

Our Three Silent Mice

By Victor Davis Hanson

President Biden was forced, unceremoniously and unwillingly, to abdicate from his impending reelection nomination. Since then, we have neither seen nor heard much from our sitting President. He has vanished, poof, gone.



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te unusual if not alarming. Unlike prior to the June 27 debate, the left now makes no effort to hide Biden's debility. Indeed, it accepts the reality that an infirm Biden might not be able to finish out his remaining six months. Yet it still cannot decide whether the nation's exposure to a President Harris prior to November 5 would lend her the advantage of incumbency or (more likely) ensure her defeat given global exposure to her puerility.

In the past, when a vice president took over the party nomination from his sitting president boss, the lame duck president was nonetheless evident and in charge until the duration of his tenure.

When Lyndon Johnson belatedly decided not to run for reelection in 1968, he claimed that he needed to devote his full attention and remaining months to finding a solution to the then-raging Vietnam War. Indeed, Johnson sought to steal interest away from his often-underappreciated vice president, Hubert Humphrey, and the latter's ongoing (and failed) bid as

the Democratic nominee to replace Johnson.

Ronald Reagan was still very busy in 1980 in his last six months as president—even as his sitting “a thousand points of light” vice president, George H.W. Bush, became the Republican nominee and was fixated on campaigning to replace Reagan.

At times in late 2000, during the waning days of Bill Clinton’s administration, a restless, lame duck Clinton seemed almost to compete for the spotlight with his then vice president, party nominee, and would-be Democratic presidential replacement Al Gore.

The vanishing Biden caught another case of COVID in mid-July shortly after his disastrous and historically early presidential debate with Trump. And in the subsequent month, Biden simply disappeared.

He is rarely seen, more rarely heard, even as Iran has promised a theater-wide war against Israel, Putin has more frequently threatened to escalate Russian attacks to existential levels, and the economy has witnessed dramatic stock shocks, dismal job news, and increasing talk of an impending recession.

Americans have wondered what happened to their president. Apparently, Biden was deemed unfit by his party bosses and donors to remain its nominee but still considered hale enough to continue for half a year as America’s president.

Rumors swirled that a depressed, embittered, and unwell Biden was in seclusion licking his wounds, acidic over being betrayed by his erstwhile allies—the Obamas, former speaker Nancy Pelosi, Senate Majority leader Chuck Schumer, the left-wing squad, a traditionally obsequious and in-the-tank left-wing media, and perhaps his replacement, the machinating Vice President Kamala Harris.

Biden gave a so-so endorsement of Harris. After that pro forma act, he has somehow evaporated in a fashion that has left the

White House even more vacant than during the octogenarian Biden's prior three years of customary three-day workweeks.

Will or can Biden campaign this summer and autumn for Harris?

And if he were mentally and physically able to do so, would it help or hurt her?

Are his policies—especially those toward Israel at the brink of a war with Iran—unchanged, or will he shift somewhat to help the Harris cause with pro-Hamas/anti-Israel voters in Michigan?

Or perhaps in his sullenness, will Biden remain indifferent to Harris, or at some point, reassert his lost authority even if, or perhaps because, it might prove injurious to her candidacy?

So, for the present, no one knows who is in charge of the United States.

Is it the three-year consortium headed by the omnipresent Obama tandem that had heretofore used Biden as a convenient waxen effigy?

Or is Jill Biden still playing the Edith Wilson role for a non compos mentis and invalid presidential husband?

Or is our de facto Commander-in-Chief the new presidential candidate Kamala Harris? She seems ebullient in welcoming to her team both Obama old-hands and Biden defectors eager for new jobs and billets, in "The king is dead; long live the king!" fashion.

The next six months may be the most dangerous in our modern history. Key geostrategic decisions concerning an opportunistic world eager to fill the widening American void will be made by whom, if anyone, and in what manner?

Harris

But stranger still is the month-long vaporization of Vice President and the now de facto Democratic nominee Kamala Harris. How weird that she sought to hog airtime and attention as vice president (although not via interviews or impromptu remarks), but once she gained an even wider portfolio as the Democratic presidential nominee, she recoiled from interviews and went into hibernation.

In the last month amid the frenzy of the Biden collapse, her coronation, and the selection of her running mate Tim Walz, a mute Harris has made up all the ground Biden lost as the prior nominee.

She is flooded with hundreds of millions of dollars in left-wing tech and Wall Street cash. All are eager to donate given their money will no longer be wasted on a sore loser but might now earn something in return from a future president.

So, a silent Harris is rising in the polls, once the Biden albatross was cut away and relieved Hollywood/Wall Street/Silicon Valley grandees poured in their riches.

Harris has been instructed to xerox the successful tripartite model of the 2020 Biden victory:

One, keep the incoherent and cackling Harris away from the public and journalists, and ration even her teleprompted and staged speeches.

Two, erase 30 years of left-wing demagoguery and socialist activism. Replace her radical chic with faux-centralism of the ol' Joe Biden from Scranton sort.

In shameless fashion, Harris is now running ads bragging she will hire more border guards, and secure and stop illegal immigration—this from someone who called for ICE to disappear, championed illegal immigration and an open border, and demonized any who sought to secure it. In some sense, she is even appropriating much of the Trump agenda for the next three

months.

So, her message to the public is simply, "Before June 27, I was for what you, the public, hated and never gave a damn about the consequences. And now I am going to fool you for 90 days into thinking I am your real border czar— on the expectation that I can delude you a third time once you naifs elect me and I destroy the border again."

Three, count on 70 percent of the electorate not voting on Election Day without serious audit.

When will Harris give an unscripted interview? In a month as promised, two months, or after Election Day? When will she dare to speak to a neutral audience? Or mix it up with Donald Trump in no-holds-barred debates? When will she be asked, as incumbent vice president, why she doesn't begin her promised agenda right now during the last six months of the Biden-Harris tenure?

No such candor will follow until she falls 5 points in the polls behind Trump and is thus forced to speak.

So far now, why would Harris confirm to the electorate that she indeed quickly exhausts her five-hundred-word vocabulary, turns off listeners with adolescent cackling, and is a puerile left-wing ideologue mouthing stale platitudes?

The Trump challenge then is to keep hammering her extremist record, her dangerous agenda for 2025 and beyond, and her weird, indeed historic refusal to mix it up with journalists and to speak *ex tempore*.

Harris knows that Biden thrived by remaining mute and when he could not, he crashed in the polls. So, she accepts that she too would rather be attacked as evasive, afraid, and cowardly than lose when confirmed as childishly incompetent—given the state media can far more successfully reconstruct her silence as incidental to her mellifluous oratory.

As for the objection that surely Harris cannot pull off such a surreptitious candidacy for 80 more days, Harris would surely answer, “If Biden pulled it off for over three years, I certainly can manage it for 10 weeks.”

Walz

Ostensibly, Tim Walz is a boon to the Trump campaign. His home state Minnesota will likely not be in play in 2024. His strange selection only confirms that Harris is proudly “woke” and a far-left “woke” “radical”—as she herself once put it.

Otherwise, we are learning very quickly that Walz is as erratic, error-prone, and dishonest as Harris. He too is already heading for seclusion from the media. The man of the people from the countryside has scoffed, in self-incriminating Mike Bloomberg fashion, that rural Minnesota is little more than “rocks and cows.”

In mere hours after his nomination, he has grown mute about his past and politics except for teleprompted rah-rah speeches—avoiding reporters, interviews, and unscripted moments.

Why?

Because, in less than a week, the nation learned that Walz lied about his military rank, lied that he had deployed to Iraq, and lied that he had carried a weapon in war. The more we learn about Walz’s record as governor in Minnesota, the more it trumps even the disastrous tenure of Gavin Newsom in his imploding doom-loop state that Walz apparently saw as a model for a once can-do stable Minnesota.

The Insurrectionary Radical Mind

Add it all up, and the president, the vice president, the Democratic presidential candidate, and the vice presidential nominee all either cannot or will not speak casually and

publicly to elected representatives, reporters, or the people themselves.

Worse still, they retire from their responsibilities of public engagement because these selected officials accept that the alternative of transparency is nearly suicidal to their own agendas. No one is now in charge of America—neither the ghosted president nor the campaigning vice president candidate who both act as if they hold no office.

It gets far worse still. Joe Biden was created by a soft coup of sorts in March 2000 when all his unpalatable left-wing radical rivals mysteriously vanished in unison at a time when an inert “centrist” Biden had not yet won a single primary.

Then Biden was dethroned abruptly 38 months later by the same inside plotters who deemed his sock puppet role was no longer viable—but only after their sure loser in November had become more a liability to the left than any longer a useful, empty vessel of governance. But as for his fitness as a man of the left to continue ruling us, he was just fine.

It continues to get even worse.

Then the same donors, the same politicians, and the same obsequious media grandees pivoted yet a third time. On the morning of June 27, a fit-as-a-fiddle Biden needed not to step down both because of his brilliance and dynamism—and the unthinkable succession of the Harris mediocrity.

By late night June 27, it was decided that a now suddenly enfeebled and unelectable Biden could be forcibly removed. Harris was Phoenix-like just as quickly reborn as the second coming of Obama—glib, in control, cool, and competent.

We are now witnessing yet a fourth coup from the party that warns us that democracy dies in darkness.

They have removed their once robust now demented nominee,

nullified 14 million primary voters, repackaged and selected Harris in his place who has never won a single primary—and now plan to continue in power for another four years by silencing the outgoing president, secluding the vice president and muting the Democratic ticket itself.

In sum, leftists endlessly conspire not only because they have little confidence in the people, but because they have absolutely none in themselves.

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