

After midterm elections, Democrats call for bipartisan unity with Trump

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Following an election campaign dominated by President Donald Trump's use of anti-immigrant racism to whip up fascist elements and justify the domestic deployment of troops and attacks on the Bill of Rights, the Democratic Party regained control of the House of Representatives and the Republicans increased their control over the Senate.

Under conditions of massive popular opposition to the Trump administration, the Democrats conducted a right-wing campaign that virtually excluded the issues of central concern to the working class: social inequality, war and authoritarianism. They responded to the election by appealing to Trump for bipartisan collaboration.

During the campaign, the Democrats refused to even speak about Trump's witch hunt against Central American asylum seekers, the erection of immigrant detention camps or the attack on birthright citizenship. In the midst of new moves by the administration in the direction of war with Russia, Iran and China—the withdrawal from the intermediate nuclear missile treaty, the imposition of savage sanctions against Iran and the escalation of trade war against China—they said nothing about the mounting war danger. They dropped their token opposition to Trump's tax cuts for the rich.

The result, hardly the much-vaunted “blue wave,” was what the Democratic Party wanted: An election that would allow Trump to consolidate his control while giving the Democrats more input. As the Democratic leader of the House, Nancy Pelosi, said in the run-up to the vote, control of the House would give the Democrats “leverage.” They intend to use that influence to pressure Trump to pursue a more aggressive confrontation with Russia and a wider war in Syria.

Wall Street signaled its delight at the outcome with a stock surge. All of the major indices shot up, with the

Dow Jones Industrial Average climbing more than 500 points.

The election campaign itself exemplified the corrupt, manipulated and antidemocratic character of so-called democracy in America. A midterm record of \$5 billion was spent, provided mainly by billionaire oligarchs, to revamp the personnel and alter the balance of power in Congress and in state houses to more effectively continue the transfer of wealth from the working class to the oligarchy. More corporate money went to the Democrats than the Republicans.

The Democrats used the election to deepen their orientation to privileged and wealthy layers of the middle class. The bulk of the House seats they picked up were in better-off suburbs. Perhaps a dozen of the newly elected Democratic congressmen came from the party's contingent of former military, intelligence and State Department figures recruited as candidates by the party leadership. These “CIA Democrats” will set the tone for the Democratic caucus in the incoming Congress.

Amid the mutual mudslinging and lies, the working class is completely excluded from any input into the policies and decisions of the government.

Trump held a press conference Wednesday to make clear there would be no let-up in his right-wing policies. He attacked a reporter as an “enemy of the people” and warned the Democrats that any attempt to use their majority in the House to investigate his finances would result in a “warlike posture.” At the same time, he praised Pelosi and offered to supply Republican votes to assure her election as speaker of the new House that takes office in January.

Pelosi then held a rambling press conference in the course of which she used the terms “bipartisan” and “work together” dozens of times.

The *New York Times* posted an editorial spelling out

the Democratic agenda of collaboration with Trump and intensification of his administration's right-wing course. There is to be no talk of mild reforms broached early on in the campaign by so-called "progressive" Democrats, such as "Medicare for all" and the "abolition" of the Gestapo-like Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency. Instead, the Democrats are to talk about ethics "reform," "transparency" and similar empty phrases. The "I" word (impeachment) is to be avoided, as is an excess of subpoenas and investigations. Instead, the *Times* states, "Finding a compromise path with Mr. Trump would be good policy and good politics."

The central issue posed by the election is this: The rearrangement of seats in Congress, from the standpoint of the interests of the working class, is largely irrelevant. No positive change is possible outside of the independent intervention of the working class.

One thing is certain: the decisions that affect the lives of millions in America and billions around the world will remain in the hands of a parasitic financial oligarchy. This modern-day aristocracy of multimillionaires and billionaires, personified in the repulsive figure of Trump, will pursue its selfish and criminal interests ruthlessly, regardless of tactical shifts and changes in the personnel of its bribed politicians. The class axis, strategic orientation and interests served remain the same.

A major factor driving the Democrats ever more desperately into the arms of Trump and the Republicans is the initial expression of a new upsurge of the class struggle. This year has seen a threefold increase in the number of major strikes in the US, including statewide strikes by teachers, strikes by hotel workers, walkouts by college instructors and contract rejections by hundreds of thousands of workers at United Parcel Service. This is part of an international growth of strikes and working-class protests.

The growth of the class struggle is an objective and inevitable process, driven by the staggering levels of social inequality. These social struggles will intensify.

The Democratic Party has nothing to offer the working class. It is one of two major right-wing parties of American capitalism. Its base, beyond Wall Street and the military/intelligence apparatus, is the wealthy upper-middle-class layers obsessed with racial and

gender politics, which are seen as a means of carving out a bigger share of the wealth of the top 10 percent.

The Democrats give Trump and his neo-fascist allies free rein to seek to channel the anger of impoverished sections of the working class in the direction of nationalism and anti-immigrant chauvinism.

The only progressive alternative is the development of the class struggle and its conscious mobilization in opposition to the entire political establishment and the capitalist system it upholds.

The broad mass of workers and youth are shifting to the left and increasingly looking for a socialist solution to the crisis. What they lack, however, is a clear understanding of the history of the class struggle and a political program that articulates the independent historic interests of the working class. This program must be brought into the working class by the revolutionary party—the Socialist Equality Party.

The answer to the dead end of the capitalist two-party system and the immense dangers of war and dictatorship is the building of the SEP to lead the coming mass struggles. The time to join and build this party is today.

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