

“Trump did a better job”: Bernie Sanders praises Trump’s anti-immigrant pogrom on The Tim Dillon Show

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As the Trump administration continues to carry out its mass deportation operation, separating families and disappearing long-time residents into a network of mostly privately run concentration camps, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders went on the far-right *Tim Dillon Show* last week to praise Donald Trump’s attacks on immigrants.

In the extraordinary interview, Sanders not only praised Trump’s illegal closing of the border, which deprives immigrants and refugees the right to claim asylum in the US, but echoed Trump’s talking points in justifying the war on immigrants.

Sanders’ decision to appear on the program is another demonstration of the pragmatic opportunism, cynicism and contempt for democratic and socialist principles that have characterized his entire political career. Dillon, like comedians Joe Rogan and Theo Von, backed Trump in the 2024 election. Dillon regularly associates with millionaire Republicans and previously admitted to having dinner with Vice President JD Vance this year.

In the last year, Dillon has hosted Vance, fascist Steve Bannon and Georgia Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene on his program.

Questioned by the right-wing comedian if “citizenship should mean something” and if “we should have a border,” Sanders seized the opportunity to wave the flag and burnish his credentials as a national chauvinist. “You’ve asked a lot of very important questions. Good questions. Let’s start off with the basic. So long as we have nation states, right which we have, you gotta have borders, right?”

Repeating Trump’s fascist campaign lines verbatim, Sanders continued: “You don’t have any borders, then

you don’t have a nation. Right, in a sense.”

Turning to praise Trump and the Republicans, Sanders said:

So has historically the United States done well under Democrats and Republicans protecting the border? The answer is no. Trump did a better job. I don’t like Trump, you know, but we should have a secure border and it ain’t that hard to do. Biden didn’t do it. Those before him did not do it. We should have a secure border period. I think most people in the Congress agree with that.

Pressed by Dillon why former President Joe Biden did not do more to block immigrants from coming to the country, Sanders defended the Democrat, “He did. He did something things. He was not, he, I think by the end of his term, if my memory is correct, the number, the number of illegal folks coming in had gone down. But I’m not gonna sit here and tell you that overall it was a good job, it was not.

Sanders continued, “You need a border, let’s have a border. And we have certainly the technology and the manpower to make that happen.”

Sanders’ defense of the capitalist nation state and its increasingly militarized borders is not new. For years, Sanders has blamed immigrants and foreign workers, as opposed to the capitalist system, for destroying jobs and driving down the wages and living standards of native-born workers. Sanders’ support for Trump’s border policies mirrors that of Teamsters President

Sean O'Brien and the rest of the trade union bureaucracies, which use economic nationalism and jingoism to pit American workers against their class brothers and sisters around the world.

Sanders legitimized the witchhunting of immigrants, declaring that those who came to the US under the Biden administration "came in illegally. Period. Okay. It was illegal."

This is not the first time this year Sanders has publicly praised Trump's fascistic mass deportation operation. In an interview on ABC earlier this year, Sanders said Trump had "done right" in regards to suppressing immigrants.

Dillon later brought up that Sanders has previously opposed "open borders," that is the free movement of people across the border, citing it as a "Koch Brothers proposal." Sanders replied, "That's right."

Notably, when Dillon featured fascist Steve Bannon on his program earlier this year, Bannon admitted that his anti-immigrant agenda was mirrored in Sanders' policies, telling Dillon, "We had a totally similar, we just lifted Bernie Sanders shit. I mean, come on. We just took it."

That Bannon and Sanders have the same anti-immigrant program makes clear that the "socialism" advanced by Sanders, and his supporters in the Democratic Socialists of America, has nothing to do with socialism. Marxists have always advanced the perspective that the working class has no country and that the emancipation of humanity from wage slavery must be rooted in the international unity of all workers in all countries against the multinational corporations and billionaires that siphon all of the wealth created by the working class for themselves and their militaries.

While Sanders' congratulation of Trump for his fascist immigrant agenda was the most significant aspect of his appearance on the show, he also advanced several other right-wing and pro-imperialist positions. Asked to comment on the fraudulent "ceasefire" in Gaza, Sanders insisted on Israel's "right to defend itself."

Sanders said, "Hamas is a terrorist organization that committed an atrocity when it attacked Israel and killed 1,200 innocent men, women and a lot of young people, took hundreds of hostages." In fact, many of those killed were massacred by Israeli military elements as part of the *Hannibal Directive*.

Dillon noted that many young people oppose not just the genocide in Gaza but the ongoing US-NATO war against Russia and Ukraine. He noted that many younger people are wondering why the US government is spending billions on foreign wars while workers and young people can't afford homes.

Sanders said he did not see the "two issues as comparable" while again reiterating Israel's alleged right to "self defense." Dillon pressed Sanders, saying they are "both foreign conflicts" and that many were wondering why billions were being spent over a "land dispute in Northern Ukraine."

Sanders grumbled, "I don't call it a land dispute." A loyal lackey of US imperialism, Sanders launched into a rant against Russian President Vladimir Putin, "a disgusting human being."

Sanders claimed European ambassadors told him that if Putin "is not stopped at the Ukraine other Eastern Europe countries will be next. ... NATO will be involved and then maybe the United States and our troops as well."

Sanders' defense of Israel and the ongoing war against Russia along with his promotion of Trump's anti-immigrant pogrom exposes him and the social forces that support him, especially those in the DSA and Democratic Party, as enemies of the working class.



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