a socialist and internationalist program to resist the plans for war and dictatorship being hatched by the ruling class on both sides of the border.



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