

In CNN town hall, Harris refuses to place conditions on Israeli military support, pledges to work with Republicans on border wall

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With the US election less than two weeks away and early voting taking place in a majority of states, the Democratic nominee for president, Vice President Kamala Harris, took part in a CNN Town Hall Wednesday night hosted by Anderson Cooper in Delaware County, Pennsylvania.

According to a tracker maintained by the AP, some 1.1 million people have already voted in Pennsylvania, one of a handful of “battleground” states that will decide the election. In total, the AP estimates that some 25.7 million early ballots have already been cast this election.

Major polling surveys published in the last week indicate that the race has tightened significantly, with Trump leading in some nationwide polls. CNBC, the *Wall Street Journal* and HarrisX/Forbes all released polls in the last week that found Trump leading by two points. This is within the margin of error in each poll but an improvement for Trump over previous surveys.

That the race is close at all is an indictment of the Democratic Party, which has proven incapable of and opposed to doing anything that addresses the social crisis in the United States, while focused on the escalation of war abroad.

Wednesday’s town hall was originally planned to be the second debate between Harris and former President Donald Trump, but the latter refused to participate. This did not prevent Trump’s far-right program from dominating the event, as Harris and the Democrats continue to adopt Trump’s fascistic anti-immigrant policies while defending the genocide in Gaza.

Wednesday’s event began with Harris ceding the “fight for democracy” to un-elected generals that served in Trump’s administration. She recapped former White House Chief of Staff John Kelly’s recent remarks characterizing Trump as a fascist who yearned for “the kind of generals” Hitler had, by which Trump means officers loyal to him and willing to carry out any order, no matter how illegal.

Cooper noted that in Harris’s response that she quoted what Kelly had said, but did she herself believe Trump was a fascist? Harris replied:

Yes, I do. Yes, I do. And I also believe the people that know him best on this subject should be trusted. Career people ... highest roles in national security, generals in our

military.

Prior to and as the coup unfolded on January 6, the Democrats refused to appeal to the broader population to defend democratic rights. Their entire orientation, then and now, is to the military and the intelligence agencies.

Harris went on to tout the immense support she has received in her campaign from Republicans, including war criminals who have served in previous Republican administrations stretching back to Ronald Reagan. Harris boasted:

I traveled this state and others with Liz Cheney, former Congress-member who was a very high-ranking Republican. She has endorsed me; her father the former vice president of the United States, Dick Cheney, is voting for me. Over 400 members of, previous members of the, the administration from Ronald Reagan, to both Presidents Bush, to Donald Trump even, have endorsed my candidacy.

These Republicans are not supporting Harris because she will defend “democracy” but because they think she will defend the interests of American imperialism more effectively than the aspiring dictator Trump.

While CNN pre-screened the questions, one of the attendees at the event was allowed to broach the slaughter in Gaza, which studies from this summer estimate has led to the deaths of over 200,000 people. Annalise Kean, a fundraiser for Habitat for Humanity, asked Harris, “What would you do to ensure that not another Palestinian dies due to bombs being funded by US tax dollars?”

Harris refused to directly answer the question, stating:

So, I will say, and I think this is to your point, far too many innocent Palestinian civilians have been killed. It’s unconscionable, and we are now at a place where with Sinwar’s death I do believe we have an opportunity to end

this war, bring the hostages home, bring relief to the Palestinian people and work towards a two-state solution where Israel and the Palestinians in equal measure have security.

In other words, the killing will continue with US military support unabated. Harris, unsurprisingly, said nothing about the “General’s Plan,” the Naziesque extermination operation that the Israeli military, with US backing, is currently undertaking in northern Gaza.

In a pattern that would repeat itself throughout the event, after Harris refused to address an inquiry, Cooper would ask a follow-up that Harris would also refuse to answer directly. In one example, Cooper asked Harris what she would say to voters “who are supporting a third-party candidate or staying on the couch, not voting at all because of this issue?” referring to the genocide.

Harris replied, absurdly, that mass killing abroad is the price to pay to bring down the price of groceries in America:

Listen, I am not going to deny the strong feelings that people have. I don’t know that anyone who has seen the images would not have strong feelings about what has happened, much less those who have relatives who have died and been killed. And I know people, and I have talked with people.

So I appreciate that, but I also do know that for many people who care about this issue they also care about bringing down the price of groceries.

In fact, just the opposite is the case. While the US government has “no money” to feed the hungry or house the homeless, under Biden-Harris the war budget has ballooned to over \$1 trillion a year. This massive sum does not account for billions in “supplemental” and “emergency” weapons packages that are regularly approved by Congress.

In response to fairly easy questions about her future priorities or what she would do differently than her boss, Harris stumbled and bumbled through several scripted answers. She could not provide a single concrete example of what she would do differently than the current administration. However, she repeatedly promised to work “across the aisle” with the same Republicans that, in her words, nominated a “fascist” as their nominee.

Harris said she would work to “get past the era of partisan politics,” to “work across the aisle” and offered a “commitment to work with Republicans,” including on “immigration.” Harris said:

I pledge to you that I will work across the aisle to fix this long-standing problem. I think the American people are demanding it on both sides of the aisle, and it’s time we put the partisan approach to this aside.

Cooper pointed out that Harris’s support for the \$20 billion stalled border bill included \$650 million to build Trump’s anti-human border wall, which Harris previously characterized as “stupid,” “useless” and a “medieval vanity project.” Questioned by Cooper if the wall was still stupid, Harris, while cackling, replied:

Well, let’s talk about Donald Trump and that border wall [giggles]. So remember, Donald Trump said Mexico would pay for it? Come on. They didn’t. How much of that wall did he build? I think the last number that I saw was about 2 percent, and then when it came time for him to do a photo-op, you know where he did it? In the part of the wall that President Obama built.

Cooper pressed, “But are you pledging to bring forward a bill that will continue that wall?” Harris replied:

I pledge that I am going to bring forward that bipartisan bill to further strengthen and secure our border. Yes, I am; and yes, I am going to work across the aisle, to pass a comprehensive bill that deals with a broken immigration system.

Cooper again pressed Harris if she would still provide the \$650 million earmarked under Trump to build the wall, Harris replied, “I am not afraid of good ideas where they occur.”

A somewhat taken aback Cooper replied, “So you don’t think it’s ‘stupid’ anymore?”

Harris complained that Trump did not really build the border wall and that she would be more effective. “I think what he did and how he did it, did not make much sense because he didn’t do actually much of anything.”

Both the Democrats and Republicans represent the ruling class and their shared class interests. They have tactical differences over how to prosecute the wars and enrich their donors, but at the end of the day both parties are the enemies of workers around the world.



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