

Democrats nominate Biden in inane display of political reaction

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The Democratic National Convention concluded Thursday night with the formal acceptance of the party's presidential nomination by former Vice President Joe Biden, after a final two-hour session that was full of empty clichés, inane rhetoric and nauseating insincerity.

The atmosphere Thursday was more of a religious revival than a political event. There was incessant emphasis on the personal moral superiority of Biden compared to Trump, accompanied by increasingly maudlin testimonials to Biden's alleged deep concern for children, the downtrodden, and virtually anyone who crossed his path. One former White House official referred to Biden's "empathy skills," a phrase which recalls the old wisecrack: "Sincerity—if you can fake that, you've got it made."

The sheer contempt for the intelligence of the population and the viewing audience was summed up in Biden's acceptance speech. His speechwriters appeared to have been trying to cram every possible trite phrase into a single 20-minute address.

He ran through a laundry list of promises, from climate change to racism to student debt, none of which the Democratic Party has the slightest intention of actually carrying out. Only two phrases had real meaning.

Biden reassured Wall Street and the billionaires, "I'm not looking to punish anyone." This sent a message to the financial aristocracy that, while the candidate was compelled to make demagogic attacks on the wealthy for electoral purposes, these would have no lasting consequences. "Nothing will change" for the super-rich, he told a Wall Street fundraiser last year, and that pledge he will keep.

And the former vice president denounced Trump for being too soft on Russia, threatening to hold Vladimir Putin accountable for allegedly paying bounties to

Taliban fighters who attacked American troops in Afghanistan. This phony story is just the latest fabrication by the *New York Times* in its four-year-long campaign to provoke a US war with Russia.

The tone for the convention's final day was set by the report Thursday afternoon that a group of 73 former national security officials from four Republican administrations were endorsing Biden and denouncing Trump in an open letter to be published in the *Wall Street Journal*. The list includes an array of militarists and police-state operatives who are responsible for the death of millions of people in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia.

Among the most prominent and most deserving of prosecution for war crimes endorsing Biden are:

- John Negroponte, with a bloody record from the contra terrorist war against Nicaragua to the occupation of Iraq in the 2000s;
- Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the 1991 Persian Gulf War, and secretary of state during the 2003 Iraq War, in which he played a central role in justifying a war based on lies;
- Michael Hayden, former director of the National Security Agency and later CIA director, who oversaw CIA torture programs and domestic spying;
- Robert Blackwill, deputy director of the National Security Council with responsibility for Iraq war policy in 2003–2004;
- Michael Leiter, director of the National

Counterterrorism Center under the younger Bush; and

- William Webster, director of the FBI under Reagan and of the CIA under the elder Bush.

The support of these former leaders of the military-intelligence apparatus only underscores the real character of the conflict between the Democratic and Republican parties, the twin political instruments of the American ruling elite.

The Democrats oppose Trump, not because of his tax cuts for billionaires or his attacks on democratic rights and the rights of immigrants and refugees, but rather because of differences over foreign policy related to the Middle East and particularly Russia. An incoming Biden administration would immediately adopt an even more provocative and aggressive anti-Russian policy.

This was underscored in one segment after another of the final day's program leading up to Biden's acceptance speech, with military veterans and Republicans brought forward to speak in video segments. The most strident pro-war message came from Senator Tammy Duckworth, who denounced Trump as the "coward in chief" for his alleged capitulation to Putin over the bounties.

As for domestic policy, Biden's closest political associate, his Senate chief-of-staff Ted Kaufman, who heads the transition team preparing for a future Biden administration, told the *Wall Street Journal* Wednesday that the rising federal budget deficit would make ambitious spending programs impossible. "When we get in, the pantry is going to be bare," Kaufman said. "When you see what Trump's done to the deficit... forget about COVID-19, all the deficits that he built with the incredible tax cuts. So we're going to be limited."

The reference to what "Trump's done" is a fraud, since the both the Democrats and Republicans endorsed, on a nearly unanimous basis, the multi-trillion dollar bailout of Wall Street in March. The coronavirus pandemic—which, as a result of the policies of the ruling class, has produced a social and economic catastrophe for the American population—has been utilized by the ruling elite as an opportunity to loot the public treasury. And it is the working class that will be forced to pay.

Despite claims by Bernie Sanders that Biden could

become the most progressive president since Franklin Roosevelt, the real policy orientation of a future Biden administration was signaled by the appearance of billionaire Michael Bloomberg, who gave the last speech before Biden himself was introduced, pouring scorn on Trump as a poor businessman and incompetent manager. It is the billionaires and the military-intelligence apparatus, not political charlatans like Sanders, who will call the shots if the Democrats win the White House.

Next week will put the ultra-right ravings of the Republican Party and the Trump White House on display. The Democratic Party masquerades as the friend of the workers while doing the bidding of the corporate elite; the Republican Party, under Trump's direction, is working to develop a fascist movement. Both parties are the enemies of the working class, which must develop and build an independent revolutionary alternative.

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