

# [***A vocal revolt: MSNBC personalities object to NBC News' hiring of Ronna McDaniel as a contributor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BMX-GRN1-JC5B-G39J-00000-00&context=1516831)

The Associated Press

March 26, 2024 Tuesday 4:51 PM GMT

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**Section:** DOMESTIC NEWS; ENTERTAINMENT NEWS; POLITICAL NEWS

**Length:** 844 words

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**Dateline:** NEW YORK

**Body**

NEW YORK — The internal furor over NBC News’ decision to hire former Republican National Committee head Ronna McDaniel as a paid contributor spread Monday, with MSNBC personalities Rachel Maddow, Jen Psaki, Nicolle Wallace, Joy Reid, Lawrence O'Donnell and Joe Scarborough all using their shows to publicly object.

Maddow, MSNBC's most popular personality, compared it to putting a mobster to work in a district attorney's office.

“I find the decision to put her on the payroll inexplicable and I hope they will reconsider that decision,” she said on her weekly program Monday night.

There was no immediate comment on Monday from NBC News or McDaniel about the extraordinary public revolt against network management that [*began with*](https://apnews.com/article/nbc-news-mcdaniel-todd-election-fraud-683aa560f0824725023dacde0f504ad6) former “Meet the Press” moderator Chuck Todd a day earlier. Todd said that many NBC News journalists were uncomfortable with the hiring because of McDaniel's “gaslighting” and “character assassination” while at the RNC.

**MCDANIEL WAS HIRED QUICKLY AFTER LEAVING THE RNC**

The network announced McDaniel’s hiring on Friday, [*two weeks after she stepped down*](https://apnews.com/article/ronna-mcdaniel-trump-rnc-stepping-down-presidential-2024-dde6c031db877008a348d0a31f04f278) as the RNC leader, saying McDaniel would add to NBC News’ coverage with an insider’s perspective on national ***politics*** and the future of the Republican Party.

Maddow said she'd been told that MSNBC management had signed off on the hiring, but that when staff “expressed outrage,” it was made clear that McDaniel would not appear on the cable network, which appeals primarily to liberal viewers. Since then, she said there's been an effort in other parts of the company to “muddy that up in the press” and make it seem like that's not what happened.

“I can assure you, that is what happened at MSNBC,” she said.

Maddow told her viewers — and presumably her bosses — that “it is a sign of strength, not weakness, to acknowledge that you're wrong."

The on-air MSNBC rebellion stretched from pre-dawn to late in the evening, starting with “Morning Joe” hosts Scarborough and Mika Brzezinski promising viewers they would not see McDaniel in her NBC News capacity. Brzezinski said it's fair to seek Republican voices to balance election coverage, but “not a person who used her position of power to be an anti-democracy election denier.”

Wallace said that with the hiring, NBC has said to election deniers “not just that they can do that on our airwaves, but that they can do that as one of us, a badge-carrying employee of NBC News, as a paid contributor to our sacred airwaves.”

Said O'Donnell: “There is an easy way to avoid the controversy that NBC News has stumbled into. Don’t hire anyone close to the crimes.”

Psaki said she decided to speak up because, as a former press secretary to President Joe Biden, her name has been used by McDaniel supporters to point out that a former Democratic political appointee was hired by MSNBC without internal objection.

She said that for a television personality, that kind of experience in government “only matters and only has value to viewers if it is paired with honesty and good faith.”

One of those GOP critics was U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas, who mentioned Psaki among several others who switched to news after working in ***politics*** for Democrats, including the late “Meet the Press” moderator Tim Russert.

“But NBC hired a Republican??!!” he wrote on X, formerly Twitter. “It's the end of the world.”

In a social media posting on Monday, Todd said that those who are trying to make it an issue of left vs. right were being intentionally dishonest. “This is about whether honest journalists are supposed to lend their credibility to someone who intentionally tried to ruin ours,” he said.

The “Morning Joe” hosts aired an exchange from McDaniel’s interview the day before on “Meet the Press” with current moderator Kristen Welker, who wondered why the former RNC chairwoman didn’t speak up earlier after saying Sunday she disagreed with Trump’s contention that people jailed for their part in the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol should be freed.

“When you’re the RNC chair you kind of take one for the whole team, right?” McDaniel said. “Now I get to be a little bit more myself, right? This is what I believe.”

**THERE’S A HISTORY OF POLITICIANS AS COMMENTATORS**

It’s not unusual for television news outlets to hire politicians as analysts and commentators. One of McDaniel’s predecessors at the RNC, Michael Steele, is an MSNBC contributor who hosts a weekend news program there. CBS News faced some backlash for hiring two former officials in the Trump administration, Reince Priebus and Mick Mulvaney, as analysts. Alyssa Farah Griffin, a former White House communications director during the Trump administration, became a CNN political commentator.

But McDaniel’s tacit endorsement of Trump’s false claims that the outcome of the 2020 presidential election was fraudulent makes her hiring even more sensitive, given the continuing legal and political ripples of the Jan. 6, 2021, siege at the U.S. Capitol that was an outgrowth of the fraud allegations.

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**Load-Date:** March 26, 2024

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