



Written by [Mary McHugh](#) on July 20, 2010

Biden Didn't Exactly Say Pelosi Is the Most Powerful Person in American Politics

Last week, White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs made remarks indicating it was possible for the Democrats to lose control of the House of Representatives in November's election. Already irritated Democrats were further angered because they viewed this admission as the White House intending to distance itself from what may truly be huge losses at the hands of disgruntled American voters.

On Monday, July 19, Gibbs explained himself simply: "I stated the obvious."

"I think the comment was unfortunate," disagreed House Speaker Nancy Pelosi last week. She also expressed much frustration about the situation during a private Democratic caucus meeting on Tuesday.



That Democrats now want overt, if not enthusiastic support from Washington may be a little puzzling, as last fall even President Obama's personal appearances were not enough to salvage several important political races for them. Indeed, it was remarked at the time that he almost seemed to be the "kiss of death" when speaking for or posing with needy Democratic candidates.

But despite how things were last year, the Democrats evidently now want whatever rhetorical and financial support they can generate, though it be from the White House. On its side, the Obama administration appeared ready to allay the concerns of Speaker Pelosi following the "misunderstandings" of last week. Vice President Joe Biden responded accordingly.

Vice-President Biden has some reknown among conservatives as "the gift that keeps on giving" because of runaway mouth.

Early yesterday, this weakness for making gaffes appeared at first to have happened again. Initial, but mistaken, media reports from a Philadelphia fundraiser on July 19 quoted Biden as declaring Nancy Pelosi, who also was present, as "the most powerful person in American politics," more powerful, even, than himself or President Obama — perhaps not the message Democrats wanted to convey.

The misguided comment was not the Vice-President's however, but had been made just previously by Rep. Allyson Schwartz (D-Pa.) who was speaking at the same event.

The [story](#) later unraveled itself as follows:

Speaking at a campaign event in Philadelphia for congressional candidate Bryan Lentz, Biden reworked a line of praise from Rep. Allyson Schwartz, who said Pelosi was the most powerful woman in American politics.

"I would rephrase that: the most powerful person in American politics with the exception of the



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President of the United States,” Biden said, according to the pool report. “The single most successful, the single most persuasive, the single most strategic leader I have ever worked with is Nancy Pelosi.”

He had pulled the remark back out of the fire, but in further lionizing Pelosi by announcing, “Nancy, you are the Mother of Health Care,” the Vice President not only downplayed President Obama’s efforts in its passage but, perhaps in an attempt to make up for last week, praised the Speaker’s full involvement.

Politico observed further about the Philadelphia event with the Vice-President:

In his remarks yesterday, Biden added some new metaphors to his repertoire.

The vice president said President George W. Bush squandered the \$237 billion surplus President Bill Clinton left behind. Biden said the Bush administration’s economic policy was “a Ponzi scheme masquerading as a vision.”

And the man dubbed “Sheriff Joe” for his role in overseeing spending through the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act talked up the success of the stimulus package in preventing a “worldwide depression.”

“My Republican friends talk about deficits,” Biden said. “For them to talk about deficits is like an arsonist talking about fire safety. I mean, this is bizarre.”

Stand by for more efforts from the White House — and “Sheriff Joe.”

Photo of Vice President Joe Biden: AP Images



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