

Biden campaign in free fall as Democrats privately and publicly call on president to withdraw

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2 July 2024

Fallout from President Joe Biden's disastrous debate with Donald Trump has intensified the crisis within the Democratic Party and the US ruling class as a whole.

The degrading spectacle has not only exposed the bankruptcy of both candidates, but the parties they represent, the donors that fund them, the media that has propped them up and the capitalist system as a whole.

In a column posted Tuesday night ("The Question President Biden Needs to Ask Himself. Now."), Thomas Friedman of the *New York Times* broached fundamental issues of concern within the Democratic Party and the ruling class more broadly about a second Biden term. Those concerns are focused first of all on US imperialism's plans for a vast escalation of the war against Russia over Ukraine, and its preparations for military conflict with Iran and China.

Friedman asked: "Is this the man you want answering the phone at 3 a.m. if the Russians or the Chinese or the Iranians attack us?"

Many Democrats who previously defended Biden's mental faculties and still defend his record of war and austerity have begun publicly, and privately, calling on him to withdraw from the race. On Tuesday morning, Texas Rep. Lloyd Doggett became the first congressional Democrat to publicly call on Biden to give way.

In his statement, Doggett, who was first elected in 1995, wrote:

[F]or more than a year, many Americans have indicated dissatisfaction with their choices in this election. President Biden has continued to run substantially behind Democratic senators in key states and in most polls has trailed Donald Trump. I had hoped that the debate would provide some momentum to change that. It did not.

Doggett drew a historical parallel to President Lyndon B. Johnson, noting that he "made the painful decision to withdraw. President Biden should do the same."

While running for reelection, Johnson, like Biden today, was deeply hated by large swaths of the population over his support for imperialist war. In the case of Johnson, it was his expansion of the war in Vietnam, which drove millions to protest and chant, "Hey, hey, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?"

Today, and for all time, "Genocide Joe" will be remembered as the main weapons supplier not only to the fascistic Zelensky regime, but also to the Butcher of Gaza, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Following Doggett's statement, a growing number of Democratic politicians gave public and private statements as well as interviews calling on Biden to step aside.

In an article headlined, "As Biden digs in, some top Democrats want him out of the race this week," CNN cited a "House Democratic lawmaker" who told it:

There's a large and increasing group of House Democrats concerned about the president's candidacy, representing a broad swath of the caucus. We are deeply concerned about his trajectory and his ability to win. We want to give him space to make a decision, but we will be increasingly vocal about our concerns if he doesn't.

CNN added that "multiple Democrats" told the network their "patience is wearing thin" and they were hoping Biden would make the decision to step down "himself."

Instead of calling on Biden to withdraw, Maine Democratic Rep. Jared Golden, a right-wing ex-Marine, published an op-ed in the *Bangor Daily News* in which he bluntly resigned himself to a Trump presidency. "While I don't plan to vote for him," he wrote, "Donald Trump is going to win. And I'm OK with that."

In an interview on CNN Tuesday morning, Illinois Rep. Mike Quigley rejected the White House line that Biden's mental decline was a "one off" event. "We have to be honest with ourselves that it wasn't just a horrible night," he said.

In an interview on MSNBC Tuesday morning, Julián Castro, Housing and Urban Development secretary under Barack Obama, observed:

Congressman Doggett, who himself has been in office a long time, he's seen a lot of things as an officeholder... I think that this is going to open the floodgates. I actually don't see a path now for President Biden to stay in this race for the long term.

When you have now a member of Congress, probably more coming out against him. You have the *New York Times* Editorial Board, and, sure, that's just elite circles and so forth, but in a lot of ways this is also what has propped up Joe Biden...

So this is what was keeping him still in the race. I know that that support, diminishing significantly, I don't think he is going to have a leg to stand on for very long.

Asked again if Biden should drop out of the race Castro replied:

Yea absolutely... I believe there are stronger options out there for Democrats. We have a stable of folks that I think could do a better job, including Vice President Harris, who just today in a poll was within 2 points of Donald Trump, whereas President Biden was six points behind Donald Trump.

The poll to which Castro referred was part of a memo that was sent to *Puck News* Tuesday morning. The memo was produced by OpenLabs, which *Puck* described as a “progressive nonprofit that conducts polling and message-testing for a constellation of Democratic groups, including the 501(c)4 nonprofit associated with Future Forward, the preferred Super PAC for Biden’s reelection campaign.”

The memo included polling conducted after the debate which showed that 40 percent of people who had voted for Biden in 2020 now supported him dropping out of the race. Biden’s “net favorability” rating was the worst out of all candidates surveyed, at negative 21.2 percent. The second worst was Vice President Kamala Harris, at negative 10.7 percent, while Trump was at negative 10 percent.

The poll found that support compared to Trump for all “alternative Democrats” was higher than that of Biden in “battleground” states surveyed. This included Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, Harris, California Governor Gavin Newsom and Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, with polling conducted in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Nevada, Georgia, Arizona, and North Carolina.

Asked in an interview Monday about his reaction to the debate, Democratic Rhode Island Senator Sheldon Whitehouse said:

I think like a lot of people I was pretty horrified... I think a lot of people want to make sure that this is a campaign that is ready to go forward and win, that the president and his team are being candid with us about his condition, that this was a real anomaly and not just the way he is these days.

Speaking with MSNBC on Tuesday, Whitehouse did not openly call on Biden to step down, but neither did he fully endorse him staying in the race. He said:

I think the discussions that are happening within the family, with his close advisors are exactly the right thing, and at some point it needs to bring in the leadership in Congress, and then we need to make a plan going forward to win this election and keep Donald Trump out of the Oval Office.

Asked if there was “a clock ticking for Joe Biden,” Whitehouse replied:

I think that the convention is an obvious tipping point... I think they have through the Fourth of July weekend to reflect and decide what to do going forward.

In an interview on the same network, former Speaker Nancy Pelosi

confirmed that she had not spoken with Biden since the debate. While claiming that Biden “had a bad night,” she added, “Now, again, I think it’s a legitimate question to say is this an episode or is this a condition? It’s legitimate, of both candidates.”

Turning to the most important aspect of Biden’s viability as a candidate, his standing among billionaires and millionaires, Andrea Mitchell asked Pelosi:

At this point, there is no one that knows the donor community better than you, you are the best fundraiser-you are a legendary fundraiser... so I got to ask you what are you hearing from your large network of people about whether he is up to it?

Pelosi replied:

I hear mixed. Some people are saying because Donald Trump is such an authoritarian and an autocrat, we have to win this election... So therefore there are people who are very concerned. So it’s split.

In a report published by *NOTUS*, an unnamed House Democrat claimed to have “...spoken to at least half a dozen colleagues who are getting near-unanimous feedback from their biggest supporters that an intervention is needed. Everyone has this feeling of dread that no one close to Biden will tell him the truth, and by the time the polling and everything else is obvious, it may be too late.”

The Democratic politician added, “This is not going to just blow over and if it somehow does, then we’re really f*****.”

The *New York Times* reported that a high-level donor meeting held Monday evening included about “500 members” of the Biden campaign’s “National Finance Committee and some other contributors.” Senior Biden campaign officials tried to downplay Biden’s decline, but their remarks “did little to stem the anxiety of the campaign’s well-heeled patrons,” the *Times* wrote.

Multiple outlets reported Tuesday that the Democratic National Committee, in an attempt to block a possible replacement and ease the internal party crisis, is considering formally nominating Biden as the party’s candidate as early as July 21, nearly a month before the convention.



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