Trump hid positive coronavirus test prior to presidential debate with Joe Biden last year

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In an extraordinary revelation with sinister implications, former White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, in his soon to be released book *The Chief's Chief*, revealed that three days before the first presidential debate between former President Donald Trump and Vice President Joe Biden, Trump tested positive for the coronavirus.

According to Meadows and first reported by the *Guardian*, which received an advance copy of the unreleased book, Trump was on his way to a campaign rally in Pennsylvania on September 26, 2020, when he was first informed that he had tested positive. Less than six days later, Trump would be airlifted to the Walter Reed Medical Center for emergency treatment.

In his book, Meadows writes that White House doctor Sean Conley called him before they were getting ready to depart Washington D.C., informing him of Trump's test and to "stop the president from leaving."

Meadows relayed the information to Trump, who reacted with a profanity-laced tirade that Meadows censored in his book: "Oh spit, you've gotta be trucking lidding me," yelled Trump. Despite the fact that the 74-year-old Trump was at high risk of serious complications from the virus, Meadows writes that there was no thought to postponing the debate or informing the public or Biden.

Meadows wrote that even though Trump knew that he needed to have a negative coronavirus test 72 hours before the start of the debate, "*Nothing* was going to stop [Trump] from going out there."

After taking a second test that returned a negative result later that same day, Meadows wrote, Trump interpreted the result as "full permission to press on as if nothing had happened." Meadows claims that at this point he warned "everyone in his immediate circle to treat him [Trump] as if he was positive."

The *New York Times* reported that while two former Trump officials substantiated Meadows' claim of Trump receiving a positive coronavirus test on September 26, three days before the debate, they did not recall Meadows warning staff to treat Trump as positive.

Instead, the *Times* wrote that hours after receiving his first positive test, "Trump walked to the back of Air Force One and chatted with reporters, not wearing a mask. One of the reporters, who works for The New York Times, later tested positive for the virus."

The fact that the White House covered up Trump's positive test and carried on as if nothing happened is characteristic of the criminal "herd immunity" policy that the entire capitalist ruling class the world over has adopted since the emergence of the pandemic. As Trump told long-time insider journalist Bob Woodward in March 2020, he intended to "play it down," despite knowing the virus was "deadly stuff."

The playing down of the pandemic by the ruling class was on full display the same day Trump first tested positive for the virus. He hosted a celebration in the Rose Garden outside the White House for his far-right Supreme Court nominee Amy Coney Barrett.

As the official US death toll from the pandemic exceeded 200,000, a quarter of the current total, Trump and friends laughed and celebrated, infecting each other in the process. At least 11 attendees of the event would later test positive, including former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, Trump's fascist advisor Stephen Miller and former senior counselor to the president, Kellyanne Conway.

The next day, September 27, a maskless Trump hosted "Gold Star" military families at the White House where he boasted that family members of deceased soldiers were yearning to hug and kiss him, which was "obviously dangerous," but, in the same breath with a smile he said: "Frankly, I'm not telling them to back up."

Two days later, as Trump was aware, prior to the start of the debate both candidates were supposed to be tested.

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However, Trump and his staff arrived to the debate late, forgoing testing. Instead, according to debate moderator and Fox News host Chris Wallace, an “honor system” was implemented with both Trump and Biden claiming they were negative.

During the debate neither Trump, Biden nor Wallace wore a mask. While a majority of those in attendance were masked, Wallace noted after the debate that Trump’s family was not.

“People in the hall did notice that while they were all wearing masks, including my wife and four children, that the first family did not wear masks during the debate. … It is worth noting that different people treated the safety rules inside the hall differently,” Wallace said in an interview following the debate.

During the debate, a sweaty Trump issued his call to his fascist Proud Boy supporters to “stand back and stand by.”

Given Trump’s dictatorial aspirations, his at-the-time lagging poll numbers, due to in large part to his indifferent and criminal handling of the pandemic, coupled with the knowledge that he had recently tested positive, make it not inconceivable that Trump knowingly tried to infect his political rival.

In response to the revelation, Trump unsurprisingly put out a statement claiming his former chief of staff was spreading “fake news.”

“The story of me having COVID prior to, or during, the first debate is Fake News. In fact, a test revealed that I did not have COVID prior to the debate,” wrote Trump, refusing to comment on the first positive test and ignoring the fact that one negative test does not mean he was not infected.

On Wednesday, an ABC News correspondent asked Biden to comment on Trump’s deceit and that fact that Trump apparently knowingly and deliberately put the 78-year-old Biden’s health at risk.

Epitomizing the Democrats’ cowardice in the face of the growing fascist threat, Biden replied, “I don’t think about the former president.”

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