



OPINION: THE CAMPAIGN OF DELUSION - BEN SHAPIRO

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Here are a few signs of a losing campaign:

No. 1: Poll denial.

No. 2: Inability to shift course.

No. 3: Celebrity cameos.

Welcome to Joe Biden's 2024 campaign.

The Biden campaign is rife with simultaneous panic and poll denial. According to Politico, "A pervasive sense of fear has settled in at the highest levels of the Democratic Party ... anxiety has morphed into palpable trepidation, according to more than a dozen party leaders and operatives." Meanwhile, according to Axios, "President Biden doesn't believe his bad poll numbers, and neither do many of his closest advisers."

Here's the problem: the polls consistently show Donald Trump ahead in the swing states. According to the RealClearPolitics polling average, Trump is running substantially up in Arizona (+4), Georgia (+4.8), North Carolina (+4.8) and Nevada (+5.4); he's running ahead slightly in Pennsylvania (+2.3); and he's running even in Wisconsin and Michigan. He can lose Wisconsin and Michigan and if he wins the rest, he's president of the United States.

What's more, Joe Biden's campaign has shown a remarkable unwillingness to shift course. Biden ran as a moderate in 2020, against the radical socialist Bernie Sanders in the primary and then against the purportedly unhinged Trump in the general election. That neutral image, combined with changes in the voting rules that led to an extraordinary explosion of mail-in turnout (22 million more people voted in 2020 than in 2016, an utterly unnatural increase), led to Biden's victory.

But Biden has pursued a different strategy as president. He is now widely perceived as divisive rather than uniting; his politics have swung sharply to the left; his leadership, which was always weak at best, is now perceived as completely maladroit. What's even worse, Biden's personal irascibility has risen to the fore as his presidency has stalled out; he barely leads Trump in the polling data as to whether he cares "about the needs of people like you."

That problem for Biden -- the widespread belief that Democrats are disconnected from the voting public -- isn't unique to Biden. Between 2016 and 2023, Morning Consult polling shows, Americans' views that Democrats care about "people like me" dropped from 43% to 31%; meanwhile, their view that Republicans care increased from 30% to 39%. A Democratic Party that *doesn't care about people* is a

Democratic Party in shambles: the Big Government Party has always thrived when it has connected its heavy spending with the image of an open heart.

But Biden can't shift course. He has apparently decided to double down on the Barack Obama 2012 campaign, which relied on heavy turnout from sympathetic voting blocs rather than an appeal to moderates. That worked for Obama, but it hasn't worked for literally anyone else: Obama was a unique commodity in politics, not a model for future application. Yet Biden continues to pander to his far-left base, seeking middle ground with pro-Hamas voters in Dearborn and trans activists in Madison and BLM radicals in Philadelphia, in the vain hope that they will spur him to victory.

They won't. And so the Biden campaign is calling out the big guns: celebrities. This week, the Biden campaign, saddled with an 81-year-old, half-senile candidate, trotted out an 80-year-old, half-senile actor -- Robert De Niro -- to lecture the press outside Trump's campaign finance trial. It felt like the tired gasps of an asthmatic campaign.

What could Biden do to right the ship? He could start recognizing reality: that if he loses moderates, he loses the election. He could start siding with America's allies rather than catering to those who undermine them; he could begin speaking the language of individualism rather than intersectionality; he could take action to solidify our southern border rather than whining about the supposed racism of his opponents.

But he won't. So he's in real trouble, even if he refuses to acknowledge it.

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