Major media outlets continue campaign to replace fading Biden following public unmasking

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30 June 2024

Years of Democratic Party hacks and media figures claiming President Joe Biden was actually lucid and sharp "behind closed doors" exploded during Thursday's debate with ex-President Donald Trump. The visible disintegration of the 81-year-old president has provoked a major crisis within the Democratic Party, prompting normally loyal capitalist media outlets to issue several worried columns and statements demanding Biden be replaced as the party's nominee for president.

While it is unclear at this time if Biden will be removed from the ticket, the public confirmation that the president is sinking physically and mentally has exacerbated the US political crisis.

The *New York Times* reported that family members, at an allegedly preplanned gathering on Sunday at Camp David, urged Biden to stay in the race. More important than the counsel of his family, the newspaper pointed out, the real test of viability for Biden will come on Monday at 5:30 p.m., at which time the reelection campaign will host "what could be a critical call with its national fund-raising committee."

"Many insiders have said," the *Times* wrote, "that preserving the donor base will be key to the president staying in the race."

There is immense concern within the Democratic Party elite that Biden's performance will scare off the base of the Democratic Party billionaire and multi-millionaire donors, all but ensuring Biden's defeat. *Axios* reported over the weekend that top White House officials including Chief of Staff Jeff Zients, Counselor Steven Ricchetti, and senior adviser Anita Dunn "worked the phones" calling "donors, allies and elected officials, trying to calm nerves."

Leading up to Monday's pivotal discussion with the donors, major pro-Democratic Party media outlets have continued to unleash a barrage of columns calling on Biden to step down.

Writing in the *Atlantic*, Rogé Karma observed, "there are no plausible theories left of how Biden could win the election. Last night was *the* test of whether Biden was up for the job of campaigning, and he failed it. This wasn't just a weak performance… The man could hardly speak. To believe that things will somehow turn around come September, when the next debate is scheduled, would be delusional."

Karma's column follows another article in the *Atlantic* by Mark Leibovich which likewise declared, "Time to Go, Joe."

The New York Times and its editorial board, which has spearheaded the campaign to pressure Biden to withdraw, continued to pump out columns calling for Biden to quit. *Times* columnist Thomas Friedman wrote on June 28, "Joe Biden, a good man and a good president, has no business running for re-election."

On June 29, in a column headlined, "The Ghastly vs. the Ghostly," Maureen Dowd wrote, "Biden looked ghostly, with that trepidatious gait; he couldn't remember his rehearsed lines or numbers. He has age-related issues, and those go in only one direction." That same day, *Times* columnist Ross Douthat wrote in a separate column about "the necessity of removing President Biden from the Democratic ticket…"

In a front-page editorial published Sunday, the editorial board of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* (AJC) called on Biden to "pass the torch" in order to "defeat Trump and for the good of the nation." The AJC is owned by the Cox family, estimated by *Forbes* to be the 10th-wealthiest family in America as of 2024, with a net worth of $26.4 billion.

The family owns media giant Cox Enterprises, which includes Cox Communications (cable television and broadband internet), Cox Media Group which owns and operates nearly 50 radio stations, Cox Automotive (Autotrader, Kelley Blue Book) and several important regional newspapers including the D*ayton Daily News (*Dayton, Ohio), *Austin American-Statesman* (Austin, Texas) and *Miami News* (Miami, Florida).

In a column published on Sunday, Edward Luce for the

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Financial Times argued "It is not too late for Joe Biden to go," suggesting governors Gavin Newsom (California) and Gretchen Whitmer (Michigan) as potential alternatives.

As of this writing, no national elected officeholders or national Democratic Party officials have publicly called on Biden to step down. Within 24 hours of the debate, past presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton issued statements on X/Twitter supporting Biden.

Speaking to *Axios*, White House Deputy Press Secretary Andrew Bates implausibly claimed: "Not only does the President perform around the clock, but he maintains a schedule that tires younger aides, including foreign trips into active war zones, and he proves he has that capacity by delivering tangible results that pundits had declared impossible."

Speaking in support of "Genocide Joe" on CNN on Sunday, former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi said, "It's not about performance in terms of a debate, it's about performance in a presidency… On one side of the screen you have integrity, the other side you have dishonesty."

Actually, on both sides of the debate, there was unlimited dishonesty, mental degradation and imperialist barbarism, with the danger of dictatorship and war.

On the same program, Rep. Jim Clyburn (South Carolina) opined, "I do not believe that Joe Biden has a problem leading for the next four years, because he's done a great job of leading for the last three-and-a-half years."

A CBS News/YouGov poll out Sunday morning found only 55 percent of registered Democratic voters agreed Biden should continue running, with 45 percent saying he should step aside. The same poll found that only 27 percent of all registered voters agreed with the statement that Biden has the "mental and cognitive health to serve as president," down from 35 percent earlier in June. Nearly three-quarters, 72 percent, said Biden "does not have the mental and cognitive health to serve," an increase of 7 percentage points in the last three weeks.

While Democrats are publicly backing Biden for now, behind the scenes, intense discussions are underway about possibly replacing him. In an interview with MSNBC's Ali Veshi on Sunday, Maryland Rep. Jamie Raskin bluntly declared, "Obviously there was a big problem with Joe Biden's debate performance."

He added,

> There are very honest and serious and rigorous conversations taking place at every level of our party … so we are having a serious conversation about what to do. … And so whether he is the candidate or someone else is the candidate, he is going to be the keynote speaker at our convention.

As the Democrats mull replacing Biden, Republicans are openly pressuring Biden cabinet officials to invoke the 25th Amendment and remove him from office. Following the debate, Utah Senator Mike Lee wrote on X/Twitter, "We've definitely entered 25th Amendment territory."

Far-right Texas Rep. Chip Roy told reporters on Friday that he will introduce legislation urging Vice President Kamala Harris to convene the Cabinet and declare Biden unfit to carry out his duties. Asked by reporters if he would back Roy's legislation, Speaker of the House Mike Johnson opined that if he was in Biden's cabinet, "I would be having that discussing with my colleagues at the Cabinet level."

Whether or not Biden remains the nominee, the trajectory of the Democratic Party and US imperialism is global war. Writing on X/Twitter, WSWS International Editorial Board Chairman David North wrote:

> Since the debate, the media has concentrated solely on Biden's senility, not his policies. It is an unquestionable given that replacing Biden will not involve any change in the Democratic Party's support for the Gaza genocide and its escalation of the war against Russia.
>
> The capitalist two-party system, controlled entirely by the ruling US corporate-finance oligarchy, offers the politically disenfranchised public a "choice" between candidates committed to US imperialist hegemony and increasing the wealth of the super-rich.
>
> Replacing Biden or Trump with other Democratic or Republican figureheads will change nothing. Whatever the tactical differences between the candidates of the Democratic and Republican parties, their policies lead to the twin catastrophes of fascism and nuclear war.

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