

Let the Games Begin! (Updated)

As I write this on the “morning after” Joe Biden’s catastrophic performance in the debate, Democrats are in crisis... wringing their hands and gnashing their teeth as to what’s to be done.

I think Al Sharpton’s remarks on Morning Joe (see below) strike exactly the right tone, but let me cut to the chase, somewhat literally, as you’ll see.

And while all eyes have been the debate, the Supreme Court has finally succeeded in crippling the federal government’s power to regulate business, something that’s been the right-wing’s holy grail for over a century now. The Chevron ruling basically gives industry a free pass to do whatever they want without fear of government regulation. *[Note: this writing is previous to the Immunity ruling, which immeasurably worse than most had predicted.]*

This is the textbook definition of fascism, folks. In this Supreme Court term, the EPA and SEC have both already been kneecapped by similar rulings, and in yet another astounding opening of the floodgates to corporate corruption, bribery is now legal, as long as the payoff happens **after** the quid-pro-quo.

What we are seeing right before our eyes is the establishment of de-facto “royalty” – an American “ruling class” that’s above the law, will accept no limitations on their power and are accountable only to themselves.

When it comes to what government has the authority to do – issues that affect all 330 million of us – the Supreme Court now has the final say. Not Congress.

Not the president. Not the thousands of experts in their chosen fields who have dedicated their lives to getting it right.

Instead, in a breathtakingly arrogant display of complete disdain for the American people they are tasked to serve, six Republican-appointed Supreme Court judges have appointed themselves as the experts, seizing power for themselves and themselves alone... without any of them ever having received a single popular vote.

And as long as this court remains in place, there isn't a damn thing we can do about it.

The crippling of government (except for the preservation of wealth and to force women to give birth) has been the goal of this "ruling class" for over a century. Now, with the Supreme Court fully under their control, they're officially going for it – full bore. The next stop will be Social Security, Medicare or any other government program they don't like – for whatever reason. Mark my words.

Their finish line is total consolidation of power in the hands of a rich elite, enforced by a one-party state with little or no limits on its authority. And our new ruling class-to-be isn't even bothering to hide what their plans are. Read about [Project 2025](#), which they'll immediately put into action the moment the Trump wins the White House again.

We are one election away from America losing our democracy for the foreseeable future. This makes November even more important, if you thought that was even possible.

With Biden at the top of the ticket, his chances of winning a second presidential term are a coin-flip at best. And after his horrendous debate performance (which will be replayed ad-infinitum over the next four months), the odds are probably considerably less than 50-50.

(How Democrats could allow the very survival of democracy to be a 50-50 proposition is unconscionable; I ask you, if your plane had even a 15% chance of crashing, would you get on board? But I digress...)

And when it comes to the Senate, the prospects of Democrats retaining control are even more dire. Democrats' chances of Senate control were already very slim; they are even less so now if Biden remains at the top of the ticket. If Democrats don't retain control of the Senate, the only federal judges who will be appointed will be hard-right judges who will promote their authoritarian agenda. With lifetime appointments, they'll do so for the next 40 years.

So what's called for this November is a real electoral game-changer. Something fresh and new that would generate enough positive energy to create a political tsunami large enough for Democrats to take the White House, House and Senate.

With the recent Supreme Court decisions on abortion, and a convicted felon, rapist and pathological liar as the Republican nominee, such a victory should be well within reach for a strong candidate. But sad to say, that's not today's Joe Biden. Joe has given his life to the country and there's simply not enough in the tank for another term. That much is obvious to anyone who watched him Thursday night.

Total victory in November – up and down the ticket – is the only way Democrats will have the ability to pass the reforms required to fix this runaway Supreme Court and defang the right-wing unelected cabal that's eroding the very foundations of our democracy. And even with a victory of such stunning proportions, success is far from assured.

Today's Joe Biden is simply not up to the task. He proved that in front of the entire country on Thursday night and it's plain for all to see, even if the Democratic Party leadership refuses to admit it in public.

Joe must go. For the good of the country, his legacy and for democracy. But he needs to make the decision himself. Whether through intervention, self-realization or simple exhaustion, Joe needs to make the call, and he needs to make it soon.

The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, The Financial Times and The Atlantic have all called for Biden to step down. Seeing the gravity of the situation, more respected publications are sure to follow. They can say publicly what Democratic insiders can't say if they want to keep their jobs. The pressure will build. We can only hope that Joe finally reads the writing on the wall, whether or not he reads it himself, or has it read to him by those he trusts.

Because it's not just about Joe. He'll get that, and if he doesn't get it in time, others may well "get it" for him. Donations will absolutely crater, not just for him, but for all Democrats, and the external pressure may well be too much for him to ignore. Biden may end up deciding to bail on his own, rather than taking everyone down with him on a sinking ship. But he needs to make the decision soon. Very soon. And quick decision-making is not in Biden's DNA. This is a man who tends to be deliberate to a fault and if he waits too long, it will be too late. Let's hope he does the right thing, as he has so often over the course of his political life... even if it often took him too long to get there.

So yes, I am convinced that for the good of the country, Joe must go. And many minds much greater than mine agree. But rather than this being a catastrophic development, I think it is a fantastic opportunity to breathe life into a stagnant campaign, injecting real excitement into the nomination process in a showcase of democracy such as this country has never seen before... with everything on the line. You can't get more exciting than that!

It'll be an opportunity to redefine the debate, showcase fresh new faces, and, above all, unite the Democratic Party as a bulwark against the forces of Trumpism, with the majority of the country – and the world – solidly behind it. What an opportunity! Thank you, Joe.

Here's what needs to happen:

1. The Democrats should hire James Goodson, the former president of ABC news to stage manage the convention, just as he stage managed the January 6 Congressional hearings. Goodson did a brilliant job in skillfully presenting hearings that could easily have been a total mess of political grandstanding. Goodson should be tasked with doing the same thing for the Democratic convention, which otherwise could be a total cluster-you-know-what.
2. Open the first ballot to online, ranked-choice voting.

Here's how it would work:

Biden doesn't need to withdraw; he just needs to release his delegates and propose what I'm putting forward here. After Biden releases his delegates, Democrats would hold a ranked-choice vote, in which any number of candidates could participate, as long as they had been sufficiently vetted (e.g. in previous political campaigns). You could even open the field to thinking-out-of-the-box candidates like Al Sharpton and/or Liz Cheney – both would be great on the debate stage.

No endorsements; all candidates would start off on an equal footing. Let's say five would advance to a runoff vote, to be held at the convention. Biden and Harris would be able to participate in the first round like everybody else, so losing candidates couldn't claim to have been unfairly slighted.

The first vote should be held at, say, the beginning of August. A runoff vote of the top five vote-getters could be held on August 20th, Day 2 of the Democratic convention, with presentations of the top five vote-getters being the highlight of the first day. Talk about compelling TV!

James Goodson knows how to make tight, effective TV. American reality TV has been a big hit... let's give the people what they want! Democrats can beat Trump at his own game; the talent is certainly there.

Ranked-choice voting means that sensible down-ballot decisions really matter, so voters would be compelled to learn more about unfamiliar names. With ranked-choice, good potential candidates like Roy Cooper (NC Governor) or Steve Bullock (former MT Governor) could rise to the top without the millions of dollars they'd otherwise have to raise. In one fell swoop, new faces could revitalize and reenergize party perception, instead of seeing the "same old same old" that's been such a drag on democrats' branding. And time-wise, by "compressing" the political season, I think a nation would be truly grateful.

Finally, voting should be open only to Democrats "in good standing," meaning those who have been members for at least two years and have – wait for it – paid their yearly dues. If half of registered Democrats were to pay \$25, that would raise over half-a-billion dollars for Democrats up and down the ticket.

The process would be a big win for everybody, most importantly of all, a big win for America and democracy. And in showing their respect for the will of "the people," Biden and Harris would only burnish their legacy. The big losers here would be the party brahmins, who would be largely powerless to influence the process. Good. They've had their chance, and it's brought us to where democracy now hangs by a thread.

The Democratic Convention is August 19-22. So there's enough time to hold two, perhaps even three debates, culminating in the runoff floor vote on August 20th. The nation – and the world – will be riveted. And the ultimate nominee could ride a wave of excitement and enthusiasm that should not only sweep a Democrat into the White House, it might even provide enough momentum to flip the House and even hold the Senate.

Biden and Obama (and Nancy, too) need to have a real heart-to-heart – behind the scenes of course. But once Biden withdraws, it'll be “game on,” and if the DNC handles it properly (a very big “if” indeed) this could be the ride of a lifetime.

So let the games begin!

I know nothing whatsoever about horse racing and odds-making, but I've taken a stab at creating a racing form for the “horse race.” Candidates are in no particular order and you are more than welcome to make your own suggestions.

I have no idea what to do with it, but for now, consider this just a little more of my personal “therapy,” as some of you know I am wont to do from time to time. (See <https://icrmedia.com/trump-video/>)

First, Al Sharpton's remarks, which, as I said, I think are precisely spot-on.

And then for some fun! (See last page.) Enjoy!

Al Sharpton on Morning Joe (MSNBC) - June 28, 2024

“I think that as much as I was disappointed to devastated by Joe Biden's performance last night, the real issue this morning is not what is gonna happen to Joe Biden; the question is what's gonna happen to us as a country.

This man, Donald Trump, unrepentant for what he did in terms of trying to overthrow the government, totally advocating last night to continuing to take away womens' right to choice and openly advocating for states' rights, which had my mother where she couldn't use a bathroom in her native Dothan, Alabama because the state of Alabama upheld segregation rights... and once you go down the road of states' rights, it's gonna not only

affect women's rights to choice – which is disastrous – it's going to affect Blacks, Latinos and everything... a man that blamed everything about people coming across the border – and certainly we need to deal with the border – but a lot of what is going on – including his mismanagement of COVID – had nothing to do with somebody coming over the border. It is a real decision we're gonna have to make on who is gonna stop this man. If Donald Trump becomes president, all of that becomes in effect.

And let me remind people – this whole news cycle is not over: the Supreme Court could drop some decisions today that further robs us of certain things. So we've got a rough road ahead between the Supreme Court and then the sentencing of the first former President of the United States [to be convicted]. I think we need to not just talk about Joe Biden's future – he's earned that consideration – it ought to be his decision. But the priority must be what is the future direction of this country. And if Joe Biden is the man I think he is, he will make his mind up based on what will happen to the future of the country. He should not go down in history as one that saved it, and then put it in jeopardy.

If he's up to it, then go for it, and I think people should go with him. But if he's not, he's earned the right to say 'I've done the best I can.'

Either way, many of us will respect him, but this is what's at stake: not Joe Biden's future – our future."

-Rev. Al Sharpton

Democratic Party 2024 Presidential “Racing Sheet”

Odds to Win Nom.	Odds to Win Presidency	Candidate	Political Office	Notes
2:1	1:2	Roy Cooper	Governor NC (term-limited)	Good campaigner with good record; a real "southern gentleman" who would have wide, down-home appeal. Prime pick.
5:1	4:5	Andy Beshear	Governor KY (term-limited)	A terrific governor who's been a proven winner in a very red state. Not as charismatic as Cooper, but would also have wide appeal. Prime pick.
3:1	4:1	Kamala Harris	VP of the United States	Polarizing figure with imperious manner
4:1	2:1	Amy Klobuchar	US Senator - Minnesota	Don't know how well she'd stand up to Trump, but certainly a possible VP pick
6:1	3:1	Wes Moore	Governor of Maryland (2022)	Charismatic, but a lightweight compared to Trump; also rather young
40:1	100:1	All Sharpton	None	Would be good to have him on debate stage
2:1	3:4	Gretchen Whitmer	Governor of Michigan	Has pledged to serve out her current term; if she does, then 2028 would be soonest. O/W she could be the strongest candidate against Trump. Solid, genuine Midwest values - certainly the strongest woman in the picture. Prime pick, but unlikely to run.
4:7	4:5	Gavin Newsom	Governor of California	Has pledged not to run against Biden, but could change if Biden withdraws. Newsom can seem too “Hollywood” slick and has yet to show he can take a punch. “Pretty boy” not the shoo-in many Dems think he is. Vulnerable on crime, homelessness and immigration, but still has the inside track. Prime pick.
20:1	Even	Liz Cheney	Former Congressmember (WY)	Would be good to have her on debate stage, possible pick for Sec'y of State
20:1	1:2	Steve Bullock	Former Governor of Montana; lost 2020 Senate race.	Dark horse, fresh face unsullied by recent politics. Solid "man of the West" would have wide appeal in embodying a style not seen since Reagan. If he's willing to run, could be the strongest in the field, but he's a question mark. Has anybody called him? Prime pick.
5:1	2:1	Josh Shapiro	Governor of Pennsylvania (2022)	Highly articulate, but lacks gravitas. More valuable as PA governor
6:1	4:5	J. B. Pritzger	Governor of Illinois (2018)	Excellent speaker, solid Democrat and real "attack dog." Biggest drawback: Chicago crime rate. Prime pick nevertheless.