

Cornel West adapts to far-right in interview on Musk-boosted X program

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On June 4, independent presidential candidate Dr. Cornel West conducted an extended interview with far-right personality Mario Nawfal on X Spaces, a live audio chat feature on the social media network owned by billionaire Elon Musk.

Notably, West's interview with Nawfal was conducted less than a month after Nawfal hosted neo-Nazi Nick Fuentes. Nawfal's interview with Fuentes was the first major appearance Fuentes made after he was reinstated by Musk to the platform last month. In announcing the interview with Fuentes, which also featured *InfoWars* founder Alex Jones, Nawfal wrote, "I don't agree with MOST of what Nick Fuentes says, but EVERYBODY deserves a voice!"

In the nearly four-hour-long interview, Nawfal, who has 1.5 million followers, provided Fuentes an open venue to espouse his antisemitic and racist perspective. One of Nawfal's self-described "tough questions" for Fuentes was, "What is the most controversial belief that you currently hold?" After Fuentes railed against "Jewish influence" and demanded that "only Christians should be in power in America. ... All Christian legislators, presidents, and Supreme Court Justices," Nawfal asked Fuentes to expound on his "second most taboo belief," which Fuentes used as an opportunity to talk about being a "race realist."

In his own two-hour interview with Nawfal, West never once brought up his interviewer's cozy relationship with fascists and neo-Nazis. Instead, West thanked "Brother Mario" for hosting him, "I look forward to learning, I look forward to listening, my brother, taking it in and trying to critically assess," before proceeding to adapt to his right-wing audience.

West was asked several times to comment on the recent Trump verdict, including at one point by a pro-Trump MAGA operative, who asked West how he

planned to "restore faith in the US justice system" following the verdict.

West replied, "That's the crucial question, brother, very very much so." After pontificating on his experiences "from the chocolate side of town," West called for more "fairness" and "integrity," which he said would provide people with the "evidence" that the system can "entertain the possibility of integrity."

Turning to the Biden's recent Trump-style executive order aimed at eliminating the right to asylum, West chastised Biden's and Trump's "tone," while not offering any actual policy or political differences. West said that as president he would "set a tone, a framework, a vibe" so "people have sense, whether or not they can come in or not." West reiterated that while he would seek more "humane" policies, "recognize that it's not just going to be open border, wide open, absolutely right."

While West offered up his usual rhetorical critiques of US imperialism and wealth inequality, he emphasized multiple times and at length that he was not a socialist, but instead, adopted some "insights" from the "socialist tradition."

"There are people who say, 'Oh, you sound like you are a socialist,'" West said, adding, "Well, no, I'm just a Christian just trying to make sure people are treated right, and there's some deep insights coming out of a socialist tradition. ... But that is part of the tone..."

West went on to defend the capitalist system, saying that if "Adam Smith" came back, "he would say this is not capitalism at all. This is a monopoly-centered oligopoly-driven obsessed with short-term profit, not long-term profit tied to common good that he talks about."

Asked by a right-wing X user if West could expand

on previous statements where he described himself as a “non-Marxist socialist” because “Marxism and Christianity ... can’t be reconciled,” West replied, “I appreciate it, appreciate it, as I said before, as a jazz man I pull from a variety of different traditions, you have to be improvisational...”

West said that while he resonated with the “socialist tradition” because it “puts working people and poor people at the center,” he would never join the Black Panther Party, “because they, themselves, had their own atheistic proclivities, and I’m Christian, Jesus-loving free Black man.”

West went on to attack Marx for being an atheist and not spending “enough time talking about democratic processes, so you ended up with communist parties that run roughshod too often over rights and liberties, but that is another issue.”

In addition to repeating the right-wing canard that the originator of the materialist conception of history and author of *Capital* is somehow responsible for the crimes of Stalinism and its progeny, West never offered a similar critique of capitalism and the fascism it produces.

This is not an oversight. While paying lip service to the “working class” and “poor,” West rejects any class analysis of society, trading instead in the snake oil of racial politics and self-promotion. This is shown in his selection of Melina Abdullah, a proponent of identity politics, as his running mate.

West’s appearance on Nawfal’s program follows other appearances on far-right platforms. In February, West appeared on a panel hosted by the Libertarian Party of California, an experience he recounted in his latest interview rhapsodically, “I was at the state convention, Libertarian, in California ... wonderful dialogue.”

When West announced his election campaign one year ago, the WSWS described his program as a “pragmatic and bankrupt muddle.” This has been clearly demonstrated in the course of his campaign, including the interview with Nawfal.

In addition to hosting “The Roundtable Show,” the Dubai-based 30-year-old Nawfal hosts “The Crypto Roundtable.” He is also the CEO of International Blockchain Consulting and founder of Froothie, an Australian-based “Global Health and Wellness Brand.”

Nawfal presents himself as a “citizen journalist” on X, where he is frequently boosted by its billionaire owner Musk, who has himself frequently appeared on Nawfal’s program. In reply to a June 5 post by Nawfal that declared in all caps, “TRUMP’S SHOW OF SUPPORT IN SAN FRANCISCO: SOLD OUT!” Musk replied, “The [San Francisco] Bay Area is shifting towards Trump,” which Nawfal then retweeted multiple times.

A few weeks after hosting Fuentes and before hosting Cornel West, Nawfal brought on Robert F. Kennedy Jr., perhaps the most “pro-genocide” candidate running in the US presidential election. In the over 40-minute-long interview, Nawfal did not once raise the topic of the US-backed Israeli genocide in Gaza but devoted several questions to the topic of cryptocurrency and Kennedy Jr. being “censored.”



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