

Ceasefire protesters interrupt Biden campaign speech at South Carolina church

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A handful of anti-genocide protesters interrupted President Joe Biden while he was delivering his second major campaign speech at Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, the site of a white supremacist mass murder in June 2015.

Nine people were murdered in the African American church by then-21-year-old Dylann Roof, a neo-Nazi. After he admitted his guilt, Roof was sentenced to death in January 2017 and is currently on death row. In addition to reading *Breitbart News* and posting on the *Daily Stormer*, Roof was radicalized by the Council of Conservative Citizens, a racist organization with connections to the Republican Party, including current presidential candidate and former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley.

Besides the protesters, Biden spoke before a privileged and conservative crowd which dutifully clapped at the pre-selected applause lines in between chants of “four more years.” In his remarks, Biden sought to resuscitate his floundering re-election campaign, which is hemorrhaging support among wide layers of young people outraged over his administration’s support for the genocide in Gaza. In his speech, Biden pointed to nebulous statistics.

“We have the lowest black unemployment rate recorded in a long, long time,” Biden said. “More blacks (sic) Americans with health insurance than ever, bringing peace of mind and dignity to their lives.” Biden neglected to mention the recent doubling of child poverty, the record-setting homelessness and the “great unwinding” of Medicaid which has plunged millions of people of all races into poverty.

Biden repeated, virtually verbatim, his hollow comments from this past Friday in Pennsylvania about the dangers to democracy represented by Republican Donald Trump.

However, approximately 18 minutes into the speech, protesters interrupted Biden with calls for a ceasefire.

“If you really cared about the lives lost here,” a young protester shouted, referring to the 2015 mass shooting, “you should honor their lives and call for a ceasefire in Palestine!”

A few protesters on the floor of the church and in the balcony also chanted “Ceasefire now! Ceasefire now! Ceasefire now!” After about 20 seconds, the peaceful protesters were escorted out by security. Microphones from television crews picked up one protester telling Biden, “20,000 Palestinians. Their blood is on your hands.”

A few hundred people had gathered inside the church to hear Biden speak. Anticipating that there would be protests against “Genocide Joe,” as he is known to millions around the world for his unstinting support for Israel’s ethnic cleansing campaign in Gaza, the church pastor had asked attendees not to interrupt Biden’s speech. Police and security officers escorted the protesters out of the church without incident.

Following the ceasefire protest, Democratic Party operatives in the media immediately denounced the protesters for having the audacity to call for peace on earth inside of a church. Seeking to stoke racial divisions, Edward-Isaac Dove, “senior reporter” at CNN, falsely reported that “both protesters who interrupted at the historic Black church were white.” Hours later, Dove admitted, “there was a third protester who is a black woman...”

MSNBC anchor Symone Sanders-Townsend, an African American, claimed that the church was “hallowed ground” and the “shock of people” from protesters calling

for a ceasefire while Biden was “speaking from the pulpit cannot be overstated.”

“I too couldn’t believe it,” the former press secretary for Senator Bernie Sanders’ 2016 presidential campaign and former senior adviser to Vice President Kamala Harris, tweeted.

Thousands of angry social media users denounced the Sanders-Townsend tweet.

“Denmark Vesey, one of the founders of the church, plotted a slave revolt and was killed as result of this,” @Marxicology, noted, adding that hosting Biden “who gave billions of dollars to the police and country perpetrating genocide is the real obscenity.”

“Little Black children being blown up in church galvanized folks during the Civil Rights Movement,” @ArielliIvy_ replied. “[A]nd y’all want to cry about people protesting the bombing of children in the churches of Palestine. Are you not ashamed?”

After the protesters were led out of the building, Biden claimed that he understood their “passion” and falsely declared that he has been “quietly working with the Israeli government to reduce and significantly get out of Gaza (sic) and using all that I can to do that.”

In reality, Biden has done nothing to reduce the violence and suffering in Gaza and the occupied West Bank. His administration has circumvented Congress to deliver millions of dollars in tank shells to genocidal Zionists who are gleefully posting their daily war crimes on social media.

As Israeli politicians continue to call for a second *Nakba*, Biden has spread Israeli lies about alleged atrocities committed by Hamas fighters who allegedly beheaded babies, while downplaying the Palestinian death toll.

At the United Nations, US ambassadors have blocked resolutions from member states calling for a ceasefire. In press conferences and interviews, his officials, including Secretary of State Antony Blinken, reassert that there are “no red lines” for the Israel Defense Forces, even as they regularly assassinate Palestinian journalists, doctors, healthcare workers and poets with US-supplied weapons.

Before he spoke, Biden was introduced by long-time Democratic Rep. James Clyburn (South Carolina).

Clyburn, as Biden acknowledges, is perhaps the politician most responsible for getting him into the White House. After Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders appeared to win the 2020 primaries in Iowa and New Hampshire, the third-ranking House Democrat provided Biden a much-needed endorsement before the tightly controlled South Carolina primary, propelling Biden to his first primary win and eventually the presidency.

Prior to Biden’s speech Monday, Clyburn made headlines in the bourgeois press over the weekend for expressing concerns over Biden’s campaign and its inability to convince voters about the administration’s supposed achievements.

Speaking on CNN, Clyburn made clear he had no problem with Biden’s policies, only that he might lose to Trump. “I have no problem with the Biden administration and what it has done,” Clyburn told CNN’s Jake Tapper. “We have not been able to break through the MAGA wall.”

Monday’s protest at Mother Emanuel AME in Charleston was one of several protests organized by Jewish-American and other antiwar groups, such as IfNotNow. Such protests against genocide in Gaza have been spreading since last October.

Protesters have also engaged in civil disobedience, such as forming human chains to block traffic at major intersections.

The latter tactic was employed in New York City and Dallas on Monday. In New York, hundreds of protesters blocked traffic at several major bridges and a tunnel leading to traffic congestion and mass arrests. The New York Police Department reported that 325 were arrested, with the majority facing misdemeanor charges.

Similarly in Dallas, over a dozen protesters were arrested outside the Love Field Airport ahead of Biden’s arrival, according to the Palestinian Youth Movement.



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