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Caitlin Johnstone: Biden Not Running the Show

All the post-debate talk about whether Biden has what it takes to be president — when he already is — suggests people know he’s not in charge.



Donald Trump – Joe Biden CNN debate on Thursday. (C-Span still)

Listen to Tim Foley reading this article.

It’s very revealing how everybody’s focusing on what Joe Biden’s dementia-addled debate performance says about his ability to win re-election instead of on the fact that the current, sitting president of the United States has dementia.

If you were lucky enough to have missed the debate, Biden was so confused and zoned out that not only did CNN’s audience overwhelmingly say former U.S. President Donald

Trump won while the word “dementia” was sent trending on Twitter, but it was also uniformly acknowledged to have been a horrifying catastrophe by Democratic Party operatives and liberal media pundits, who are now widely suggesting that the president should withdraw from the race.

But the conversation has almost entirely revolved around Biden as a presidential candidate, with relatively little attention going to the fact that this person is the president right now. Everyone’s talking about whether Biden can assure American voters that he has what it takes to be president, and nobody seems all that concerned about the fact that he is already president and will remain so for half a year.

What this suggests is that people already kind of know on some level that the president of the United States doesn’t really run the United States, but are still mentally compartmentalized away from this reality enough to care who wins the presidential election.

If people really believed the president runs the country, they’d be freaking out that Biden in his demented haze might order an attack on what he may think is still the Soviet Union or nuke Libya to kill Muammar Gaddafi or something.

They’re not worried that this will happen because they know their government is actually being run by unelected empire managers from behind the scenes, and that Biden is just the official face on the operation.

So in order to hold their mainstream worldview together, liberals are simultaneously straddling the two completely contradictory concepts that (A) it doesn’t matter who the president is because the country is actually run by unelected empire managers, and (B) that Biden’s debate performance was very concerning because it means Trump will become president.

If they let go of (A) then they’re no longer in the mainstream worldview where their country works how they were taught it works in school, and if they let go of (B) then they’re no longer in the mainstream worldview where presidential elections are super duper important and all their country’s problems are the result of Americans voting incorrectly.

They straddle both and try not to think too hard about the obvious contradictions between them, in order to avoid the crushing cognitive dissonance they’d experience if they looked at them too closely.

In reality the U.S. empire has marched along in all its usual depravity despite its official leader having Swiss cheese for a brain this entire time.

They got their genocide in Gaza and their world-threatening proxy war against Russia, as well as a China policy that is vastly more hawkish than that of Biden’s predecessors.

The imperial murder machine hasn't skipped a beat in its nonstop campaign of steadily increasing global tyranny.

This has happened because U.S. presidential elections are fake and the results don't matter.

It wouldn't matter if Americans elected a labrador retriever or a bottle of Tabasco sauce; the empire would roll forward without the slightest interruption.

The wars would continue. The economic injustice would continue. The surging authoritarianism would continue. The oligarchy and corruption would continue. The ecocidal capitalism would continue. The imperialist extraction would continue.

U.S. elections are just a diversion to keep Americans from pushing for real change in ways that pose a meaningful challenge to power, and Americans already kind of know this.

The sooner they stop compartmentalizing away from this fact that they're already dimly aware of and face reality, the sooner they can start bringing health to both their nation and the world.

Caitlin Johnstone's work is entirely reader-supported, so if you enjoyed this piece please consider sharing it around, following her on Facebook, Twitter, Soundcloud, YouTube, or throwing some money into her tip jar on Ko-fi, Patreon or Paypal. If you want to read more you can buy her books. The best way to make sure you see the stuff she publishes is to subscribe to the mailing list at her website or on Substack, which will get you an email notification for everything she publishes. For more info on who she is, where she stands and what she's trying to do with her platform, click here. All works are co-authored with her American husband Tim Foley.

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