

# [***'Morning Joe' hosts add to internal NBC criticism of Ronna McDaniel's hiring as a contributor***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BMS-GRT1-JC5B-G1WM-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**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’s “Morning Joe” hosts saying on the air that they strongly objected and wouldn’t have her on their show.

“We hope NBC will reconsider its decision,” said Mika Brzezinski, co-host of MSNBC’s four-hour morning show with her husband, former GOP congressman Joe Scarborough.

The comments from the hosts, who said they learned about McDaniel’s hiring through press reports on Friday, followed former “Meet the Press” moderator Chuck Todd’s [*public criticism*](https://apnews.com/article/nbc-news-mcdaniel-todd-election-fraud-683aa560f0824725023dacde0f504ad6) a day earlier. Todd said many NBC News journalists were uncomfortable with hiring because of McDaniel’s “gaslighting” and “character assassination” while at the RNC.

There was no immediate comment on Monday from NBC News or McDaniel.

**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.

Scarborough said he objected because of McDaniel’s role in former President Donald Trump’s “fake elector scheme” and said she summed up the “sickness” in the Republican Party where sticking with the team is more important than speaking the truth.

Brzezinski said “Morning Joe” believes NBC News should seek out conservative Republican voices to provide balance in election coverage. “But it should be conservative Republicans, not a person who used her position of power to be an anti-democracy election denier,” she said.

NBC has said it will leave it up to individual MSNBC producers and personalities whether McDaniel will appear on the network, which appeals to liberal viewers. Brzezinski said she would not be a guest on “Morning Joe” in her capacity as a paid NBC contributor.

The 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**

The “Morning Joe” ban shouldn’t come as a surprise to those who watch the show, which has been relentless in its criticism of Trump’s actions after the 2020 election and supportive of President Joe Biden. The show brought on historian Jon Meacham, a Vanderbilt University professor who has informally advised Biden, to discuss the McDaniel hiring.

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.

During her “Meet the Press” interview, McDaniel acknowledged that Biden won the 2020 election “fair and square.” That was a reversal from a comment she made on CNN last summer, when she said “I don’t think he won it fair. I don’t.”

On Sunday, she said: “The reality is Joe Biden won. He’s the president. He’s the legitimate president. I have always said, and I continue to say, there were issues in 2020. I believe that both can be true.”

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Associated Press writer Jonathan J. Cooper in Phoenix contributed to this report. David Bauder writes about media for The Associated Press. Follow him at [*http://twitter.com/dbauder*](http://twitter.com/dbauder)

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