Biden Must Withdraw for a Viable Challenge to Trump

written by Frieda Afary | July 5, 2024



If the current crisis within the Democratic Party does lead to Biden's withdrawal from the race and a period of open debate and discussion to pick a viable presidential and vice-presidential team of candidates at the Democratic National Convention, that might help regenerate the democratic process in the U.S. and bring back young people and people of color who have become disillusioned with the U.S. elections.

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In the past week, the political developments in the U.S. have been head-spinning. Joseph Biden's disastrous performance in the June 27 debate with Donald Trump showed that his level of cognitive decline is so severe that he is incapable of challenging Trump's lies, bullying, misogyny and racism. Biden did not even mention the word Palestinian in his debate. The only one who mentioned that word was Trump who used it as a slur against Biden.

Then on July 1, the U.S. Supreme Court's ultraconservative majority voted 6 to 3 to grant Trump and future presidents broad or practically absolute immunity for their official conduct and to make it illegal to use any evidence related to their official conduct to prosecute them for their private conduct.

Given this dire situation, and given the fact that Trump has a 3% lead over Biden among registered voters, the only immediate pathway to possibly reverse this authoritarian drive is for the Democratic Party to replace Joseph Biden with another candidate. Another Democratic Party candidate might be able to challenge Trump and gain support among the 20% of voters who are still undecided and the many youth who are too disillusioned to vote. The Democrats would also have to win a large enough majority in the Senate and regain a majority in the House of Representatives in order to pass new legislation and possibly change the composition of the Supreme Court.

While Biden has still not relented, opposition to his nomination is increasing within the party leadership, the donors and among the general public

Some Democratic Party leaders such as James Zogby are offering plans for a four-week period of democratic, transparent and open debate for leaders who wish to offer themselves as replacement candidates before the Democratic Party National Convention in August when the delegates would have to vote for them.

Other Democratic Party leaders are saying that Biden should simply anoint his vice president,

Kamala Harris as the nominee since she is next in line and also authorized to access the funds raised for their race so far. Based on some recent polls however, Kamala Harris is only one or two percentage points above Biden in a match up against Trump.

If the current crisis within the Democratic Party does lead to Biden's withdrawal from the race and a period of open debate and discussion to pick a viable presidential and vice-presidential team of candidates at the Democratic National Convention, that might help regenerate the democratic process in the U.S. and bring back young people and people of color who have become disillusioned with the U.S. elections.

Given how discredited Biden has become because of his October 2023 embrace of Netanyahu and his mostly uncritical support of Israel's right-wing government, the idea of a new candidate who might care about both Palestinians and Israeli Jews would be refreshing.

At the same time, if Biden refuses to withdraw in the end, we need to vote for him because he and his administration would be far better than Trump's which would take away all of our basic civil rights.

Voting for the Democratic Party candidate and not a third-party candidate such as Robert Kennedy, Cornell West or Jill Stein is still the only effective option for fighting the growing authoritarianism at this time.

In my recent book, *Socialist Feminism: A New Approach* (Pluto Press, 2022), I have explained the distinctive features of twenty-first century authoritarian capitalism and offered theoretical and practical long-term and short-term perspectives for confronting it and creating a humanist alternative.

In our day-to-day interactions with people, we also need to challenge the disinformation that is being used to confuse the public to vote against their own human interests. Toward this aim, the Social Responsibilities Round Table of the American Library Association has created pathfinder brochures on various current world events to promote discussion among the general public about the burning issues of the day. https://sites.google.com/view/srrt-pathfinders/home

Frieda Afary, Iranian American Public Librarian

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