

Australian Greens leader Adam Bandt expresses “big respect” for “Genocide Joe” Biden

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Amid the massive political crisis in America, Australian parliamentarians have declared their ironclad commitment to the US alliance whatever happens in Washington.

The Labor government, joined by the Liberal-National Coalition opposition, fawned over the right-wing gangster Donald Trump after he narrowly escaped assassination, dispatched its ambassador Kevin Rudd to the openly fascist Republican National Convention, and conveyed its well-wishes to the senile war criminal Joe Biden when he announced he would not stand for re-election.

Each of these actions has been a signal that Canberra remains fully committed to the US-led war drive globally, including the genocide of Palestinians in Gaza, a proxy war against Russia in Ukraine and advanced preparations for a catastrophic conflict with China in the Indo-Pacific. The response is in line with the explicit support of Labor and the Coalition for American-led militarism worldwide.

More revealing was the reaction of Greens leader Adam Bandt to Biden’s announcement.

The Greens are the only parliamentary party to have accurately branded the Israeli onslaught on Gaza a genocide, to have demanded that it end and to have pointed to the complicity of the Australian government.

For this, the Greens have repeatedly been denounced by Labor and the Coalition, together with the corporate press. At the same time, they have won a degree of respect and support from layers of young people and others being politicised by the horrific war crimes.

Biden’s responsibility for the Israeli massacre is so widely recognised that he will forever be remembered by the moniker “Genocide Joe.” Given that, and the Greens’ stated opposition to the destruction of Gaza, one may have expected a sharp word from Bandt on Biden’s announcement that he would not contest the presidential election.

Instead, the Greens leader posted on X/Twitter: “Big respect to Joe Biden for making what would have been a

very difficult decision overnight.” There was not a critical note, either over Biden’s involvement in the mass murder of Palestinians, or his decades-long political career, which has consisted of supporting one war crime after another and representing the interests of the Wall Street banks.

Biden’s decision to accept his own mental decrepitude may have been a “very difficult” one. However, there is no indication that providing the Israeli regime with two-thousand pound bombs to level Gaza gave him any difficulty. Indeed, Biden’s most lucid moments over recent months have been when he has spoken of the need to wage war globally to advance US imperialist interests.

Greens’ supporters may dismiss Bandt’s comment as a one-liner without political significance and/or a gesture of grace. But that is refuted by the context. Bandt connected his well-wishes to Biden with a blanket endorsement of whoever was to succeed him as Democratic Party candidate.

Because Bandt rushed out his statement, Biden’s replacement was not yet named, but it was clear that it would either be his Vice President Kamala Harris or another pro-business warmonger.

Nevertheless, Bandt declared: “The new Democratic presidential candidate must do all they can to keep Trump out of office,” and Americans should vote for them. This was because “[a] second Donald Trump term would be dangerous. For the climate, for already marginalised communities, and for the growing threat of far-right extremism.”

The Democrats, whom Bandt was promoting as fighters of “far-right extremism” on Monday, were today giving a standing ovation to the Israeli version of Hitler, Benjamin Netanyahu, whom they invited to a special joint sitting of Congress together with the Republicans.

More generally, Bandt and other proponents of lesser-evilism are unable to explain why Trump and his fascist MAGA movement have been immeasurably strengthened by four years of Biden’s presidency.

Biden and the Democrats responded to Trump's attempted fascist coup in January 2021 by covering up its dire implications and declaring their wish for a "strong Republican Party." To the extent Trump has been able to make a pseudo-populist appeal to discontent, it is the result of the reactionary, pro-business and pro-war policies that Biden has enacted.

Trump's fascist movement will not be defeated by voting for the Democrats, but by building a socialist movement of the working class against the two-party system.

It is striking that Bandt, in his commentary on Biden's resignation and the implications of the US election, didn't even mention the Gaza genocide. For the Greens, this historic war crime is one issue among many, to be raised when politically convenient, and to be shelved when not.

In his rush to join the paeans to Biden, Bandt was above all sending a message to the Australian political establishment and the ruling elite it represents. The Greens may have limited criticisms of the genocide and of such things as AUKUS, the militarist pact preparing for war with China, but they accept the whole framework within which these policies are pursued, including the US alliance itself.

Bandt's line on the US has an immediate domestic relevance. While they have condemned the government's complicity in the genocide, the Greens have not ruled out preferencing Labor or forming some sort of power-sharing arrangement with it after an election that must be held by next May. They will almost certainly do the former, and would pursue the latter if Labor called on them.

The Greens' line on Gaza, while including emotive denunciations of the horrors, has largely consisted of appeals to the Labor government to "do the right thing." The party has continued such moral appeals, even as Labor has doubled down on its support for Israel at every step.

The purpose of the Greens' posturing is to divert opposition back behind the political establishment, while advising the government that establishing some distance from the Israeli regime is necessary to diffuse mass anger. At the same time as the genocide has occurred, the Greens have continued to collaborate with Labor on other issues.

As the WSWS has previously reviewed in detail, the Greens are not an anti-war party. They are among the most enthusiastic proponents of the US-NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine, one of the signature policies of Biden's presidency.

For American imperialism, the war in the Middle East, the conflict with Russia and the confrontation with China are theaters of a single global conflict, aimed at establishing untrammelled US hegemony. The Greens cover up this fundamental reality—an understanding of which is essential to fighting war—supporting Washington's "good wars,"

while offering verbal criticisms of its "bad wars."

This is not new, with the Greens having supported the US regime-change operations in Libya and Syria during the 2010s, which served as a direct precursor to the current eruption of imperialist militarism globally, including the genocide in Gaza.

Bandt's online nod to Biden recalls an earlier episode. In 2011, then President Barack Obama addressed the Australian parliament, announcing from its floor a new US "pivot to Asia," a vast military build-up throughout the region directed against China. Bandt, following then Greens leader, Bob Brown, was among the first in line to shake Obama's hand and congratulate him after he had outlined this militarist program.

At the time, the Greens were in a formal alliance with the minority Labor government of Julia Gillard. The Greens propped up Gillard's government as it aligned Australia with the US war drive targeting China, aided the persecution of Julian Assange, victimised welfare recipients, took the axe to education and healthcare, and supported Israeli oppression of the Palestinians. The Greens would do so again if given the chance.

Bandt's comments are also an exposure of the various pseudo-left groups, such as Solidarity and Socialist Alternative. They have buried the Greens' support for militarism, instead presenting its posturing on Gaza as bona fide and laudable, as they have adopted the same position of subordinating opposition to feckless appeals to Labor.

The fight against genocide and imperialist war means building a political party of the working class, against Labor, the Coalition, the Greens and the entire parliamentary set-up. The Socialist Equality Party is alone in advancing this perspective, as part of a global struggle to mobilise the working class against the source of the deepening barbarism: capitalism itself. Join the SEP as an electoral member today to ensure there is a genuine socialist, anti-genocide and anti-war party on the ballot at the federal election.



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