

# [***Biden And Trump Agree To June And September Debates; Biden And Trump To Debate Without Audience; Kennedy Left Out Of 2024 Debate Plans; Protests On College Campuses Criticized As Antisemitic; Honoring The Fallen While Lawmakers Debate Bills; Democrats Use Capitol Attack To Vote Against Bills; Judge Frees Teen Gun Suspect On Bail; New Data On U.S. Economy Shows Reduced Rate Of Inflation; President Biden And Republican Presidential Nominee Donald Trump Agree To Two Debates; Rep. Dean Phillips (D-MN) Suggests During Interview That Democratic Party Should Not Hold Convention This Year; Artificial Intelligence Revolutionizing Modern Warfare; Recent Polls Show Donald Trump Leading President Biden On Issues Of Economy And Immigration***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C1T-GDF1-JCS1-617T-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Guests:** Stef Kight, Dean Phillips, Morgan Ortagus

**Body**

DANA PERINO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: I don't think I get time for mine.

JEANINE PIRRO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Yes, go.

PERINO: Congratulations. Look at these four people. The New Jersey quintuplets graduate from same college together. Congratulations.

JESSE WATTERS, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: It's a quints.

GREG GUTFELD, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: Quints.

WATTERS: Judge?

JEANINE PIRRO, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: No, I don't have anything this, and we wouldn't have enough time.

PERINO: I know.

PIRRO: But let's --

(CROSSTALK)

WATTERS: Well, the first-time judge has nothing to say.

PERINO: Their names are Victoria, Ludovico, Ashley, Michael, Marcus.

(CROSSTALK)

WATTERS: Write it down in the Guinness Book of World Records.

That it is for us. Have a good night.

RICHARD FOWLER, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONTRIBUTOR: Good night, everybody.

BRET BAIER, FOX NEWS CHANNEL HOST: I wait for the judge to come up with something that she wanted

PIRRO: Is that true? Do I talk to much?

WATTERS: That's all right. (INAUDIBLE).

BAIER: OK. All right. I'll do it. All right. Thanks, Jesse.

Good evening. Welcome to Washington. I'm Bret Baier.

"BREAKING TONIGHT", two big stories. First, challenge accepted. Former President Donald Trump says he will meet President Biden June 27th and September 10th to debate.

The current president taunting his predecessor and opponent on a video released this morning, telling him to "make my day, pal."

The former president responding on Truth Social, ending with, "Let's get ready to rumble." Both accurate quotes, by the way.

President Biden has agreed to two debates so far. Former President Donald Trump would like more. He's accepted three formal invitations. And both men will debate on T.V. networks outside the nonpartisan Presidential Debate Commission that had a long tradition of running three presidential debates and one vice presidential debate every cycle.

Also, we hear at Fox are releasing right now, new Fox polling indicating the race is tightening slightly among registered voters nationally. While the president's support among core constituencies seems to be slipping.

Former President Trump leads President Biden 49 to 48, head-to-head right now. That's down from a five-point advantage in March. The former president's lead in a five-way race is three, down slightly, but again, all within the margin of error.

Voters are becoming more enthusiastic about participating in November with 68 percent now saying they are extremely motivated. And debates, well, they make a difference.

White House correspondent Peter Doocy, leads us off tonight live from the North Lawn. Good evening, Peter.

PETER DOOCY, FOX NEWS CHANNEL WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENT: Good evening, Bret.

President Biden has struggled to change the subject and control news cycles lately, but he did it today. Getting Donald Trump to agree to a letter full of ground rules and a 14-second-long video invitation that came complete with a reference to Dirty Harry.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

JOE BIDEN, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: Make my day, pal. I'll even do it twice.

DOOCY (voice over): Now, there is one debate scheduled for before Trump even accepts the Republican nomination, and one after.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: We are pleasantly surprised.

DOOCY (voice over): President Biden's push to debate comes as brand-new Fox polls out tonight show he is sliding with key groups. Since October 2020, he is down seven points with black voters, seven points with suburban women, and 14 points with voters under 30.

Among registered voters, Biden is seen as doing a better job on abortion, health care, and election integrity, while Trump is seen as stronger on foreign policy, crime, the economy and immigration. Trump also leads Biden by nine points on mental soundness to serve.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Obviously, it's uphill for President Biden or he wouldn't be debating in the first place.

DOOCY (voice over): The agreed upon debates will have no audiences.

REP. NANCY PELOSI, (D-CA): I, myself, would never recommend going on stage with Donald Trump.

DOOCY (voice over): The campaigns were also cutting out the Commission on Presidential Debates. Its chairman sounds skeptical these debates will help the process.

FRANK FAHRENKOPF, CO-CHAIRMAN, COMMISSION ON PRESIDENTIAL DEBATES: If they can do it, God bless them.

DOOCY (voice over): Biden and Trump debating at least somewhat important to 79 percent of voters. 69 percent think it's important to include RFK Jr., but he is not.

And now, accusing Biden and Trump of collusion. Saying, by excluding me from the stage, presidents Biden and Trump seek to avoid discussion of their eight years of mutual failure, including deficits wars, lockdowns, chronic disease, and inflation.

QUENTIN FULKS, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY CAMPAIGN MANAGER FOR BIDEN'S RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN: We have to stop wasting time in front of the American people with individuals who have no chance.

DOOCY: So, should we see this sudden offer from the president to debate as a signal that you guys realize you need to change the subject after some really bad polling.

KARINE JEAN-PIERRE, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY: You know, we went had a back and forth on polling yesterday. He is laser focused on making sure we do everything that we can to give people, Americans a little bit of breathing room.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

DOOCY (on camera): The Trump team is still pushing for more than two debates. A few minutes ago in the Cabinet Room, I had a chance to ask President Biden if he will do a third debate. He just laughed, didn't say anything.

He also just laughed at a question about why he doesn't want to debate RFK Jr. Bret.

BAIER: Peter Doocy, live in the North Lawn. Peter, standby if you would.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

BIDEN: To make sure you, in fact, let people know you're a senator.

(CROSSTALK)

DONALD TRUMP (R), FORMER U.S. PRESIDENT AND PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: He doesn't want to answer that question.

BIDEN: I'm not going to answer the question, because the question is --

(CROSSTALK)

TRUMP: Why wouldn't you answer that question?

BIDEN: The question is --

TRUMP: You want to put a lot of new Supreme Court justices. Radical left.

BIDEN: The question --

Will you shut up, man?

TRUMP: Who is on your list?

BIDEN: That was really a productive segment, wasn't it? Keep yapping, man.

TRUMP: The people understand, Joe.

BIDEN: They sure do.

TRUMP: 47 years, you've done nothing. They understand.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: Well, it is going to happen at least twice. Maybe more. We'll see. New York Times: "Biden and Trump agree to a debate on June 27: Mr. Biden and his top aides want the debates to start much sooner than the dates proposed. They want the debate to occur inside a T.V. studio, with microphones that automatically cut off when a speaker's time limit elapses.

They want it to be just the two candidates and the moderator without the raucous in-person audiences that Mr. Trump feeds on." All of that agreed to by the former president.

Let's bring in our panel early tonight to digest all of this. Byron York, chief political correspondent of The Washington Examiner. Axios political reporter, Stef Kight. And still with us, Peter Doocy, live from the North Lawn.

OK, Byron, how do you take this? Obviously, we've got CNN on June 27th. ABC on September 10th. We don't know the other structure. We had the former president agreed to a debate with Fox, the Biden team did not. Where do you see this?

BYRON YORK, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONTRIBUTOR: Well, on the substance of it, this is a good thing, and both sides are right. The commission on public debates really is kind of -- presidential debates is really kind of outdated with millions and millions of Americans voting early.

We needed earlier debates, so that they can vote after they've seen a debate, and not before the debate. So, substance wise, is a good thing.

On ***politics***, if you're a Republican, I think you're a little disappointed by this. It's clear that Biden took the initiative in this, Trump seem to be following it. Biden seem to be driving this car all day. And I think that you will see Republicans questioning, they don't like CNN, they really don't like ABC.

They will be questioning, why President Trump agreed so quickly to do it this way.

BAIER: I pointed out that he -- the former president did agree to a Fox invitation for debate. Once that all started, we invited both President Biden and former President Trump.

The Biden campaign put out a statement saying, "Donald Trump has a long history of playing games with debates, complaining about the rules, breaking those rules." It goes on to say, "No more games. No more chaos, no more debate about debates. We'll see Donald Trump on June 27th in Atlanta - - if he shows up."

The Trump campaign, the former president has said, anytime anyplace, and it seemed like he was accepting all offers this morning when it all came to be.

STEF KIGHT, ***POLITICS*** REPORTER, AXIOS: Yes. Yes, it's pretty remarkable to see it play out this morning. It seemed like we were all watching this agreement come together on social media live. And then, you know, the way it came together kind of signal that there had to have been some kind of back channeling between the two campaigns.

I know reportedly, both campaigns had kind of decided to try to work around the commission this time and reach some kind of agreement. And into Byron's point, it's pretty -- it's pretty interesting to see the way that Biden has tried to take the lead on this after so much time of Trump telling him he was willing to debate anytime and he plays. Trump has been the person, kind of pushing for this debate up until now, and to see the Biden campaign then, try to take ownership of this, and to see Trump go along with it is pretty interesting.

And even seeing the way that Trump has kind of already said, you know, Biden is the worst debater in history. We've already seen Trump kind of saying that he is very confident going into this.

BAIER: Right. Peter, it's -- it is interesting. And to the point of your question about dealing with tough polls, in some places that maybe the polls haven't been tough before, and especially on different items, the economy, immigration, crime. What about the thought process that there was a group inside the White House and inside the campaign that really didn't want President Biden to have to face debates?

DOOCY: Bret, in everybody that we talked to at the White House, and some folks in Wilmington, it never really felt like the overall Biden world conglomerate thought that there would be a benefit to him participating in debates. And tell, he went on Howard Stern a week and a half ago and said that he was going to do it.

And it seems like, at that moment, the Biden campaign and their Trump -- their Trump counterparts started talking about ways to make it happen. It's going to be something though, because both of these men are very out of practice. Remember, there were a lot of complaints from Republicans that Trump wouldn't participate in primary debates this time. So, he hasn't debated in four years. And there were complaints by some of the Democratic challengers, President Biden want to get in and debate in the primaries this year.

So, he hasn't debated in four years. And President Biden's engagement off- script has been really limited too. Early, during his time in office, he would often engage with lengthy Q&As for five, 10, 15 minutes. He doesn't really do that anymore. And a lot of the interviews that he does are really short.

Yesterday, they put out the full length of a Yahoo Finance interview, it was two minutes and 40 seconds long.

BAIER: Yes.

DOOCY: So, that's -- that is a lot less depth than there is going to be in one of these debates.

BAIER: That was shorter than the first answer in my interview with President Obama. I know that for a fact. I think that time for the 3:30.

And speaking of the Commission on Presidential Debates, Frank Fahrenkopf, chairman, was on with Martha earlier, and here is what he had said.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

FAHRENKOPF: We volunteer our time and energy to make sure, in a non- partisan way that debates are held. And so, we're still waiting there.

MARTHA MACCALLUM, FOX NEWS CHANNEL ANCHOR: Do you anticipate that that this may blow up when they really start haggling over the details, and that they may come back to you?

FAHRENKOPF: You know, it's happened before. In the past, there has been this sort of thing, and they have come back.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: Now, it's interesting. These are two T.V. networks. ABC has now committed, Byron, to simulcast other networks. In other words, other people will be able to see it in other places.

CNN has not yet said that. This changes the dynamic for how it is digested by Americans and American voters.

YORK: Yes, I think what you're saying is there's possible that -- it's possible that a lot fewer people could end up seeing this, which is not -- it's just the opposite of what you actually want to happen.

And I think, Martha's question was spot on, because when you had an official body, the commission, both sides had an incentive to negotiate and work with that official body. And now, if it -- it's kind of a free for all with a couple of networks.

Last thing I would say about why Biden did this so quickly. Our poll today, nationally is extremely close. But he is in bad shape in a number of super important key states.

And there's two things, he is not doing well, and a lot of people have already made up their minds. And that hardening of positions continues from now all the way through Election Day. So, the earlier, he can possibly shake up the race, make a change with a debate performance, probably the better for him.

BAIER: Here is the Biden campaign on RFK Jr., being excluded from these debates.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

FULKS: We have to stop wasting time in front of the American people, with individuals who have no chance. the American people deserve to hear directly, uninterrupted from the two individuals that have an opportunity to be like the president of the United States, and RFK is not one of them.

CHUCK TODD, HOST, MSNBC: If you're Joe Biden, you're going to want him on the debate stage.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Yes.

TODD: I think there will be a point in the fall that they will actually see that as an asset. I'm sort of in the minority on this.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: He is in the minority in this. RFK Jr. says that this is all part of a deal to keep him off the debate stage, if he made it above 15 percent, for example, he might be included.

KIGHT: Yes. I mean, the reality is, you've seen both the Biden campaign and the Trump campaign kind of go after RFK Jr., as we've seen him kind of tick up in the polls and impact both campaigns at different points in the cycle.

So, you know, perhaps, the Biden administration -- or the Biden campaign did not want RFK on the stage. But, you know, the Trump campaign may have also agreed to that. It would not be surprising if they kind of agreed let's move this up early. Let's make this in June, to make sure it's just Trump versus Biden on that stage.

BAIER: We will cover it all. There is it's fascinating to see as it developed today. Panel, thanks. We'll see you later. This afternoon, House lawmakers heard from Jewish students at two of the schools where anti- Israel protests have caused major problems.

Chief Washington correspondent Mike Emanuel has that report tonight.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

MIKE EMANUEL, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CHIEF WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT (voice over): With pro-Palestinian protests ongoing today at NYU's graduation --

AMERICAN CROWD: We will free Palestine.

EMANUEL: Two Jewish Ivy League students came to Capitol Hill to draw attention to antisemitism on their college campuses. Even at the antisemitism hearing, there were pro-Palestinian protesters with symbolic blood on their hands.

A University of Pennsylvania senior shared experiences from that campus.

EYAL YAKOBY, SENIOR, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA: While students walked to class, they are met with masked individuals screaming at them, go die. You are Hitler's children and Nazis.

EMANUEL: A Harvard Divinity student recalled fellow Harvard students referring to Jews, as "bloodthirsty vipers".

SHABBOS KESTENBAUM, GRADUATE STUDENT, HARVARD UNIVERSITY: I have seldom experienced such disdain disregard and contempt for a minority group than the way in which Harvard treats its Jews at Harvard.

EMANUEL (voice over): The new Fox poll reveals one-third supports the campus protests while nearly 60 percent oppose them.

A Jewish New York Democrat expressed outrage at the treatment of the Jewish students, but offered this distinction.

REP. JERROLD NADLER (D-NY): Criticism of Israel's government or political criticism of Zionism on a college campus is not inherently antisemitic.

EMANUEL: A rabbi called on Congress to act to protect Jewish Americans.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Not all anti Zionism is antisemitism, but most of it is.

EMANUEL: The White House announced a handful of measures intended to reduce antisemitism. Yet, critics blasted the president's slow response and lack of public comment, which he tried to clean up.

BIDEN: -- overwhelming obligations.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

EMANUEL (on camera): The Harvard students said for a Jewish American in 2024 to receive equity, equality, or justice, they have to go to Congress and file lawsuits, because his own school's leadership is not responsive. Bret?

BAIER: Mike Emanuel, thanks.

Coming up. We go inside the latest inflation numbers to see how they may affect you and your family. Keep it in.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BAIER: House Republicans are going after President Biden and his democratic colleagues over the perception that the president is politically vulnerable on the lawn order issue.

They are teeing up several crime related bills as President Biden visits Capitol Hill for Police Week.

Congressional correspondent Aishah Hasnie has details tonight.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

BIDEN: Every time you put on that shield and walk out of the house, your family wonders if that call will come.

AISHAH HASNIE, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENT (voice over): As President Biden honored fallen police officers outside Capitol Hill --

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: These asinine policies that seek to vilify them.

HASNIE (voice over): House Republicans began debate on a series of crime- related bills inside, condemning what they call, the Democrats' soft on crime policies.

REP. MIKE JOHNSON (R-LA): We'll be voting to deport illegal aliens who assault law enforcement. Boy, we sure hope everybody votes for that one.

HASNIE (voice over): That bill allows ICE to arrest illegal immigrants charged with assaulting cops. And it comes after police say a group of migrants attacked two NYPD officers in Times Square earlier this year.

According to The New York Post, six of those suspects were offered plea deals that include jail time. Democrats are whipping against these bills hitting back at Republicans by invoking the January 6th Capitol riot.

REP. PETE AGUILAR (D-CA): It's a little more difficult when they want to try to whitewash what happened when they will stand with some law enforcement, but they won't stand with others.

HASNIE (voice over): The FBI just unveiled new data showing more officers were killed from 2021 to 2023 than in any other consecutive three-year period in the past 20 years.

D.C. police union chairman, Greggory Pemberton says legislation is important, but so is sending a strong message that both sides back to blue.

GREGORY PEMBERTON, CHAIRMAN, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, POLICE UNION: Policing has been politicized. All we're trying to do here is go out, find people who violated the law, and bring them into the criminal justice system to be held accountable.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

HASNIE (on camera): And Bret, tonight, some rare bipartisanship as we watch the House take votes on these bills. House Republicans, I can tell you just pass the D.C. Crimes Act, with the help of 18 Democrats. That's a big deal. And the detain and deport illegal immigrants bill for attacking cops, that would also just pass with bipartisan fashion with the help of 54 Democrats. Unclear if the Senate will actually take these bills out. But quite a bit of bipartisanship here tonight. Bret.

BAIER: Aishah Hasnie, live on the Hill. Aishah, thanks.

HASNIE: Got it.

BAIER: A judge here in Washington is under fire tonight over posts about being woke and the release of a teenager accused of firing more than two dozen rounds on a busy street right here near the U.S. Capitol.

Here's correspondent Griff Jenkins.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

GRIFF JENKINS, FOX NEWS CHANNEL CORRESPONDENT (voice over): It's a chilling image. an 18-year-old captured on surveillance videos, spraying a busy D.C. neighborhood with more than two dozen rounds last month, just a mile from the U.S. Capitol. Amonte Moody now released on bail, ahead of his trial.

D.C. Superior Court Judge Lloyd Nolan, whose online presence boasts to being woke, supporting BLM, and donating to groups with ties to George Soros felt Moody posed no threat to the community and let him walk.

CULLY STIMSON, SENIOR LEGAL FELLOW AND MANAGER, NATIONAL SECURITY LAW PROGRAM, HERITAGE FOUNDATION: Happens every day in D.C. and usually goes under the radar screen because the media just can't cover all the crime stories in D.C.

JENKINS: But the real problem lies with the reluctant federal prosecutor says Cully Stimson, a former prosecutor in the US Attorney's Office for D.C., now, working for a conservative think tank.

STIMSON: You have a U.S. attorney who's the chief prosecutor, who doesn't take gun crimes or violent crime seriously.

Matt Graves is a disgrace and he should resign, frankly. He's been an abysmal chief prosecutor. And now, the report from the D.C. Sentencing Commission shows just that.

JENKINS: That Sentencing Commission Report shows, Graves office declined, dropped, or pled down 2,262-gun cases over the past two years. And outright declined to prosecute 33 percent of arrest for felony gun possession last year.

But Graves, who opposes judge Nolan's release of Moody on bail, is calling for a hearing next week to overturn the order. And has defended his office's efforts to reduce violent crime.

MATTHEW GRAVES, UNITED STATES ATTORNEY, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA: Keeping the community safe -- doing our part and keeping the community safe is our number one area of focus.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

JENKINS (on camera): But people here are concerned about public safety. A new Washington Post poll shows 96 percent of D.C. residents consider crime a serious issue. Bret?

BAIER: Griff, thanks.

We have new data tonight on the number of migrants who were able to elude capture as they illegally crossed from Mexico into the U.S.

Customs and Border Protection figures, obtained exclusively by Fox News, show massive increases coinciding with President Biden's years in office. The number of gotaways during the previous decade averaged about 128,000 per year, fiscal year 2021, a surge to 387,000. The year after, 606,000. And last fiscal year, almost 671,000 encounters.

Up next, we break down today's inflation report and what it means for you and some "COMMON GROUND".

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BAIER: Stocks were up today following inflation data that came out. All three indices finished with record closes, the Dow surging 350, the S&P 500 gaining 61, the Nasdaq jumping 231.

Great numbers on the economy, and despite some tightening in the overall head-to-head number in our poll, there is some tough news for President Biden in that poll concerning the economy. Sixth-four percent of the registered voters surveyed say their family feels things are getting worse. Just 30 percent say they are getting better. Six percent say it's about the same.

New government statistics show the rate of inflation is down slightly after three straight elevated ratings, but prices still rose three-tenths of a percentage point from March to April. Edward Lawrence of FOX Business joins us now from the North Lawn of the White House to show us what that may mean for you and your family. Good evening, Edward.

EDWARD LAWRENCE, FOX BUSINESS NETWORK: Good evening, Bret. And 3.4 percent over the past 12 months is what inflation, but that's still too high for the Federal Reserve to even consider a rate cut or reducing that rate, even though this was a decrease in inflation. Still, voters are feeling pitched here. In fact, all prices are up about 19 percent since the month President Biden took office. People are paying 21 percent more in the grocery store and 38 percent more for energy in that timeframe. Now, the former CEO of Carl's Jr. says all of this could affect the election.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ANDY PUZDER, FORMER CKE RESTAURANTS CEO: Until they start seeing it at the gas pump and in the grocery store that their costs are coming down, they're not going to change their opinion of Biden or how he is handling the economy. The impact on consumers should have a huge effect come November.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

LAWRENCE: So the FOX News polling now shows that grocery prices, gas prices, and utility prices, or energy costs, are by far the top three problems for registered voters. In re-messaging the economy, President Biden misrepresented inflation. Listen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Two times in the past two books the president said inflation was nine percent when he came into office. Is the president misinforming Americans on that, or does he just not realize that inflation was 1.4 percent when he came into office?

KARINE JEAN-PIERRE, WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARY: You know, and thank you for the question. The point that he was making is that the factors that caused inflation was in place when he walked into the administration, when he took office.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

LAWRENCE: Now inflation at 9.1 percent in June of 2022. That's about 18 months after President Biden took office. Now, for 20 months now, 29 months, actually, we have been hearing President Biden say that fighting inflation is his number one priority. Bret?

BAIER: All right, Edward, thank you.

Former Governor Larry Hogan easily won the Republican Senate primary in Maryland last night. Democrats have nominated county executive Angela Alsobrooks in the race to replace retiring Democratic Senator Ben Cardin.

In West Virginia, Republican Governor Jim Justice won the Senate primary. He will face Democrat Glenn Elliott, the mayor of Wheeling, West Virginia. They are seeking to replace retiring Democrat Joe Manchin.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, (D) PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES: The fact is that everything he is saying so far is simply a lie. I'm not here to call out his lies. Everybody knows he is a liar. I just want to make sure --

DONALD TRUMP, FORMER U.S. PRESIDENT: Joe, you're the liar.

BIDEN: I want to make --

TRUMP: You graduated last in your class, not first in your class.

BIDEN: Oh, God.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: Well, that was the debate. It's going to happen very soon, in about a month-and-a-half. "New York Times," "Why Biden wanted to debate Trump early and why Trump said yes. Tens of millions of dollars of advertising has not changed President Biden's polling deficit. Donald J. Trump's criminal trial has not altered the race's trajectory. And Mr. Biden's significant cash and infrastructure advantages have yet to pay political dividends. So on Wednesday, the one weekday Mr. Trump is not confined to a courtroom, the Biden campaign shook up the race, publicly offering to bring forth the first presidential debate by three months. The move was meant to jolt Americans to attention sooner than later about consequential choice in 2024."

With that, let's bring in Minnesota Democratic Congressman, former presidential candidate Dean Phillips. Congressman, thanks for joining us.

REP. DEAN PHILLIPS, (D-MN) HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE: Good to be with you, Bret.

BAIER: What do you make of the shakeup, the early debate. There are now two on the books. The former president has agreed to three, including one invitation from us. What do you make of that?

PHILLIPS: Well, what I make of it, first, is hallelujah. Debate is the vitamin of democracy. It wasn't long ago, Bret, that it seemed like there may not be a debate for the first time in modern history between the two major party candidates. So it is good. Would I prefer that the Commission on Presidential Debates continued their nonpartisan hosting and, perhaps, include third party candidates? Of course, because 25 to 30 percent of the country right now plans not to vote for either President Biden nor former President Trump. But a step in the right direction. And I just hope that we actually see legitimate policy debate, not just arguments and talking over each other.

BAIER: Yes. As it stands right now, the former president has agreed to the rules put forward by the Biden campaign. CNN will have the first debate, ABC the second. ABC has agreed in a statement to simulcast to all networks. In other words, all Americans will see it on every channel. CNN has not yet. What would you say to them?

PHILLIPS: Like I said, the more people that see conversation, debate deliberation, the better. In the absence I think democracy dies. I'd like to see that feed available to all networks as widely as possible so that more people can see. And like I said, of course the two major party candidates will be on stage, but 25 to 30 percent of the country right now is indicating they are not for either of them. And that's why I think it would be better to actually include, in this case, RFK Jr. who a lot of people are supporting, I think would be thoughtful, engaging debater with those other two.

And again, the more, the better. Competition is good, Bret. And I'm seeing to many efforts to diminish it rather than promote it.

BAIER: Yes. Peter Doocy at the White House tried to get President Biden on that very question earlier. Take a listen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DOOCY: RFK Jr.?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Thank you, thanks, everyone. Appreciate it.

DOOCY: That's a no?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Thank you.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: He said do you want to debate RFK Jr.? He just smiled and kind of laughed there.

I want to talk to you about maybe another reason that President Biden did this to shake things up. If you look at Minnesota from 2020, your state, it went to President Biden 52.5 to 45.4. Right now, in the general election, RCP, Real Clear ***Politics*** average, it's 43 to 40.7 in blue Minnesota.

PHILLIPS: Well, Minnesota is in play, Bret, just like a lot of states that I think a lot of my fellow Democrats don't want to confess is the reality. President Trump came awfully close in 2016, didn't do as well, of course, four years later. But I'm telling by Democratic colleagues who are supporting President Biden, myself included, that there's a lot of work to do. And Minnesota, Wisconsin are going to be bellwether states. I think a lot of people are going to be staying home, so I think there is a lot of competition with the couch.

But mark my words, we're going to see a lot of surprises, I think. Unless there is a major course correction, acknowledgment of inflation, the immigration crisis, and real attention to addressing both of those issues. Absent that, it's going to be a wipeout.

BAIER: Why do you think the shift is happening? Why do you think places like Minnesota with the rally we saw in New Jersey, and those polls are said to be single digits now as well?

PHILLIPS: Bret, the numbers are not reflecting this, but I think many of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle have been feeling this for many, many months. Certainly, I have in Minnesota, conversations with center right, center left voters in Minnesota are telling me regularly that they are shifting perspectives. And that's why I ran for president to shake up the Democratic primary. That's why I have been encouraging the Biden campaign to really wake up to reality. Because if Minnesota is that tight, rest assured the rest of the country is heading in the same direction.

BAIER: Last thing, quickly. How much do you think the Israel-Hamas situation and the Biden administration's policy or talking about that has affected numbers?

PHILLIPS: Let me start by saying, Bret, that I think President Biden has done a very good job of supporting our ally and friend Israel. I think he made a misstep, of course, last week with withholding some arms shipments, but I'm very pleased with his support. Clearly, young progressives are dismayed. And frankly, I think now the president has kind of offended those on both sides of this issue. But he can recapture that. I do believe he is principled in his support for Israel. But I'm afraid that this is looking awfully like 1968 with a lot of anger and angst and disenfranchisement that I think are going to play out on TV this summer, and it's going to be awfully contentious. So there's time to course correct.

BAIER: 1968 was in Chicago, the Democratic Convention. You think it could look a little like that?

PHILLIPS: I think it can. And frankly, I think it would be in the best interests of the Democratic Party to forego the convention and focus on campaigning, because I don't see any way it could be accretive to the mission of winning the next election.

BAIER: Interesting. Congressman Dean Phillips, thanks so much for the time.

PHILLIPS: Thank you, Bret.

BAIER: Up next, how artificial intelligence is shaping modern warfare. And then the panel is back with a deep dive in today's FOX polls, just releasing, plus the debate.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

BAIER: Ukrainian forces have withdrawn from some parts of the country's northeast and are battling Russian troops in other areas. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says he will postpone all his upcoming foreign trips because of that.

Visiting Secretary of State Antony Blinken is seeking to reassure Ukraine of continuing American support, announcing a $2 billion arms deal. Most of that money comes from a package approved by Congress last month.

Also today, Russia's President Vladimir Putin landed in Beijing for a two- day state visit to China.

Tonight, we examine how artificial intelligence is changing modern warfare. On the Hill today, senators rolled out a bipartisan A.I. roadmap worth $32 billion to try to keep the U.S. ahead of China. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer says China is spending 10 times more than the U.S. on development right now.

Meanwhile, two of the companies developing high tech weapons systems are show casing their work, using A.I. to the country's top military leaders. Chief national security correspondent Jennifer Griffin takes a look from the Pentagon.

(BEGIN VIDEO TAPE)

ALEX KARP, PALANTIR TECHNOLOGIES CEO: It's either we own A.I. or our adversaries China and Russia own A.I.

JENNIFER GRIFFIN, FOX NEWS NATIONAL SECURITY CORRESPONDENT: Modern warfare is being revolutionized by artificial intelligence.

KARP: Our adversaries have an as long tradition of being not interested in the rule of law, not interested in fairness, not interested in human rights. And on the battlefield, it really is going to be us or them. We have to dominate and then set a rule of law to constrain development, which is what we did in that post World War II period with nuclear warheads.

GRIFFIN: The U.S. is the leading producer of A.I. software, far outpacing China and Russia, says Alex Karp, cofounder of Palantir, whose technology is being used in the Ukraine and in the Middle East.

GRIFFIN: Do you think you can prevent a war with China?

KARP: The way to prevent a war with China is to ramp up not just Palantir but defense tech startups that produce software defined weapons systems that scare the living f out of our adversaries.

GRIFFIN: This mixed reality headset from Palantir allows the war fighter to see the battlefield, available air assets, enemy targets, and supply routes in 3-D. But fear that A.I. could lead to killer robots and taking humans out of the so-called kill chain has led to anxiety and threats of regulation that worries American innovators. Former intelligence analyst Shannon Clark says this targeting technology would have helped shortened the war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

SHANNON CLARK, PALANTIR TECHNOLOGIES: It's about speed. What was able to be done in days or weeks is now done in minutes. I had a general say to me the other day, it doesn't matter if I have 50 targets. I need to know what ammo, what affecters I have available.

GRIFFIN: Software by tech companies like Govini can streamline supply chain, something that will be needed in the Pacific. This simulation shows how Palantir software can find a nefarious cargo ship hiding in busy lanes.

CLARK: It's going to be all about scale. You are not going to be able to do this alone as a human. You are going to need machine learning to tell you how do we get through this process faster.

GRIFFIN: The Pentagon is taking note.

GEN. CHARLES O. BROWN, JOINT CHIEFS CHAIRMAN: They don't play for second place. If I'm in, I'm putting my best foot forward to make sure we are going to win.

GRIFFIN: In Washington, Jennifer Griffin, FOX News.

(END VIDEO TAPE)

BAIER: Up next, we bring back the panel on the presidential debates, the new FOX polls, we'll dig in.

First, Beyond our Borders tonight. Slovakia's populist Prime Minister Robert Fico battles for his life after being wounded in a shooting following a political event today. Slovakian TV station says Fico was hit in the stomach after for shots were fired in the town of Handlova, about 100 miles northeast of the capital. A suspect has been detained in that assassination attempt.

And this is a live look at Rio de Janeiro, courtesy of the beach there of Earth Cam. One of the big stories there tonight, Brazilian lawmakers declare a dance style an intangible cultural heritage in the state of Rio. It brings recognition to a combination of break dancing, samba, and it's paced to a Brazilian funk music. It's popular among young people with plenty of flexibility and no joint problems. It looks like it hurts.

Just some of the other stories Beyond our Borders tonight. We'll be right back.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

MARK PENN, DEMOCRATIC POLLSTER: A $7 trillion budget -- unpopular. Immigration, border, for most people seems to be open -- unpopular. Pushing EVs and not giving people a choice -- unpopular. He has got some real issues there that he is going to have to figure out how to present to the American people. Obviously, it's uphill for President Biden or he wouldn't be debating in the first place.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: Former Clinton adviser Mark Penn there talking on "AMERICA'S NEWSROOM." The new FOX polls, who do you trust to do a better job on all of these issues, as you see President Biden with higher numbers on abortion, healthcare, election integrity. But former President Trump on foreign policy, crime, the economy at 55-42, immigration 56-41.

As you look at these numbers, these will be topics for two debates that have been agreed to so far. We just had Democratic Congressman Dean Phillips on about the need for those debates to be out and about.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PHILLIPS: The more people that see conversation, debate deliberation, the better. In the absence, I think democracy dies. I'd like to see that feed available to all networks as widely as possible so that more people can see it.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: OK, let's bring in our panel. Morgan Ortagus joins us, host of "The Morgan Ortagus Show" on Sirius XM, founder of Polaris National Security, we bring back Byron York, chief political correspondent of "The Washington Examiner," and "Axios" political reporter Stef Kight.

OK, Morgan, didn't hereby from you before. What about this move about the debates? It seemed like President Biden came out swinging today, and they agreed to two of them so far.

MORGAN ORTAGUS, FORMER STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESPERSON: Yes, and there's also, too, by not going with the debate commission he is ensuring that he doesn't have to be on stage with RFK, which was still unknown if he would meet that polling threshold. So he gets the matchup that I think he likely wanted, which is the one-on-one with Trump.

From the Trump campaign perspective, but what they messaged today, they seem itching for these debates as well. They'd love to turn the tide away from talking about what is going on in New York. And I think they will use the debate as an opportunity to focus in on the things that FOX polling shows that voters care about most. And that's the economy, that's inflation, that's the border, and, of course, the war and chaos going on around the world.

And so, President Biden is going to have a very, very tough record to defend. If you ask voters, are you better off four years ago economically? Do you feel safer than you were four years ago? I don't think there is a lot of people that could answer "yes" to both of those questions.

BAIER: Stef, as you go into details what the Biden campaign pitched and the former president agreed to, it's sitting at a table without an audience. And the moderators have the ability to cut off the mics when the time is expired for the person answering the question. That's different, and they're both agreeing to that.

KIGHT: What we have seen today is that it's very clear that both campaigns, both Trump and Biden, feel that when voters see them on stage next to each other that they are going to come out on top. We think that the Trump campaign thinks that Biden will seem elderly or stumbling. They are hoping that he messes up on his words, that Trump comes across as the stronger candidate. And at the same time, the Biden campaign is hoping to make this election again a referendum on Trump. That's what Biden did in 2020, and he wants to do that again. He wants to again put the focus back on Trump and show -- remind people who Trump is. He has a lot of personality, and Biden is hoping to draw a more favorable contrast there as well.

BAIER: We have a lot of time before June 27th, Byron. But before the State of the Union address, there was this lower exception for President Biden. And it was like if he made it down the aisle it was a win, to the podium there. Now, the former president put out a statement saying if he can string two sentences together and make it to the stage. So you wonder what the exceptions will be for President Biden once he gets to this debate.

YORK: I don't know why Donald Trump does that. When you are playing the bad team, don't you say, boy, they are really good. They are really tough. It will be a tough fight for us? I don't know why he says that, because if Joe Biden just comes out and doesn't drool or fall over himself, then he has passed Donald Trump's standard.

Before the first debate the last time around, 2020, I think a lot of Republicans had convinced themselves that Biden was in such bad shape that he might not even know where he was. Now, he had been in 11 Democratic debates. He didn't do well in them, but he got through them all. And so that was a crazy idea to have. But a lot of Republicans thought that. And they should really not think that this time.

BAIER: I want to play this other soundbite from the Dean Phillips interview, and this is about the Democratic Convention in Chicago. Take a listen.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

PHILLIPS: This is looking awfully like 1968 with a lot of anger and angst and disenfranchisement that I think are going to play out on TV this summer, and it's going to be awfully contentious. So there's time to course correct.

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PHILLIPS: I think it can. And frankly, I think it would be in the best interests of the Democratic Party to forego the convention this year and focus on campaigning, because I don't see any way it can be accretive to the mission of winning the next election.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

BAIER: I didn't know I was in the two box there, but you could see my face go, wow, really?

ORTAGUS: I had the same reaction. I even asked someone, did I just hear that correctly, but that's pretty shocking. At the end of the day, I don't think they will do it, but that is really showing how worried Democrats are about their own convention.

Listen, Republicans know that there is going to be protesters as well. They have also dealt with it. But for a serious Democrat to suggest that they forego the convention just shows how high level the concerns are. And especially the concerns are going to be with all of the factions of the base that Biden is not performing well with at the moment.

BAIER: It's August. Of course, you could see a cease-fire, I suppose. But the way things are going between Israel and Hamas and the negotiations, it doesn't seem like that. So it could be pretty tough.

KIGHT: Yes. I think we are expecting to see protesters again in Chicago for the Democratic Convention. But we also know that Republicans are also preparing for protests at the Republican Convention as well. Majority Leader Mitch McConnell actually requested that there be more space around the Republican Convention as well. It doesn't seem like these protests are going away anytime soon. And Democrats, of course, in particular are very concerned about how that is hurting them with young voters, more progressive voters. They don't want this to be an issue. So it will be interesting to see whether we hear from more Democrats who agree with Phillips on this.

BAIER: All right, panel, thanks. A little bit of a different show today. Thanks for rolling with the punches.

Tomorrow on SPECIAL REPORT, our series looking at toxic sites continues. Members of communities linked to radiation exposure head to Washington to call for a vote on a compensation bill.

Remember, if you can't catch us live, set your DVR, 6:00 in the east, 3:00 in the west.

Thanks for inviting us into your home tonight, fair, balanced, and unafraid. Here's Laura.

**Load-Date:** May 16, 2024

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