

## Weekly Commentary 32

*Biden did not just commit hara-kiri. He butchered his own presidency...*

I said last week that Biden will have to surrender his candidacy within the week. While the week is not yet over, he has done enough to lose all chances of making it to a second term. With everything that has happened this week, this will likely cause his party to withdraw his status as the presumptive nominee for the Democratic ticket in the Nov presidential elections. It is coming, I am sure of it.

In the last few days, Biden basically made enough gaffes to prove to all observers that his dismal performance in the presidential debate against Trump was not a one off event, a single bad night. He tried to redeem himself by doing an interview with a friendly host, George Stephanopoulos, but that host later said that he was not sure that Biden can rule for another four years. Then Biden got into the NATO summit scheduled for Friday in DC celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, promising a “Big Boys” press conference at its end, where he would take questions from the international media. From the hype, it was tipped to correct the impressions of his being senile.

As it turned out, the presser blew the world away, not with Biden’s brilliant showing, but with the unforgiveable mistakes he made that only reinforced the now irreversible view that Biden does not have what it takes to run for a second term. He butchered his own chances for re-election by trying too hard. The Biden presidency is imploding...

For example, he called Zelenskyy “President Putin” when introducing him at the end of the NATO conference. Asked to comment on his own VP Harris, he was so confused that he said, “VP Trump”, instead. It was ghastly. It is not something you can make a simple excuse for, like he did with the Trump debate when he tried to explain his miserable performance away by saying it was jet lag or that he was having a cold.

You cannot make these things up. Here is a Youtube clip that captures some of Biden’s gaffes in the last week:

BIDEN BLUNDERS: President’s shocking week of gaffes

<https://youtu.be/X3jvCqOfTes?si=TNeOlaFVgoHeTfh9>

For those of you who like the written word, this is what Politico has to say about it:

### **Dems frozen in place after Biden survives press conference**

The Biden campaign hopes more travel and media appearances will quell concerns about the president.

By JARED MITOVICH, IRIE SENTNER and ANUSHA MATHUR

07/12/2024 12:43 PM EDT

President Joe Biden didn't entirely stumble at his high-stakes NATO press conference on Thursday — but his performance and continuing defiance to stepping aside has frozen Democrats in place once again over the president's embattled candidacy against Donald Trump.

Another senior Democrat, Rep. Jim Clyburn of South Carolina, kept the door open to Biden changing his mind, while urging an end to the unrelenting trickle of Hill Democrats opposed to his bid. Another new poll shows that Biden and Trump remain neck-and-neck — though Democratic replacements didn't fare better. And Biden's campaign swings through Michigan, Nevada, and Texas will keep the attention on him and any potential flubs — while a Monday interview with NBC will provide counterprogramming to the Republican National Convention in Milwaukee.

Two weeks out from a debate that upended the 2024 presidential race, Biden continues to evade a fatal number of defections from elected officials and voters concerned about his stamina and mental acuity. But in the days to come after Biden's NATO press conference, where he demonstrated his foreign policy chops but confused his vice president with Trump, Democrats are likely to keep questioning whether this new phase of the campaign is tenable, amid growing fears of losing the White House — and Congress — in November.

Some Democrats, like Clyburn, signaled that conversations over Biden's physical and cognitive viability should end, urging the party to focus on the president's record and opponent.

"I am all in," the Biden ally said Friday on NBC's "Today Show." "I'm riding with Biden, no matter which direction he goes, no matter what method he takes. I'm with Joe Biden."

Yet he also said the president should be given the space to "continue to make his own decisions about his future."

"If he decides to change his mind later on, then we will respond to that," Clyburn said.

**But others on the Hill are continuing to give Biden and his campaign a harder time, unrelieved by the NATO press conference and urging him to make up his mind quickly for the sake of the party — despite the fact that he has publicly remained insistent on staying in the race.**

As of Friday morning, 17 Democrats in the House and one in the Senate have publicly called on the president to withdraw from the race, including three who issued statements in quick succession after the press conference: Reps. Jim Himes of Connecticut, Scott Peters of California and Eric Sorensen of Illinois. Rep. Brittany Pettersen of Colorado put out a similar statement Friday morning.

"I am hopeful President Biden will step aside in his campaign for President," Sorensen, a first-term Democrat in a swing district, said in a statement released an hour after Biden left the NATO podium.

And by Friday afternoon, another purple district Democrat — Rep. Mike Levin of California — confronted the president directly on a call with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, telling Biden he had to go. Moments after the call wrapped, he became the 19th Democrat in Congress to publicly demand that Biden withdraw.

In a post on X Friday morning, former Biden chief of staff Ron Klain wrote, “it’s time to end the freak out and unite behind the Democratic nominee” — linking to a new NPR/PBS News/Marist Poll that shows Biden 2 points ahead of Trump in a head-to-head, which is within the poll’s margin of error.

The Marist poll, released Friday, shows Biden receiving 50 percent of the vote and Trump 48 percent — a statistical dead heat. But 64 percent of registered voters — and 38 percent of Democrats — believe Biden lacks the mental acuity to serve as president, the poll found. Forty-nine percent of respondents believed Trump was mentally unfit to serve.

Nearly 60 percent of those surveyed believe Trump will win the general election — including 24 percent of Democrats. Vice President Kamala Harris, California Gov. Gavin Newsom and Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer all polled about as well as Biden against Trump.

Biden is still campaigning, with plans to whip through Michigan on Friday and Nevada and Texas next week as counterprogramming to the Republican National Convention. In Austin, Texas, on Monday, Biden will sit down for an interview with NBC’s Lester Holt for his second one-on-one with a major TV news anchor in as many weeks.

Biden navigated an interview last week with ABC’s **George Stephanopoulos** with few stumbles — though the anchor **was later recorded telling someone on the street “I don’t think he can serve four more years,”** TMZ first reported.

The Biden campaign hopes the travel and media appearances will quell concerns about the president’s capacity, slow the drip of defectors on the Hill and distract from the GOP convention, where thousands of Republicans will gather next week to formally nominate Trump.

But Democrats are watching closely, scared that another poor performance could occur, as Washington is immersed in rumors about which high-profile members of the party are huddling with whom.

Beyond Capitol Hill, there were signs on Friday that grassroots groups were also moving against Biden, with Movement Voter Project becoming the first progressive fundraising and organizing coalition to officially call on the president to drop out of the race.

Seventy-one percent of leaders from the 64 on-the-ground mobilization groups Movement Voter Project works with said they would either strongly or lean toward preferring to see Biden withdraw, the coalition wrote in a statement to 50,000 donors.

“For the past many months, we’ve described our biggest challenge in beating Trump as closing **the Biden enthusiasm gap**,” said Zo Tobi, MVP’s communications director. **“That gap since the debate has become the Grand Canyon.”**

MVP did not explicitly indicate if it prefers Harris to be at the top of the ticket instead. On Thursday, former Labor Secretary Marty Walsh brushed aside speculation that he would be in the running for Harris’ vice presidential pick if she swaps in as the nominee.

“I don’t deal in hypotheticals,” Walsh told POLITICO. “[Biden] is my candidate for president. He is staying in the race for president. He plans on running and beating Donald Trump.”

**But it’s an open question whether anything will be enough to salvage Biden’s damaged candidacy. Former Speaker Nancy Pelosi and former President Barack Obama have spoken in private about the future of the incumbent’s campaign, CNN reported.**

And House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries met privately with Biden last night, telling lawmakers in a letter he “directly expressed the full breadth of insight, heartfelt perspectives and conclusions about the path forward that the Caucus has shared in our recent time together.” The GOP convention and Trump’s upcoming vice presidential selection, however, may take some of the political attention of Biden.

**There is no doubt in my mind that Biden will not win a second term. There are other reasons besides these gaffes, including:**

- 1) The fact that his approval rating in the 30 is almost a guarantee that given the historical experience in US elections, he is not going to be re-elected.**
- 2) 70 percent of Americans don’t think he has the mental acuity to make it through a second term. If 70 percent of the electorate don’t vote for him, he’s not going to become president again.**
- 3) All the polls since the debate show Trump leading in the electoral college voting. Trump is now likely to win by a landslide, with the possibility of taking all the battleground states. Even New Jersey and New York, both Democratic bastions are showing loss of support for Biden. This is a disaster for the party.**

According to pollster, FiveThirtyEight, Democrat leaning, Biden’s poor ratings are due to the following reasons:

## **What's Behind Biden's Record-Low Approval Rating?**

By Geoffrey Skelley

In games such as golf, you win by scoring lower than any of your opponents. But in the realm of presidential job approval, such an approach is a recipe for political upheaval, as President Biden has found over the past few months. Polls continue to show his approval rating in poor shape, and even Democrats are asking questions about his political future amid broad dissatisfaction with the current state of the country.

In fact, Biden is dancing with a bleak bit of history: His approval rating of 39 percent<sup>1</sup> is now the worst of any elected president at this point in his presidency since the end of World War II, according to FiveThirtyEight's historical presidential approval data. In other words, Biden is arguably in worse shape than any other elected president heading into his re-election bid, including his four most recent predecessors, who, like Biden, were operating in an increasingly polarized political climate.

After entering office, most recent presidents see a decline in their approval ratings, but since Biden's numbers peaked at 55 percent in March 2021, they have moved in only one direction: down. To some extent, President Barack Obama's approval rating followed a similar trajectory, but he started off with better numbers than any of the other four most recent presidents and was still well above where Biden is at this point in his presidency.

By comparison, President Bill Clinton actually mounted a comeback nearly a year into his presidency before his approval fell again in the latter part of 1994. Even President Donald Trump's low approval rating ticked back up into the low 40s in 2018 after falling to 36 percent in December 2017. And, of course, President George W. Bush topped them all when his approval jumped to a record-high 88 percent in 2001 due to a rally-around-the-flag moment shortly after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Why is Biden's approval so low? For starters, Americans have a really dim view of how things are going in the U.S. For instance, about 75 percent believe the country is on the wrong track according to the RealClearPolitics average of recent polls, while only 18 percent say the country is moving in the right direction. To be sure, Americans have long held negative views about the direction the country is moving in — RCP's average hasn't been net positive once in the past 13 years — but this is still the highest level of dissatisfaction since 2011.

Notably, too, inflation has soured Americans further on Biden's job performance. For instance, an early June poll from Ipsos/ABC News found that only 28 percent of Americans approved of Biden's handling of inflation; along with his handling of gas prices (27 percent approved), inflation ranked lowest of any of the issues the poll asked about. This stacks up with what's happened to past presidents, too, as notable upticks in inflation have often coincided with sharp declines in presidential job approval. This is particularly true of rising gas prices, as studies have found that gas price increases are linked to lower presidential approval — and gas prices have soared during this period of high inflation.

Recently, the connection between economic perceptions and presidential standing hasn't been as strong, but political scientists John Sides and Robert Griffin found that falling consumer sentiment is once again a useful indicator for understanding presidential approval, as it explains a lot of what we're seeing with the decline in Biden's approval.

Interestingly, that reconnection between the economy and presidential approval may be partly down to the decreasing confidence Democrats have in the state of the economy. In fact, even though Democrats are still more confident than Republicans or independents about the economy, we can see that Democrats' opinions about economic conditions are actually worse now than at any time during Trump's presidency, using consumer sentiment data from the University of Michigan's Surveys of Consumers.

The upshot is that this may have weakened Democratic loyalty to Biden. Just 69 percent to 76 percent of Democrats said they approved of Biden in polls from Ipsos/Reuters, YouGov/The Economist and Morning Consult conducted in early July. This sounds high, but it's much lower than what these pollsters found for Trump's approval rating among Republicans during the same period in 2018, when it hovered between 84 percent and 88 percent. Of course, economic conditions were more favorable during Trump's presidency, which may have helped keep Republicans firmly behind Trump, but regardless of party loyalty, the reality is that Biden has lost ground among pretty much every group we have numbers for, continuing a trend we first observed in October 2021.

Back then, close to 35 percent of independents approved of Biden, a figure that's now sunk to around 30 percent. Meanwhile, Biden's approval among Black Americans may have fallen even more, going from the high 60s to about 60 percent; among Latino Americans, his approval has gone from around 50 percent to the low-to-mid 40s. White Americans are more Republican-leaning, so Biden had less ground to lose with them to begin with, but even still, his numbers among them have slipped from the high 30s to the mid 30s.

One other group that has soured on Biden is younger Americans, especially considering they were the most Democratic-leaning age group in 2020 (and in most recent elections). The Pew Research Center and the Cooperative Election Study suggest that around 60 percent or more of voters 18 to 29 backed Biden in 2020, yet recent polls suggest Biden's approval among that age group has fallen into the 30s, or even lower in some surveys.

Economic dissatisfaction certainly plays into the disillusionment that young people may have of Biden, but other reports suggest that some of that frustration may also lie in their anger over the Biden administration's limited progress on issues like climate change and canceling student debt and most recently the war in Gaza. Looking ahead, the discontent young people feel toward the president could be a real problem, as it might dampen their enthusiasm to vote — that could be bad for Democrats since young voters are already far less likely to turn out .

As it currently stands, polls suggest that Republicans as a whole are more enthusiastic than Democrats about the upcoming election, although most recent surveys asking that question predate the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 decision establishing abortion as a constitutional right. This is an issue that could be motivating for Democrats this fall, and in fact, we've already seen some movement toward Democrats in our generic ballot average. It remains to be seen, though, whether that's a short-term blip or a more long-lasting change in the

electoral environment, and of course someone who is unenthusiastic can still vote — an unenthusiastic vote counts the same as an enthusiastic one.

Nevertheless, the historical relationship between presidential approval and the performance of the president's party in elections should scare Democrats. Generally speaking, the worse a president's approval is, the more seats that party tends to lose in the House.<sup>2</sup>

We can't know for sure where Biden's approval will go from here, but many of the factors playing into his approval rating don't look likely to disappear anytime soon. And that could be a major anchor weighing down Democrats this Nov.

*Geoffrey Skelley is a senior elections analyst at FiveThirtyEight.*

**Here is what a few supporters of Biden say of his cognitive decline:**

**Gaffes, stumbles and missteps – for Biden, the cracks were showing**  
*Joe Biden began by shattering his metaphorical vase, and spent the rest of the press conference putting it back together*

**David Smith** in Washington *The Guardian*

Fri 12 Jul 2024 03.30 BST

The British politician Roy Jenkins once famously observed that Tony Blair's challenge in getting Labour elected in 1997 was "like a man carrying a priceless Ming vase across a highly polished floor".

Joe Biden dropped the vase, shattering it into a thousand crazy pieces, before his rare press conference even got started on Thursday.

"Ladies and gentlemen," Biden declared at the Nato summit in Washington while introducing Ukraine's Volodymyr Zelenskyy. "President Putin!"



Joe Biden mistakenly refers to Zelenskyy as Putin before correcting himself

It was a cringeworthy moment for European leaders who did not know whether to clap (or cry). The 81-year-old US president caught the error and corrected himself, but it was yet another blow to his anguished campaign to convince Democrats that he's still got the vim and vigour to beat Donald Trump in November. (He doesn't.)

Joe Biden defiant despite gaffes at Nato press conference as he battles calls to stand aside

Come the press conference, Biden started by grinding fragments of that broken vase further into the carpet. The opening question was about him losing support among many fellow Democrats and key unions, and about Kamala Harris possibly replacing him on the ticket.

Against the backdrop of Nato blue and eight US national flags, Biden proceeded to mix up Harris and his opponent Donald Trump. "Look, I wouldn't have picked Vice-President Trump to be vice-president if I didn't think she was qualified to be president," he said.

Biden calls Kamala Harris 'Vice-President Trump' at Nato press conference

Harris is a 59-year-old Black woman and former criminal prosecutor. Trump is a 78-year-old white (orange) man and convicted felon beloved by white supremacists. The two are easily confused (hahaha...)

You could have heard a pin drop in this somewhat sterile, strip-lit room at a convention centre in downtown Washington. Dozens of reporters sat in silence like a concerned family sitting around of an elderly patient speaking nonsense. They said nothing, thinking it best not to stage an intervention.

Tragically, the only person unaware of what had happened was the patient himself. (Indeed, cadavers have no emotions.) Indeed, Biden's critics say he is the only one who cannot see what everyone else can: time has caught up with him and he should quit the US presidential race.

After a start like that, it had all the makings of total disaster, a bitter sequel to the president's calamitous debate performance. His old foe, the frog in the throat, must have stowed away on Air Force One and followed him all the way from Atlanta. (No more excuses, Joe...)

There were more stumbles. "I'm following the advice of **my** commander-in-chief," said the commander-in-chief (and who might that be, Joe??). Sometimes his voice trailed off with an "anyway". Sometimes he defaulted to his strange whispering habit.

No doubt a hundred members of Congress were sitting with their fingers poised on the "send" button to call for the president's exit. If only George Clooney, the Hollywood star and Democratic donor who has wielded the dagger like Brutus in a New York Times column this week, was up on that stage, looking presidential.

And yet, as the night wore on, it wasn't quite so simple. The second question reminded Biden of his Putin-Zelenskiy confusion and asked if he is damaging

American's standing in the world. He laughed and retorted: "Did you see any damage to our standing in my leading this conference? (All they achieved was to unpromise NATO membership to Ukraine and unpromised further aid to the bankrupt country...Is that supposed to be leadership???)

"Have you seen a more successful conference? What do you think? I thought it was the most successful conference I've attended in a long time and find me a world leader who didn't think it was." (Sure, all of these world leaders are sycophants...)

Biden has recently been accused of turning Trumpy, stubbornly digging in and putting his own interests ahead of the nation. The saviour of democracy in 2020 could destroy it all. What if you ruin your legacy? one reporter wondered. "Look, I'm not in this for my legacy," he insisted. "I'm in this to complete the job I started."

And reports of his early bedtime were "not true", he said, though he acknowledged: "Instead of my every day starting at 7am and going to bed at midnight, it would be smarter for me to pace myself a little more."

His schedule since the debate has been "full bore", he added, before taking a swipe at the opponent who recently challenged him to a round of golf. "Where's Trump? Riding around on his golf cart filling out his scorecard before he hits the ball?"

Less helpfully, he quipped: "I love my staff but they [add] things. They add things all the time at the very end. I'm catching hell from my wife (president she??)."

The questions about neurological exams and his fitness for office kept coming, and he continued to bat them away. "If I slow down, I can't get the job done, that's a sign that I shouldn't be doing it. But there's no indication of that yet! None!"

Nato is like a home fixture for Biden. He proved expansive on foreign policy regarding China, Israel, Russia and other parts of the world. He reminded everyone of his role in rebuilding alliances and partnerships. Among the "elites" that Biden now professes to scorn, he fought this near hour-long exchange with 11 reporters to a score draw.

For the Bidenites, there was a reminder of his canyons of expertise and experience: this man knew Golda Meir! Do you really want to throw all that away for some neophyte? The president himself observed: "The only thing age does is creates a little bit of wisdom, if you pay attention."

But for the anti-Biden rebellion, there was sufficient hubris and missteps to confirm their view that he is going to lead the party to defeat in November. Remember King Lear: "Men must endure / Their going hence, even as their coming hither; / Ripeness is all."

Sadly for the president, quotable gaffes will get more attention – on cable news, social media and late-night TV – than a snoozy masterclass on foreign policy. When the official questions were done, a chorus of reporters shouted more, including one about Biden's Harris-Trump mix-up.

Peter Alexander of NBC News noted that Trump was already using the gaffe to mock Biden's age and memory. Asked how he would combat that criticism, Biden smiled and said simply, "Listen to him," then departed stage left. Piece by piece, he was putting the vase back together – but the cracks were showing.

This is what we're up against

Teams of lawyers from the rich and powerful trying to stop us publishing stories they don't want you to see.

Lobby groups with opaque funding who are determined to undermine facts about the climate emergency and other established science.

Authoritarian states with no regard for the freedom of the press.

Bad actors spreading disinformation online to undermine democracy.

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But we have something powerful on our side.  
Joe, We've got you.

Not everyone agrees. One prominent Democrat fund raiser, George Clooney, said to be close to Obama and acting on his instructions, has written an op-ed in the NYT.

**George Clooney: I Love Joe Biden. But We Need a New Nominee.**

**July 10, 2024**

**By George Clooney**

**Mr. Clooney is an actor, director and film producer.**

**I'm a lifelong Democrat; I make no apologies for that. I'm proud of what my party represents and what it stands for. As part of my participation in the democratic process and in support of my chosen candidate, I have led some of the biggest fund-raisers in my party's history. Barack Obama in 2012. Hillary Clinton in 2016. Joe Biden in 2020. Last month I co-hosted the single largest fund-raiser supporting any Democratic candidate ever, for President Biden's re-election. I say all of this only to express how much I believe in this process and how profound I think this moment is.**

**I love Joe Biden. As a senator. As a vice president and as president. I consider him a friend, and I believe in him. Believe in his character. Believe in his morals. In the last four years, he's won many of the battles he's faced.**

**But the one battle he cannot win is the fight against time. None of us can. It's devastating to say it, but the Joe Biden I was with three weeks ago at the fund-raiser was not the Joe "big F-ing deal" Biden of 2010. He wasn't**

**even the Joe Biden of 2020. He was the same man we all witnessed at the debate.**

**Was he tired? Yes. A cold? Maybe. But our party leaders need to stop telling us that 51 million people didn't see what we just saw. We're all so terrified by the prospect of a second Trump term that we've opted to ignore every warning sign. The George Stephanopoulos interview only reinforced what we saw the week before. As Democrats, we collectively hold our breath or turn down the volume whenever we see the president, whom we respect, walk off Air Force One or walk back to a mic to answer an unscripted question.**

**Is it fair to point these things out? It has to be. This is about age. Nothing more. But also nothing that can be reversed. We are not going to win in November with this president. On top of that, we won't win the House, and we're going to lose the Senate. This isn't only my opinion; this is the opinion of every senator and Congress member and governor who I've spoken with in private. Every single one, irrespective of what he or she is saying publicly.**

**We love to talk about how the Republican Party has ceded all power, and all of the traits that made it so formidable with Ronald Reagan and George H.W. Bush, to a single person who seeks to hold on to the presidency, and yet most of our members of Congress are opting to wait and see if the dam breaks. But the dam has broken. We can put our heads in the sand and pray for a miracle in November, or we can speak the truth.**

**It is disingenuous, at best, to argue that Democrats have already spoken with their vote and therefore the nomination is settled and done, when we just received new and upsetting information. We all think Republicans should abandon their nominee now that he's been convicted of 34 felonies. That's new and upsetting information as well. Top Democrats — Chuck Schumer, Hakeem Jeffries, Nancy Pelosi — and senators, representatives and other candidates who face losing in November need to ask this president to voluntarily step aside.**

**All of the scary stories that we're being told about what would happen next are simply not true. In all likelihood, the money in the Biden-Harris coffers could go to help elect the presidential ticket and other Democrats. The new nominee wouldn't be left off ballots in Ohio. We Democrats have a very exciting bench. We don't anoint leaders or fall sway to a cult of personality; we vote for a president. We can easily foresee a group of several strong Democrats stepping forward to stand and tell us why they're best qualified to lead this country and take on some of the deeply concerning trends we're seeing from the revenge tour that Donald Trump calls a presidential campaign.**

**Let's hear from Wes Moore and Kamala Harris and Gretchen Whitmer and Gavin Newsom and Andy Beshear and J.B. Pritzker and others. Let's**

**agree that the candidates not attack one another but, in the short time we have, focus on what will make this country soar. Then we could go into the Democratic convention next month and figure it out.**

**Would it be messy? Yes. Democracy is messy. But would it enliven our party and wake up voters who, long before the June debate, had already checked out? It sure would. The short ramp to Election Day would be a benefit for us, not a danger. It would give us the chance to showcase the future without so much opposition research and negative campaigning that comes with these ridiculously long and expensive election seasons. This can be an exciting time for democracy, as we've just seen with the 200 or so French candidates who stepped aside and put their personal ambitions on hold to save their democracy from the far right.**

**Joe Biden is a hero; he saved democracy in 2020. We need him to do it again in 2024. (Stand down Joe.)**

**Democrat kingmaker Jim Clyburn keeps door open for Biden to drop out**  
Story by Morgan Phillips, Congress Reporter On Capitol Hill For Dailymail.Com

### **More key Dems demand Biden drop out AFTER press conference**

Key Biden ally Rep. Jim Clyburn suggested the president could still drop out of the running after his momentous NATO press conference.

Clyburn told the Today Show's Savannah Guthrie that he takes Biden 'at his word' with his decision to stay in the race.

'That's why I'm all in, I'm riding with Biden, no matter what direction he goes, no matter what method he takes, I'm with Joe Biden,' Clyburn said. 'And if he were to change his mind, I just answered the question that I will be all in for the vice president.'

Three more Democrats called on Biden to drop out after his news conference. That brought the number up to 17 public calls for Biden to step aside from congressional Democrats - and many more behind closed doors.

Key Biden ally Rep. Jim Clyburn suggested the president could still drop out of the running after his momentous NATO press conference

Provided by Daily Mail

### **Joe's gotta go: Top Democrats pressure Biden to drop out after the debate debacle**

The protection sphere that Democrat leaders formed around President Biden after the debate is starting to show cracks as doubts overtake elected officials and even himself.

Being the president can be difficult. Between foreign policies and keeping the peace, there are bound to be a few slip-ups when a person is in office. But while there is a lot we might not know about President Joe Biden, we do know that he seems to find himself in an awfully large number of awkward situations.

The fact that Donald Trump is advancing in the polls is evidence he is also waging an intelligent campaign. He is in the fortunate position of not having to do anything to move ahead in the polls. In the past, he talked too much. Now he is just doing just enough to let Biden self-destruct.

### **Biden is teetering. Trump's plan? Let it happen**

5 hours ago

By Holly Honderich, in Washington BBC

Trump has stayed mostly off screen as Democrats spiral

As Joe Biden attempted to calm the storm engulfing his presidential re-election campaign, he hit an early snag: referring to "Vice-President Trump" during a Thursday press conference when he meant Kamala Harris.

Within minutes, Donald Trump mocked the gaffe on his social media platform, Truth Social, with an accompanying clip. "Great job, Joe!" he wrote.

It was the kind of reaction voters have come to expect from Trump, who has spent years insulting the president, 81.

And yet, **for the past two weeks, as Mr Biden was fighting for his political life, Trump remained uncharacteristically quiet, letting Democrats argue among themselves.** Republican strategists claim the relative silence is down to Trump's new-found discipline - a change from his 2016 and 2020 campaigns.

"He's played it brilliantly by not saying much about the Democratic crisis," said Ron Bonjean, a Republican strategist and former senior Senate and House leadership aide. "Why take the shovel away when they're digging their own hole?"

Trump, 78, has not gone entirely underground. Since Mr Biden's poor debate performance in late June, Trump has given a handful of radio interviews, appeared at rallies in Virginia and Florida, and kept up a steady drumbeat of posts on Truth Social. "The radical left Democratic party is divided in chaos," Trump said at a Tuesday campaign rally in Miami. "They can't decide which of their candidates is more unfit to be president, sleepy, crooked Joe Biden or laughing Kamala."

He also challenged the president to a golf match, claimed all US airports were dirty, said that visitors to Washington DC end up "shot, mugged and raped", claimed 45,000 people were at the Miami event when there were closer to 700, and pondered why "we don't eat bacon anymore".

But experts say that compared to past behaviour, the Republican has been restrained. **Some have suggested Trump's camp may even be delaying his choice for vice-president to avoid stealing attention from Mr Biden's problems.**

"If you compare this strategy and execution [in] this campaign to 2016 and 2020, it is far more strategic, far more disciplined," said Kevin Madden, a Republican communications expert who worked on Mitt Romney's presidential bids.

With the Democratic Party fracturing over Mr Biden's candidacy, Corey Lewandowski, Trump's 2016 campaign manager, said **the approach taken by Trump since the debate had been effective.**

**"The Trump campaign has done an outstanding job of allowing the Biden campaign to self-destruct," he said.**

The debate gave Republicans a visual for their main line of attack: that Biden is too old

That implosion may have been what the Trump campaign was banking on from the start. The Republican plan to win over the American people has, for a while now, leaned on voters' well-documented fears about Mr Biden's age.

Speaking to The Atlantic's Tim Alberta, Trump campaign manager Chris LaCivita said he had planned for an "extraordinarily visual" match-up where Mr Biden was viewed as old and frail while Trump appeared strong and vigorous.

"The debate was exactly what they wanted," Mr Madden said. "They got the perfect split-screen that was going to endure."

**A number of recent polls put Trump consistently - if still narrowly - ahead of Mr Biden.** But there is concern within the Trump camp that anxiety over Mr Biden's fitness has peaked too soon.

Were he to be replaced by a younger nominee, Trump would lose two main lines of attack - age and frailty. And it would be harder to directly blame a new candidate for the president's perceived policy failures: Mr Biden scores badly with voters on the economy and the southern border crisis.

"They're silently hoping, with their fingers crossed, that Biden is the nominee," said strategist Ron Bonjean of Trump's campaign. "They feel they will win the election with Biden as their opponent."

Some of Trump's closest surrogates have seemed to suggest they want Mr Biden to stay on. On Thursday, while Democrats parsed the impact of the president's defiant press conference, Trump's son Don Jr offered rare praise.

Mr Biden's performance had been "not too bad", he said. "He did fine enough to be able to stay in it - he doesn't want to go."

Last week, Trump's daughter-in-law and co-chair of the Republican National Committee, Lara Trump, suggested it would "go against the democratic process" if Mr Biden were to be removed.

Nevertheless, Mr Bonjean and other Republican experts made clear that if it was hard for Republicans to take on a new candidate, it would be harder still for Democrats to choose one.

Republicans would need a new strategy if Kamala Harris, 59, became the nominee

"Yes, it will cause the Trump campaign to scramble a little bit. But their scrambling is not nearly what it will be for the Democrats," said Douglas Heye, a Republican strategist who served as chief of staff to former House majority leader Eric Cantor.

"They have to figure out how to nominate somebody else... they have to build a brand-new structure from scratch."

Meanwhile, Republicans are combing through records of Ms Harris and other possible replacements, he said. "They're not prepared, necessarily, for this, but they are preparing."

Next week, at the Republican party convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Trump will reclaim centre stage, officially accepting his party's nomination and making a primetime speech that will set the tone for the final months of his campaign.

Mr Heye suggested that the convention - four days of party fanfare built around a candidate who revels in the spotlight - will have made it easier to sell Trump the benefits of the strategy of remaining largely quiet.

"If you're committed to keeping your candidate under wraps for an extended period, there has to be a pay-out later on," he said. "His leadership can say: 'You've got all of next week, it's going to be the Donald Trump show'."

(At this point in time, I don't doubt that Trump will beat Biden. In fact I think it will be a landslide victory. Many Democrats think so too. The mainstream media, which hates a Trump presidency, is also up in arms against the White House especially since they have been used to gaslight Americans, by their cover up of Biden's inadequacies. This makes it a civil war within the Democratic party as they struggle on how to get rid of Joe Biden. If they fail, we will get Trump again as president. If they can get Biden to step down, we will still get Trump because the only real choice for the Democrats is Kamala Harris, who has no chance against Trump, given her unpopularity and her strange hyena-like laugh. All the polls point in this direction.

And if Trump wins, we will get the following results geopolitically:

- 1) We may get a heightening of the trade war with China, but that's fine as long as the Trump White House does not pick up cudgels over Taiwan. Let them compete economically. After a while, Trump will accept the rise of China peacefully. Trump at the end of the day is a deal maker, not a militarist. Biden is a old cold warrior who wants to do the Churchillian thing about not wanting to rule over the dissolution of empire. Trump is just a businessman.

- 2) We will see a weakening of NATO and the end of the war in Ukraine. Trump does not like NATO and if he wins in November, NATO will be relegated to the pages of history as it should have been after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1990. Look at what these fools were trying to do at the Washington summit – they were stirring up shit by blaming China for Russia’s enduring strength in the Ukraine war. It is nonsense, but they don’t know how to blame themselves for underestimating Russia.
- 3) The world will evolve towards a more cohesive Global South away from American and European domination. In the days prior to the NATO conference, Modi of India was in Russia on a state visit and it shows the way how India and Russia are also pals, much like how China and Russia are brothers. The US was not happy about the Modi visit but China was fine with it. This will continue to evolve as BRICS and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization with greater trade and business between these countries and away from the old colonial structures. The days in which NATO would have a misguided view of Russia and China are over because India, the third largest economy in the world has chosen to side with their Asia neighbours, No 1 China and No 4, Russia. BRICS will become a far more vibrant economic entity than the G7. The collective west can no longer impose their view on these supposedly Second World countries expecting them to be afraid of sanctions and military compulsion. The economic union of China, Russia and India plus the other BRICS countries will lead to greater peace in the world because the bullies of the First World will have to think twice before they do any bullying. Consider the fact that when the EU tried to steal Russia’s \$300 billion of frozen state assets, and give it to Ukraine, the Saudis stood up to say that if that happens, it will put all their assets from the G7. So Zelensky went home from the NATO summit empty handed, as this professional beggar rightly should.
- 4) And if the fall of Biden as well as Macron and the Tories in the UK have anything to do with less military friction in the world, then it is all good.)

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