

**Remarks at a Campaign Reception in Chevy Chase, Maryland**

*June 27, 2023*

Well, first of all, thank you. You know, people indicate that putting on a fundraiser is no big deal. It's a giant deal. You've had Secret Service running through the house. *[Laughter]* You've had all kinds of people. Yes. Your neighbor is saying, "What the hell you're blocking the roads out there for?" *[Laughter]*

So thank you, thank you, thank you. And I want to thank everyone here. And I know that there's a great concern about the situation in Israel. I'm happy to take some questions on that. But I just want you to know that, you know, I've often said, from the time I came to the United States Senate, I've been—and Stu knows—an incredibly strong supporter of the State of Israel.

I've often said: If there weren't—*[inaudible]*—we'd have to invent one. My dad was what a lot of those of you involved in the community would call a righteous Christian. Our dinner table was a place—this is the God's truth—where we would—my dad worked late to—he ran an automobile dealership. Didn't own it, but he ran it. And he'd come home for dinner every night. And at our house, dinner was a place where you'd ask questions and incidentally ate.

And my dad would rail against what—why we didn't bomb the railroad tracks, the camps, why we took so long to allow the ships to come in, et cetera. And he talked about a phrase that was used often then and still: that silence is complicity. And I mean this—this is a fact; everybody knows this about my dad, when he was alive and at home.

And my dad talked about the fact that—the idea that—and by the way, Chris Dodd's dad was part of the Commission to investigate what happened in the concentration camps. And he'd talk about why we didn't do a lot at the time.

And you know, one of the interesting things is that he used to talk about how it was impossible for the Israelis to—excuse me—the Germans not to know what was going on. And so he convinced me before he—long before he died: The one thing I've done, I've taken every one of my children to Dachau and every one of my grandchildren, because I wanted them to see—I wanted them to see those beautiful homes along the fence line with the beautiful roofs and lovely homes, and they'd pretend they didn't know. But they knew. And I wanted my kids to understand how—how that happened.

Now, I've taken every one of my—my three children—Beau was alive at the time—as well as my grandchildren. I have eight grandchildren; I have two to go. They're too young. But, by the way, they're even trying to change a little bit of what Dachau looked like at the time. It's much more sanitized than it was.

But the point I'm trying to make is, there's been an unbreakable bond we've had with Israel. Our relationship is defined by a genuine friendship. It's defined by a shared interest and shared democratic values. And America is the only nation, in my view—and some of you heard me say this before—that was founded on an idea. Every other nation has been founded based on geography, ethnicity, religion, and whatever.

We're the only one that—I apologize to the press for hearing me say this so many times—but we're the only nation in the world founded on an idea. Nothing else unites us but that idea. And it's one that we say that we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and women are created equal, endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights—life, liberty, et cetera.

We've never fully lived up from it, but we've never walked away from it. We've never walked away from it.

And one of the things that concerns me is—you inadvertently mentioned when you were introducing me—and that is that democracy is at stake. Democracy is at stake not just here but around the world. And I called a meeting of all the leading democracies—which we've done. We have fewer democracies today than we had 15 years ago.

And one of the things that I think is important to keep our focus on is that I've been stunned at the damage done by the last administration to us internationally and globally. I mean, I've been stunned how deep it goes. His "one America"—his, you know, "America only" policy has been disastrous. This is a guy who wanted us to pull out of NATO. This is a guy who thought Putin was an admirable guy. This is a guy who thought we could deal with—it just went on and on and on.

So what I've done—I've spent a great deal of my time, in a bizarre way, trying to put the world back together again—not because I'm so special, but I just happen to be President. So I've met with over 89 heads of state so far, and I've—trying to make sure that they understand we're not that nation. We're not the nation that existed.

I'll tell you a really quick story. When I showed up for the first G-7 meeting back when I was just elected in February in London, the G-7—I sat down with all the other—other major democracies and their major economies. And I said, "America is back." And one of the member—one of the heads of state turned to me and said: "For how long? For how long?"

And then another one said, "Joe"—he would call me "Mr. President"; we call each other "Joe" now. But he said—I said—he said, "Mr. President, what would you do if you woke up tomorrow morning and read in the London Times that a thousand people broke into the House of Commons, broke the doors down, killed two bobbies, and—to overturn an election that was occurring in the House of Commons? What would you think?"

And I never thought about it quite before. But that's how the world—the rest of the world wonders. They wonder about are we really back.

And one of the things that you've just seen what's happened in Russia, with Wagner and—the group—and Putin: The fact is that Putin was certain that he was going to be able to break up NATO. And Stu knows this: He was positive this was going to be the effect.

So I've spent over 180 hours directly meeting with the group and/or individually, as recently as on the telephone and Zoom with each of the heads of state in Europe this past couple of days, because they look to the United States to decide what we're going to do, how we're going to proceed.

My generic point is this: We have a lot to do, but we have enormous opportunities in terms of American foreign policy. We put together with—the Japanese have been wonderful. They've been wonderful. They've increased their budget. They're—they are engaged in a European war by saying that "We can't allow it to happen."

We find—and you know, I became friends with the Prime Minister of Japan. And he indicated to me he was going to make things better with South Korea. He did it. He told me what he was going to do. And I strongly supported it, the idea. South Korea and Japan have had—not had a relationship.

So there's a lot happening around the world. We've also put together a thing called the Quad in the Indian Ocean and in the South China Sea, affecting the—all that security surrounding what—what the—what Xi Jinping is very worried about: being isolated.

Well, that's not the purpose. He asked me why I'm doing what I'm doing. I've been—spent more time meeting with Xi Jinping than any person in—that holds a government office, mainly because it started when I was Vice President.

We knew he was going to become the President. And what happened was: Barack couldn't be talking to him and dealing with him, but I did. And I traveled with him over 17,000 miles in the United States and in China. I know him well.

The point is, he called me and said: "Why are you doing the Quad? You're trying to surround us and hurt us." I said: "No, we just don't want the international rules of—to change relative to airspace and sea space, and you're trying to do that. We're not going to go along with it."

My generic point is that we're uniting the rest of the world in a way that it hasn't been united before. We have a long way to go. I don't want to overstate it, but I don't want to understate it either.

And we talk about China being this great power. China has enormous problems—enormous problems. I'm not going to get into it right now. But the idea that they are going to be able to do things that they thought they could do is not accurate.

Domestically, I was—I ran—and I'll be very brief. I ran with a specific objective. I was sick and tired of trickle-down economics, the fundamentals of economics. They didn't—they weren't working for America. They weren't working for America. Not much trickled down to my dad's — my dad's kitchen table in terms of helping him. And so I thought it was really important. And I thought the key to the United States power—[inaudible]—in economic growth and stability was when the middle class was growing.

When the middle class does well, everybody does well. The wealthy do very well. The poor have a way up, and the middle class is just fine. And so I've spent a lot of time—and I'm making the speech tomorrow on what the—what the Wall Street Journal referred to as "Bidenomics." Well, it's working. It's working. We've created 17—13.2 million jobs in 2 years—more jobs than any President ever has created in 4 years—ever. We've also reduced the Federal deficit by \$1.7 trillion. No one has ever done that. The reason it's working is because we're engaging everyone.

And by the way—and I know I get criticized for being so pro-labor. I make no apologies for it. The reason I'm so pro-labor is because, you know, these are people who are feeling left behind. They're feeling—but they also—and they're—and they're clean now.

And here's the deal. You have a circumstance where, you know, to be—to get a license to be an electrician, you've got to spend 5 years—5 years—5 years as an apprentice getting partial pay. And they don't—people don't realize that.

And I met with the Business Roundtable. Told them—and they said why am I so pro-labor? I said: "What did you say to me when I was working with the Secretary of Commerce on the—as Vice President? What do you need most?" We interviewed three hundred—and I think—fifty-eight corporate heads. They said, "We need a better educated workforce." I said, "Why aren't you educating them then?"

I said, "I come from a State of DuPont. More corporations incorporated in my State than every other State in America combined. And the day—and they were the eighth largest corporation when I got elected. Eighth. And guess what? When they bought a new enterprise, they trained their workers. You guys don't spend any money training your workers. You expect the government to do it. So why in the hell are you against my effort to increase education funding?" And they all looked at me like, "Hmm, never quite thought of that."

But my generic point is, it's changing. The idea that any President could be endorsed within a week by the environmental movement, all of it; by the AFL-CIO, all of them; by the women's

organizations, all of them; and by significant elements of corporate America in one week, because we're doing something right.

We're not—I—the only thing we have disagreements on these days is taxes. I think everybody should pay your fair share. When you've got a million—you've got—now we have a thousand billionaires. I'm a capitalist. If you can make a million bucks, make it. It's okay by me. Multimillionaire? Good. It's good for the country. But pay your taxes. Not 8 percent average—8 percent. A cop pays more than that. A firefighter pays more than that. We've got to make sure that people know. That's the one thing that we still—we haven't done very well.

Lastly, I also thought it was really important to deal with—as my dad used to say—my dad was a well-read man who never got to go to college. And my dad—you—our dinner table was a place where you sat down to have conversation and incidentally eat. And I'm not joking. I'm not joking when I say that. And one of the things that he said was—he used to say: "Joey, a job is about a lot more than a paycheck. It's about your dignity. It's about respect. It's about being able to look your kid in the eye and say, 'Honey, it's going to be okay.'" And he meant it. He meant it.

Well, one of the things we've been able to do, for example—he'd also say that, "At the end of the month, do you have any breathing room?"

We talked about inflation. And I'll end with this. We have inflation down for 11 months in a row, notwithstanding some of the dire predictions of the—of recessions next month. Hadn't happened yet. I don't think it will because the basis of the economy is so strong now—so strong. But we'll see. I could be wrong.

But here's the point: My dad used to make the point that it wasn't whether the price of gasoline went up and food went up and all those things—which are bad—and housing. But it was about: Do you have any money left at the end of the month?

And guess what? What's the biggest bill most people over 65 pay? Health care. Health care. Why is it that you have—we have the best drug companies in the world—same drug company making an important product sold here in the United States and around the world—same exact product—you can buy it more cheaply in Toronto and you can buy it more cheaply in Germany, London—in London, you can—Frankfurt, Germany. Why? Why is that? Because right now, it's the only industry we can't bargain with. Only industry we can't bargain with. And you pay billions of dollars a year in Medicare expenses. Billions—tens of billions a year.

Well, guess what? In my negotiations with the Speaker of the House when they shut down the Government—that issue—not "trying to"—but trying to avoid shutting down the Government. I—he wanted—they wanted to get rid of what I just passed. Well, what we just passed was: Medicare can negotiate the price of what it cost.

For example, any of you—I'm sure all of you know someone who needs—who has type 1 or 2 diabetes and needs insulin. Well, guess what? The average cost of insulin for a month is 400 bucks a month. And you know how much it costs to make? Ten—t-e-n—dollars. Ten. The guy who invented insulin didn't patent it because he thought it should be available to everybody. It cost 12 bucks to package it—a total of 12 bucks.

So guess what? We just had Medicare negotiate it. The price of insulin is now, for on a monthly basis, \$35. Thirty-five dollars.

And I can go down the list. We're going to—I also—eight different drugs a—a year can be negotiated as well. If you go to the—for example, the VA, they negotiated all their prices. You want to sell us drugs or insulin? You come—you—we negotiate the price with you.

My generic point is, at the kitchen table, if you were able to deal with a little money at the end of the year—you got a little money at the end of the year. I can go down the list.

For example, when my staff thought I was crazy when I said: "We ought to deal with junk fees—junk fees." Well, guess what? You know we have—and most people—it deprives people of their pride. You want to take your grandson or daughter to see your mom on the East—on the West Coast, you're going to be surprised when you find you pay almost double the price to have your child sit next to you. You're not told about that.

Old bank overdrafts, you know how much it is—[inaudible]? Fifty-five billion dollars a year. Okay? They're one of the—and I won't name them, but you could check it out—one of the CEOs had a yacht called "Overdraft." My word, it's now sunk. [Laughter]

But my generic point is, it's just about treating people with decency. Just let people know what's going on. And that's what we're doing.

And one of the things that have started and—for example, I used—and remember in the beginning you said: "Biden you can never get anything done bipartisanly. Not possible." Well, guess what? We did. We did. We passed the act that—you know, dealing with veterans exposed all those burn pits.

We owe—we have a lot of sacred obligation and only one truly sacred obligation: Equip those folks we send to war and take care of them and their families when they come home. Well, guess what? Not anymore. They're going to have to be paid for those losses because of exposure to those burn pits. Why wouldn't we do that?

We used to be number one in the world in infrastructure. We're now number 18. How in God's name do you run—how do you have the most powerful nation in the world with a second rate infrastructure? I'm not—I think it's actually we're number 10.

And the same thing with—we just—just go down the list. We used to invest more in research and development than any country in the world: 2 percent of our GDP. Know what it is now? Point seven-tenths of 1 percent. How do we lead the world?

Computer chips. We were the guys that went out—we invented the semiconductor. We invented it. Invented—we made it sophisticated. We used to have 40 percent of the market; we now have 10 percent in the market.

If you decided it was better to buy it overseas—"Buy America"—people are criticizing me for the Buy America is a provision passed in the thirties. It's totally consistent with all of our international trade. If a President is given money to put a new deck of an aircraft carrier, he's allowed to say, "We're going to have American labor and American—American products on it."

Well, guess what? I've said that. Democrat and Republican Presidents of the past didn't say that. They made exceptions saying you can only have—you need 10 percent or whatever.

Well, guess what? Manufacturing is back. We have created 800,000 jobs—800,000 manufacturing jobs. A major article today in Bloomberg, you ought to—I'll leave a copy behind—about—no, I'm serious—major article and—by a Syracuse paper saying how we're bringing back all of manufacturing—think of all the places—and you—we've been campaigning a lot together, Stu—think of all the places where in a place like in—in the Midwest or in Western Pennsylvania or—where all of a sudden, the factory that's been around employing 2-, 3-, 5-, 700 people for years and years gets shut down. Why does it get shut down? Because labor is cheaper overseas, we export the jobs and import the products. Not anymore. Not anymore.

One—we're going to put \$495 billion in private investment, just since I've become President, in infrastructure, as well as new endeavors. Almost \$500 billion.

This idea that when our Government is setting—we did a survey: Are you more likely as a corporate entity to invest in a project where the government has an interest or not? Eighty-five percent said more likely.

So my point is, we're creating thousands and thousands and thousands of good-paying jobs. And the middle class is growing. And it's only now becoming clear.

I was asked earlier by a group of editors I met with—not editors—columnists. And they said, "Why are you talking about it now so much?" A simple reason: We couldn't start it off—we started it off, we passed all this, but no one knows what it meant. None of it was happening. Now we have 35,000 infrastructure projects underway—bipartisan infrastructure projects.

Guess what? McConnell needed a bridge across the Ohio River. It cost a billion dollars to fix it—\$1 billion. But it affects the commerce of the entire Midwest area, so we're building a new bridge. I indicated I was going to be President for everybody, whether they voted for me or not.

You know, the point is that there's a lot—for example, I know I'm a big Amtrak guy. So I—*[inaudible]*—Amtrak, everybody kind of rolls their eyes. I get it. I've traveled 1,200,000 miles on Amtrak. Commuted every single day for 35 years.

Here's the point: If you think about it, there is a tunnel going through Baltimore underneath the bay there, and there's one in New York as well. Those tunnels are—nothing has been done on one of them since 1906.

I'm probably the only non-Amtrak worker that's walked through that tunnel. There are lightbulbs hanging down. There's flooding going on. There is a lot of problems. You have to slow down to 30 miles an hour to go through there with the train.

We're fixing it. It's cost a lot of money, a billion dollars. But guess what? It's going to save billions of dollars because now you'll be able to go through it 100 miles an hour.

We learned one thing for sure—certain: If in fact you could travel from point A to point B faster on a train than your vehicle, you leave your vehicle home. It has profound impact on dealing with the environment, which I'm—the last thing I'll mention. Oh, no, I won't; I'm going to get a question on the environment, so I'm going to wait on that. I think I'm getting a question about it.

Anyway, my point is, I am really optimistic. I'm optimistic about the notion that I think the American—I'm confident the American people are decent and honorable people. They've just been confused as hell.

And there—and when I made that speech when I was running in 2020 at the—at—up at the—in Philadelphia, and I—I made the speech about democracy was at stake. And with all due respect to the press, they said, "What the hell is he talking about that for?"—by and large, notable exceptions. But, "why is he talking about that?"

Well, guess what? Sixty-six percent of the American people agree with me. They're worried about the—literally, I'll end with this—democracy in America. What's happening? Not a joke. What's happening?

We talked about the Supreme Court—great news today. And there is great news. I think Roberts is beginning to have an impact on the close calls.

But think about what's happened, what we've done in terms of individual rights—individual rights, everything from gay—LGBTQ rights all the way through to rights relating to having an abortion. You know, I'm determined to bring back *Roe v. Wade*. And my objective to do that is to get the States—half the States to decide that, because now the Court said, you know, it's State issue.

And the thing I love, they said, "And we'll see what women can do." They're going to find out. [Laughter] They're going to find out. But my point is, in addition to all this, the world is changing so rapidly. It's understandable why people are concerned.

Last point: The pandemic—I think we're going to find—and I wrote about this early on—a profound impact on the psyche of the American people. A profound impact.

Mental health concerns are higher today than they've ever been in history of America. Look what's happening. Third graders are 7 to 18 months behind in their education. Across the board, schools, teachers—look, these guys wanted to cut 100,000 teachers in the negotiation that happened—100,000 teachers. Try being a teacher in a classroom.

Did you ever think you'd live in a country where books are being banned? No, I'm not joking. Think—I mean, think about the things that are happening.

So people are confused. We've got to let them know who we are. Let them know who we are, what we're for, and what we're against. And I think we'll be okay. But with that, I'm going to—as my mother would say, "Hush up, Joey." And I understand I've got some questions coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:46 p.m. at the residence of Michael and Susie Gelman. In his remarks, he referred to former Sen. Christopher J. Dodd; former Presidents Donald J. Trump and Barack Obama; President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin of Russia; Prime Minister Fumio Kishida of Japan; President Xi Jinping of China; former Secretary of Commerce Penny S. Pritzker; Speaker of the House of Representatives Kevin O. McCarthy; Senate Minority Leader A. Mitchell McConnell; and Supreme Court Chief Justice John G. Roberts. He also referred to his grandchildren Naomi K. Biden Neal, R. Hunter, Natalie, Finnegan, Maisy, and Beau Biden, and Navy Joan Roberts. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 28. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

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*Locations:* Chevy Chase, MD.

*Names:* Biden Neal, Naomi K.; Biden, Finnegan J.; Biden, Natalie P.; Biden, R. Hunter; Biden, R. Hunter, II; Biden, Roberta M. "Maisy"; Dodd, Christopher J.; Kishida, Fumio; McCarthy, Kevin O.; McConnell, A. Mitchell; Obama, Barack; Pritzker, Jay R. "J.B."; Putin, Vladimir Vladimirovich; Roberts, Navy Joan; Trump, Donald J.; Xi Jinping.

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