



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 2, 2020

## Biden Challenges Trump to a Debate, Again

Once again, the likely Democrat candidate for president, former Vice President Joe Biden, is [challenging the president to a debate](#). During an interview with radio host Enrique Santos on Wednesday, Biden said he is “ready to debate President Trump on Zoom or Skype, any time he wants.”



The last time Biden challenged the president to a debate he claimed he would “beat him like a drum.” Unfortunately for Biden, that was back in February — ages ago in political terms. Following his Super Tuesday win, while being interviewed by Brian Williams, Biden challenged the president:

I’m going to beat this man like a drum. I’m telling you. I can hardly wait to debate him. I want to debate him about corruption. Talk about corruption. This is the most corrupt president we’ve ever had in American history. I can hardly wait, Brian.

I’m not going to play his game. I’m not going to get into the idea of whether or not I have to defend anything. What he did was impeachable. He got impeached. He should have been convicted. They acknowledged he should have been. That he committed the crimes that he, in fact, they said he did but they said it wasn’t enough to impeach him. This is outrageous.

Since then it has been all Trump, all the time. The coronavirus threat has taken over the conversation. Trump is everywhere. He is being increasingly perceived as large and in charge. His approval ratings both as president and as leader of the attack on the virus have skyrocketed. He is even getting modest plaudits from high-profile Democrats such as New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, California Governor Gavin Newsom, and Washington Governor Jay Inslee. Polls are showing enormous gains for Trump among from Democrats and Independents — approaching 10-percent gains in favorables in some cases — putting the president within shouting distance of a 40-state win in the general election.

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Biden’s challenge so far has been met with silence from the Trump camp. The pro-Trump political action committee America First Action Super PAC, however, is taking the fight to Biden, dumping \$10 million into political advertising in three key Rust Belt states that the president flipped in 2016: Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. And this is just the start, said the group’s president, Brian Walsh: “This is our first round of spending, with much more to come. By the time November rolls around, voters in battleground states are going to know why Joe Biden is weak, wrong and been around for too long to lead the United States of America.”

In the meantime, Biden is hiding out in his basement desperately trying to find a way to get voters’ attention. He is sheltering in place, reading from short scripted speeches from a teleprompter. It’s not working.



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Not only does Biden face an electorate increasingly favorable to the president, he suffers from grievous personal liabilities. As Justin Ward opined in USA Today, “Biden has every liability Hillary Clinton had, and then some. His Iraq War vote, [his] ties to the financial sector, [his] scandals involving his son [Hunter] and brother — these issues got little attention from the liberal press during the primary, but Trump and the conservative media will give [him] no quarter.”

Pat Buchanan perfectly described the difficulties Biden faces:

If Biden cannot gather crowds to hear him in a time of social distancing, how does he get his message out? How does he attack Trump without appearing to undermine the president in his role as a wartime commander in chief, where America wants Trump to succeed?

How does a basement-bound Biden compete with Trump in the Oval Office, Cabinet Room, East Room and Rose Garden?

Whom does Biden call upon to rival Trump’s instant access to respected leaders eager to come and stand beside the president in the most serious crisis since World War II?

How does Biden recapture the spotlight of Super Tuesday?

If he does somehow manage to get some air time, the former vice president runs the risk of, as Karl Rove put it, “sounding small and partisan when Americans desire less partisanship and more unity.”

Biden can’t count on a poor economy to catapult him into the White House either, as most voters are likely to blame the virus and not the president. And if the president and others are correct, the virus will be ancient history and the economy on the rebound by November.

If by some miracle, or error in judgment by the president or his political advisors, Biden is able to engage the president in a debate before the general election cycle begins (the first official debate isn’t scheduled until late September), Trump is likely to be the one beating his opponent like a drum.

All he needs to do, according to William McGurn, is to get under Biden’s skin. As McGurn noted in the Wall Street Journal:

Mr. Biden’s particular weakness has to do with his anger. Probably because of his origins in hardscrabble Scranton, Pa., he may have concluded that he’s just the guy to give Donald Trump a taste of his own medicine. Once he boasted how he wished he were back in high school, so he could take Mr. Trump “behind the gym” where he would “beat the hell” out of him.

If part of your appeal is restoring comity to the Oval Office, this isn’t a good look.

Worse, Mr. Biden has been directing most of his anger at ordinary voters. Already this election season a plainly irritated Mr. Biden questioned one voter’s IQ and challenged him to a push-up contest, called a young woman a “lying, dog-faced pony soldier,” and told a Detroit auto worker who questioned him on his gun policy that he was “full of s—.”

Again, this isn’t the way to run against this president.

Many see the stars aligning perfectly, with the election clearly being Trump’s to win.

*Image: [Gage Skidmore / Wikimedia Commons](#)*

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