

# [***Donald Trump Crushes Nikki Haley, Wins More Than A Dozen States In The Presidential Primaries; Senator McConnell Endorses Donald Trump; Howard Kurtz And Guest Panel Discuss Biden's State Of The Union Speech; Kari Lake Shows Support For Trump; Jason Kelce Retires From The Philadelphia Eagles, Cries In News Conference***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BHM-BF71-F072-X000-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

HOWARD KURTZ, FOX NEWS HOST: Super Tuesday wasn't super suspenseful, at least for the media, as Donald Trump won more than a dozen states, crushing Nikki Haley, who eked out only a win in Vermont. The former President was briefly in a celebratory mood, but soon moved on to what he sees as the dangers facing America.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

DONALD TRUMP (R), FORMER U.S. PRESIDENT, REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEE: They call it Super Tuesday for a reason. This is a big one. We're going to close our borders. We're going to have to deport a lot of people, a lot of bad people, because our countries can't live like this. Our cities are choking to death.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: But then came a sharp pivot by the press saying, yes, Trump had an amazingly successful night, but look at all these warning signs he faces in November. And there was even a more fundamental divide among the pundits and prognosticators. The right is more focused on Trump's message and what he stands for, while the left keeps assailing him as a would-be dictator.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

LAURA INGRAHAM, FOX NEWS ANCHOR: What most of these people have never understood is that this really isn't about Trump. And he himself often says he's just a vessel for the hardworking Americans who feel forgotten and even tormented by the corrupt D.C. Uniparty.

RACHEL MADDOW, MSNBC ANCHOR: The project of the Republican Party is to install a strongman form of government in the United States and get rid of democracy, and that is the project of electing Donald Trump.

SEAN HANNITY, FOX NEWS ANCHOR: What we are seeing from Donald Trump, we're watching history, frankly. Now, he continues to win contest after contest despite opposition from the radical left. And what is a politicized and weaponized system, a Department of Justice.

MICHAEL BESCHLOSS, NBC NEWS PRESIDENTIAL HISTORIAN: We could be a dictatorship next year if Donald Trump is elected and carries through on his threats and carries through on his threats to suspend the Constitution.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: By the next morning, Nikki Haley was out.

NIKKI HALEY (R), FORMER REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE: I said I wanted Americans to have their voices heard. I have done that. I have no regrets.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Now, the former governor invited Trump to reach out to our supporters, but you didn't miss anything. Haley made no endorsement. I'm Howard Kurtz and this is "Media Buzz". Ahead, the controversial Arizona Senate candidate Kari Lake joins us live.

One mini-drama from Mar-a-Lago, MSNBC, the only cable network whose Super Tuesday coverage was not anchored by journalists, indulges ambivalence over whether to carry Trump's major speeches at all. Rachel Maddow, the popular liberal in the anchor chair, was so annoyed by Trump's victory speech that she cut away.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TRUMP: I read an article yesterday where it said this is one of the finest run campaigns that anybody has ever seen.

MADDOW: Yeah, okay. It is a decision that we revisit constantly in terms of the balance between allowing somebody to knowingly lie on your air about things they've lied about before and you can predict they're going to lie about.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: In fact, right there, Trump was signing an NBC News article. Maddow made clear she didn't agree with her network's policy of airing the big Trump speeches. Her all-liberal panel portrayed the former President's supporters as motivated by racial animus and even poke fun at the border crisis.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOY REID, "THE REIDOUT" HOST: They're voting on race. They're voting on this idea of an invasion of brown people over the border, the idea that they can't get whatever job they want. A black person got it.

JEN PSAKI, "INSIDE WITH JEN PSAKI" HOST: I mean, I live in Virginia. Immigration was the number one issue. Of course, I mean, again, these could change in Virginia.

MADDOW: Well, Virginia does have a border with West Virginia.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

MADDOW: That was too much even for a CNN panel.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

UNKNOWN: That is a massive in-kind contribution to Donald Trump's campaign.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Joining us now to analyze the coverage, Cassie Smedile, political commentator and vice president of the company Coign. And in Los Angeles, Leslie Marshall, the radio talk show host and Fox News contributor, Cassie, Donald Trump mounts this remarkable comeback in the wake of January 6th and impeachment blows away the competition. And the media coverage almost instantaneously shifts to, yeah, yeah, but he can't possibly win in November. What do you make of that?

CASSIE SMEDILE, COIGN VICE PRESIDENT: Well, that last clip of Jen Psaki and the rest of that panel showing how out of touch they are from their ivory towers, how they just continue not to get it, because immigration is one of the top issues --

KURTZ: Absolutely.

SMEDILE: - that voters have said. And that's a change because a direct result of what we've seen from Joe Biden's policies. So, that type of commentary is only going to propel Donald Trump into the White House. I feel strongly about that.

I would also note quickly about the party coming home and coming together. In 2016, Donald Trump had Super Tuesday victories and defeats that were much closer than we saw this past Tuesday. So, I have no concerns about everybody rallying together by Election Day.

KURTZ: Now, Leslie, there were warning signs in, for example, a percentage of Republican vote that Nikki Haley got in certain states and, you know, people telling pollsters or at least a chunk of them that they wouldn't vote for Trump if he was convicted of a crime. So, that's fair game for the press. But with Trump sweeping Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, all but one Super Tuesday state, couldn't the media geniuses be underestimating him again?

LESLIE MARSHALL, DEMOCRATIC STRATEGIST: Well, I don't really think it's the media's job. I think it's people like me and everyone else on these panel's job to analyze that as political analysts, democratic strategists like myself. And it is not the, you know, media across the board's job to do that. But you know, as a Democrat, I'm certainly hearing other things.

Joe Biden had an incredible, you know, primary thus far. And what did I hear the other night? But he lost Samoa. I mean, really, you know, that's what I hear. He lost Samoa or he's too, you know, he's too old. It's sort of like, you know, can we, you know, get to the policies?

And certainly, immigration is a policy. It is a policy that is a winner right now for Republicans and maybe a losing issue for Democrats. But there are many, many more issues. That being said, Howie, a network is a business and you have to know your audience, whether it's viewers or readers. I mean, the list goes on.

KURTZ: Right

MARSHALL: So, yeah, you carry it. But maybe there is a point that you cut away just depending on time and depending on dollars.

KURTZ: I'll come back to that. And I should point out that President Biden is essentially running unopposed, even if he did lose Samoa. Cassie, Donald Trump, as everybody knows, is facing four indictments. And the media's own conventional wisdom on this has shifted from, oh, this is terrible.

He'll never be able to survive it, to this is actually helping him because many of his supporters view this as the product of a weaponized law enforcement system that is persecuting the former President. So, does the press keep missing the mark here?

SMEDILE: Well, the polls would say yes, because you see just there was a Fox News poll this week that showed Donald Trump ahead of Joe Biden. There have been other polls that show outside the margin.

KURTZ: Yeah.

SMEDILE: Yeah.

KURTZ: It's been tight, though.

SMEDILE: Tight. But the way that the media is covering it, you think Joe Biden should be running away with this, let alone now behind President, former President Trump --

KURTZ: -- currently. So, I do think the more they not just give him oxygen, but continue to downplay it, continue to count him out. We saw what happened in 2016 when they did the same thing. It felt like every day they said, oh, this is going to be the thing that takes him out. And then he'd go up in the polls or eventually into the White House. So, I see the same playbook being recycled and we know the outcome of that.

KURTZ: Leslie, let me expand on your point about any news organization has to know its audience and so forth. And I get that. And of course, I get the distinction between straight journalists and commentators left, right, center or somewhere in between. But why can't outlets like MSNBC, which always seem to be agonizing us, just run his speech?

I mean, after all, he just won 12 states and then spend the next 23 and a half hours attacking him. I have no problem with the attacks, but it's like they make such a self-righteous point of, oh, we're cutting away. We can't possibly pollute our airwaves.

MARSHALL: Well, again, their audience is going to get on them and perhaps boycott the advertisers and the list goes on if they carry the whole speech, especially if there's non-factual information being given. Because one could argue that every media outlet should cut away, you know, from anybody if truth is not being told. Because in addition to coverage, you're also supposed to be reporting the facts.

And I hear you. You could have it and you could do a fact check, right? You could run a B-roll with the fact check along the side, you know, which is something I would choose to do if I were the head of a media network. I'm not. And nobody asked me.

But, you know, again, you know, but again -- and also you have to say, remember, a couple of things that we're talking about in 2016 and look and he won in 2020 and look and he lost. And I believe in 2024 we'll lose again.

But that aside, you know, you -- you have -- we really, I think many networks learned that, I mean, where does it end? And in 2016, it wasn't just victory laps. It was every lap. It was every single appearance. It was every single time he had a rally. And I know there are media outlets out there that are like, we're not going to do that again. So, I think that weighs into it as well.

KURTZ: Yeah. Except that the reason it was done in 2016, probably the excess was it was good for ratings. So, Mitch McConnell, who, as everybody now knows, is stepping down as Senate GOP leader after a long time, has now endorsed Donald Trump. Here's Senator McConnell taking a question from a reporter.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

REPORTER: How do you reconcile your Trump endorsement with the fact that you called him practically and morally responsible for January 6th, and the fact that he insulted you and your wife repeatedly?

MITCH MCCONNELL (R-KY) SENATE MINORITY LEADER: I said I would support the nominee for President, even if it were the former President.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Cassie, Mitch McConnell and Donald Trump haven't spoken since 2020, when the Republican leader accused the President of causing the violence of January 6th. And the media reaction is sort of like, yeah, well, he had no choice. But is that true? Was McConnell confronting the fact that this is now a party that, I don't want to say he doesn't recognize, but it's very much Donald Trump's party.

SMEDILE: Well, I would just note for the record that Mitch McConnell endorsed Donald Trump in 2016 right about the same time. It was once all the other competitors were out of the race. So, this is, for lack of a better word, consistent --

KURTZ: Yeah.

SMEDILE: -- for him.

KURTZ: And they did work together.

SMEDILE: And they worked together. Of course, the judges and the judicial nominees -- huge, huge partnership. But I think that Mitch McConnell, by saying, hey, I'm not going to run for leader again of the party, is recognizing his time in the party and also where the party wants to move.

And I think that's fair, because the party is clearly seeing something in Donald Trump that we need, and the least of which is that it is a departure from Joe Biden, who has been an unmitigated disaster for the country these past three and a half, going on four years.

KURTZ: Leslie, Trump said in his Super Tuesday speech, and you can also respond to that if you want, that the press is not being fair. Now, are the media further eroding their sinking credibility by, with much of the country, I should clarify, by refusing to give Trump his due when he has major victories? I mean, this has been a remarkable role since Iowa.

MARSHALL: I didn't see it as people saying that, you know, he didn't have a remarkable victory, you know, at all. I saw it as the same political cycle that we have in every election, especially leading up, you know, to a general election. And you know, the same opinions.

The people like me on the left are going to be like, you know, Joe Biden good, Donald Trump bad. And the other, like on this panel, Joe Biden bad, Donald Trump good, Joe Biden's terrible for the, you know, country, obviously not reading the economic news as of late.

But you know, again, you have a right to cut away. And at what point that is has to be up to each individual media outlet. But I want to touch quickly, if I can, on Mitch McConnell --

KURTZ: Just very, very quickly.

MARSHALL: Mitch McConnell has always been a party guy. And I'll tell you, if my husband were Mitch McConnell, I would have changed the locks after what Donald Trump said about his wife.

KURTZ: All right.

MARSHALL: And he's leading this leader.

KURTZ: So, we got to jump in.

MARSHALL: He had the opportunity to do that. But he's -- he's a, you know, Republican through and through to the end.

KURTZ: All right. Look, you have a lot of self-appointed media guardians right now saying we must save democracy. But a chunk of the country hears that as we must elect Joe Biden. And as we go to break, a big programming announcement, I'll be doing an in-depth interview this week with former President Donald Trump at Mar-a-Lago. And we'll bring you that on next Sunday's program. When we come back, all those pundits who said should kick Donald Trump off the ballot, even the liberal Supreme Court justices don't agree with them.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: When Colorado decided it would be a fine idea to kick Donald Trump off the ballot, some of the left-leaning pundits applauded. A CNN headline said legal scholars increasingly raise a constitutional argument that Trump should be barred from presidency. Well, it turned out.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOHN AVLON, FORMER CNN ANCHOR: The Colorado Supreme Court decided that the Constitution still matters and replies to Donald Trump.

MEHDI HASAN, "THE MEHDI HASAN SHOW" HOST: There really is an effort underway to remove Donald Trump from the presidential ballot. In fact, from any future political ballot.

CORNELL BELCHER, POLITICAL STRATEGIST: Colorado is executing its state's rights --

REID: Yup.

BELCHER: -- to decide who should be on their own ballot. This is a slam dunk.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Well, it turned out to be a slam dunk for the other team, a nine- zero ruling that Colorado and any other state does not have the power to eradicate a presidential candidate's name from the ballot. So, all three liberal justices, Elena Kagan, Sonia Sotomayor, Ketanji Brown-Jackson, agreed that states lack the authority, but that wasn't good enough for the critics.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

ERIN BURNETT, "OUTFRONT" HOST: The Supreme Court does it again, handing another major win to Donald Trump, allowing him to stay on the Colorado ballot and choosing to ignore the question at the heart of the case, which is whether Trump is an insurrectionist under the 14th Amendment.

JIM ACOSTA, CNN CHIEF DOMESTIC CORRESPONDENT: A lot of Americans out there, their blood is boiling over what Donald Trump did on January 6th. They just think that he's just getting let off the hook scot-free.

INGRAHAM: The truth, of course, is these people don't trust the voters. And they don't much like the voters, at least not the 74 million who voted for Trump. Today, we really saw it. Their anger and their hatred consumed them.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Cassie, the anchors and commentators who said, of course Colorado and Maine and Illinois should be able to kick Donald Trump off the ballot under Section 3 of the 14th Amendment, how do they look now in the wake of this unanimous Supreme Court ruling?

SMEDILE: Well, silly, unhinged, not credible because nine-zero -- when do you ever hear that in the supposedly partisan, divisive Supreme Court?

KURTZ: Very rarely.

SMEDILE: Right? And they were saying that wasn't a commentary on if they support Donald Trump as a candidate. It was just saying the voters have the right to decide at the ballot box who they would choose to be their next President. And this makes no sense. So, I thought it was just a really silly reaction before and after the decision.

KURTZ: That's why we tried to show the contrast. Leslie, it's fine to take a contrary position, obviously. But for all the media coverage, didn't it look anti-democratic for various commentators and pundits to say that Americans in these states shouldn't be able to vote for the candidate of their choice? Even some of your liberal media friends were uncomfortable with that.

MARSHALL: Look, I was uncomfortable with it.

KURTZ: Yeah.

MARSHALL: And the reason being, it's very different if after so many indictments, you are found guilty and you are now a convicted criminal. That to me would have been very different. Obviously, they wouldn't be able to use Section Three of the 14th Amendment.

So, I was surprised when Colorado put this forth. Not just myself, but, you know, numerous people on the left felt that the Supreme Court decision was predictable. And the Supreme Court wasn't just about the states having the authority or not to do that, but the ambiguity, if you will, of the specifics or lack thereof of Section Three of the 14th Amendment, which they clearly felt that Congress should specify more so with legislation.

But then lastly, to your point about democracy, and I think it's actually a good way to phrase it. Look, people on my side don't want Donald Trump to be President again. But I have to say, I do believe, at least from what I hear, the majority of people on my side, they want him to be beat at the ballot box. And you've got to give the people in every state, Colorado --

KURTZ: Yup.

MARSHALL: -- Maine, Illinois, and all the rest, the opportunity to have that choice and to make that choice.

KURTZ: On that question, I couldn't agree more. So, look at the SCOTUS ruling, Cassie. You have Kagan, Sotomayor, and Jackson agreeing with Brett Kavanaugh, Sam Alito, Clarence Thomas, at least on the court decision. And so some T.V. blioviators are saying, well, that's not good enough for me, that they're not pure enough for me because they're not opposing Trump's name appearing on these ballots like in Colorado.

SMEDILE: Yeah. And isn't that typically the case of these liberal activists? It's never enough. Even when you try and placate them, it's never enough. We see that all the time as conservatives. I see it even when I just go to a kid's birthday party and start talking ***politics***. It's never enough.

KURTZ: Don't talk ***politics*** at a kid's birthday party.

SMEDILE: No, no, that's true.

KURTZ: That's your first mistake.

SMEDILE: Partly, a sin. I know. But I do think, and you talked about democracy being on the ballot. And I think Leslie's point is a good one, that there is this divide between where voters are and where the activists are, the people with the soapbox in their party. And I would even give that that's on both sides.

If Joe Biden is such a wonderful President and candidate, and if all of the data backs that up, then who cares who he's running against, right? That shouldn't be a problem. And yet they are trying literally every trick in the book to keep democracy off the ballot by keeping the Republican's chosen candidate off the ballot.

KURTZ: Yeah. And some haven't given up. Congressman Jamie Raskin is preparing legislation that would give Congress the authority to step in and say, no, you're disqualified if a majority, which of course won't happen in a House -- Republican-controlled House that is, if a majority believe that Trump, you know, incited an insurrection.

So, Leslie, the liberal wing did object to the conservative majority going too far, saying they didn't need to get to some of these legal arguments in order to remember this. As you know, this is a post-Civil War statute aimed at Confederate officers. But the one thing that most justices agree on was this -- they didn't want one state dictating a result for other states.

MARSHALL: Absolutely. I mean, one thing about the general election that people forget, it's a 50-state race. It is a marathon. It is not a sprint. And, you know, I mean, and the justices spoke to that, the, you know, part of preserving democracy is preserving our union and our union is comprised of 50 states.

So, not living in Colorado, I, you know, like I said, I wasn't surprised about the decision --

KURTZ: Yeah.

MARSHALL: -- you know, based on that and, you know, other factors that the judges spoke of. But, you know, I live in California and I'm sure the rest of the people in places like Alabama and Mississippi don't want my state to dictate what's going on.

KURTZ: Now, that is something that.

MARSHALL: I feel the same for Colorado.

KURTZ: Nobody can argue with. Leslie Marshall, Cassie Smedile, thanks very much for joining us. Ahead, Kari Lake joins us on her Senate campaign, her second attempt to win office in Arizona. But up next, Donald Trump challenges Joe Biden to debate. Is this a serious offer?

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: This debate about debates is, for the moment, a debate about nothing. It's only March. But when Donald Trump pulled very close to the nomination after Super Tuesday, he issued this challenge. I am calling for debates anytime, anywhere, any place the debates can be run by the corrupt DNC or their subsidiary, the Commission on Presidential Debates. And that gave the pundits, well, something to debate.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JANINE PIRRO, "THE FIVE" HOST: Joe Biden is frightened of Donald Trump. There is no way Joe Biden will debate him because he is incapable of debating him.

JOE SCARBOROUGH, "MORNING JOE" CO-HOST: It's a damn shame that that Donald Trump won't submit to this because he's such a coward.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Joining us now, two guys who like to duke it out, Kevin Corke, senior national correspondent for Fox News, and Griff Jenkins, a Fox News correspondent and anchor. Kevin, Donald Trump must know that by saying right now he wants to debate Biden yesterday, that some detractors might point out that, well, yeah, but didn't you blow off all those Republican primary debates?

KEVIN CORKE, FOX NEWS SENIOR NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: That's a very good point. But it's interesting listening to Joe Scarborough -- he's a coward - - listen, it goes back to what Leslie Marshall was saying to you earlier.

Sometimes you play to the crowd. I think reaching to the choir when he says things like he doesn't believe that for a second. He knows Donald Trump wants to debate Joe Biden because he thinks he can beat him, not just on the facts, but on style points. You know, Trump is a political pugilist. He loves to counterpunch. He's going to debate if a debate happens.

KURTZ: If a debate happens, indeed. Griff, is Donald Trump trolling Joe Biden here in the sense that, you know, he thinks he can overwhelm him in the debate? He does tend to talk a lot in debates and he just can't wait to get started?

GRIFF JENKINS, FOX NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Well, absolutely. He's trolling him because, look, if Biden refuses to do it, then it shows or suggests that he's not up to it. But here's the thing. The American people seem to lose if they don't debate.

KURTZ: I'm glad you brought that up. Because for the first time in history, you would have two presidents on a stage together for 90 minutes defending each other's policies. The whole are you better off now than you were four years ago has never rang true.

But here's the thing. In -- in the 2020 debates, remember, they cut the mics with Trump and Biden, right? The first one was out of control. Second -- when they cut it. So, we might really get some policy debate, dare I say.

KURTZ: That would be good. And there's always a debate about whether this is good for the country to see the candidates. On the other hand, it's not unusual for candidates not to debate if they think it's not in their interest. Kevin, Trump has said before he will not participate in any debate involving the Commission on Presidential Debates, which has sponsored these things since 1988. Now, no problem. So, what's going on here?

CORKE: Yeah, I think he obviously realizes he never surprises, right?

KURTZ: Yeah.

CORKE: Of course he does. I think he realizes, Howie, that if he wants to win the argument, if he wants to sway those -- oh, listen. I'm not so sure I believe in him, but I want to hear what he has to say. You got to play by the rules. Get in the game. Take your shot. I think he will.

KURTZ: Griff, have a minute.

JENKINS: Look, I think that if you don't get up there and defend, I mean, Joe Biden's centerpiece of his campaign is that democracy is at stake. But yet you're not willing to stand on a stage for 90 minutes and defend it. It's like Superman saying, well, Lex Luthor is going to end civilization, but I don't have time to fight him. So, I think there's a lot.

Now, by the way, Trump has a little bit of risk, too. It could backfire because we saw in the State of the Union a fiery Joe Biden, and the bar could be low for Joe Biden, if he can get up there and take him on for 90 minutes, it might backfire on Trump.

KURTZ: We'll talk about that ahead. But of course, there's a difference even though a fabulous speech, give a reading something off a prompter versus responding to journalist questions. Guys, we'll see you in a bit. Next on "Media Buzz", a big shakeup in the Arizona Senate race. Republican candidate Kari Lake is here to talk about her campaign.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: The Arizona Senate race has come into the media spotlight now that one of three contenders has dropped out. Kari Lake -- excuse me, Republican former television anchor and close ally of Donald Trump, is the likely opponent against Democratic Congressman Ruben Gallego. Incumbent Senator Kyrsten Sinema, who left the Democratic Party to become an Independent, just announced she's not seeking a second term.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

KYRSTEN SINEMA (I) ARIZONA SENATOR: The only political victories that matter these days are symbolic. Attacking your opponents on cable news or social media. I believe in my approach, but it's not what America wants right now.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Joining us now from Arizona, Kari Lake, the Republican front runner in the Senate race. I'll start with a horse race question. Does Kyrsten Sinema dropping out help you by turning this into a two-person race? And do you agree with her, at least in part about ***politics*** being broken?

KARI LAKE (R) ARIZONA SENATE CANDIDATE: I, yes and yes.

KURTZ: Okay, next question. No, go ahead.

LAKE: Okay, let's move on. So let me -- let me expound a little bit on that. You know, I think the polling initially was showing that she was taking a little more from me, but as we've been watching the trends in the polling, it was starting to show she was taking more from Gallego.

It's six of one, half a dozen of the other. We were prepared to go in a three-person race or a toe-to-toe with radical Ruben Gallego. And I guess now I can, you know, fire everything toward Ruben Gallego. So, it might make it a little bit easier that way.

But I, I respect the courage that Kyrsten Sinema -- Senator Sinema --

KURTZ: Yes.

LAKE: - Senator Sinema showed when she helped save the filibuster. And for your viewers who don't understand what that means, although I'm sure they do.

LAKE: You know, with the filibuster, you have to have 60 senators vote.

KURTZ: Yeah. It means everything.

LAKE: -- legislation.

KURTZ: Yeah.

LAKE: It means everything.

KURTZ: So --

LAKE: And she showed courage in saving that. And without that, if Ruben Gallego were to win, the filibuster would be gone, D.C. and Puerto Rico would become states. They'd pack the court with five to 10 additional Supreme Court justices and our country would be gone.

KURTZ: You've been saying that you are putting out an olive branch to people who didn't support you in your run for governor. "New York Time" says you're mending fences. So, have some of these conversations been difficult reaching out to people who you are at odds with?

LAKE: I, you know, I don't find it difficult to pick up the phone and call people or meet with people who I don't disagree with or that I don't agree with on everything. That is called being an American who wants to, you know, engage in discourse and solve problems. And so, I've reached out to a lot of people and guess what? It's going wonderfully.

So, many have not only said, oh, absolutely. Do I support you -- how can I help? And that's the attitude we have to have going into the next eight months to save our country. This isn't just a normal election. Let's face it. If we give four more years of Joe Biden or the destructive Democrats, I don't know how much longer we can hold on.

I'm here in Southern Arizona. I've been campaigning across Southern Arizona the last several days. And I'll tell you what, the people are with us. They are with President Trump. They're with America First policies. I've talked to independents.

KURTZ: We'll see how that works out. But I did want to ask you about this tweet from the other day because it's sort of in my alley. "There's no salvaging the fake news," you wrote. "They are the enemy of the people. These propagandists have brainwashed millions of Americans for decades." So, how did you go from spending a quarter century as a Phoenix television actor to having such a harsh view of the news business?

LAKE: Well, I think it's real obvious. I mean, I worked as a fair and honest journalist. I think, Howie, you and I probably came up in journalism at the time when we were taught to put the facts out there, tell both sides of the story. If there's three sides, put all three sides in and leave your opinion out.

But something really seriously changed over the years, and especially during COVID, when there was no pushback against the government really taking away our liberties and freedoms. And so, I walked away from a seven- figure contract in the news. I said, I'm not going to be part of pushing propaganda. I'm not going to push half-truths because those are lies.

And now, I thought at that time the media had hit rock bottom. It has dropped about 100 floors down since then. It is so bad right now that I believe the American people are waking up to it. And every day when someone wakes up and realizes that they've been lied to for so long by the news media, they're never going back. They're never going back to being a consumer of bad news.

KURTZ: There is certainly a credibility problem. Now, you took a whack at Nikki Haley when she hopped out against your guy, President Trump, describing the humiliating loss and referring to her by her Indian first name, Nimarata. Nikki is her given middle name. Some people were disturbed by that. Why go there?

LAKE: I think that it's time for her to -- she vowed that she would, when she did step out, that she would get behind and back the nominee. And this wasn't just a minor loss for her. These have been historic losses since Iowa -- since the Iowa caucus. We're talking record losses.

President Trump is winning in historic fashion and she backs out and doesn't live up to what she said she would do, which is to support the nominee. We've got to get behind our nominee, President Trump. And we have to save our country right now.

I like people who live up to what they say they're going to do. And I know that eventually she'll hopefully do that. I wish her nothing but the best, but we have to get behind our President because this is between President Trump and Joe Biden.

KURTZ: Yeah.

LAKE: And the differences in those two could not be more stark.

KURTZ: You --

LAKE: It's open borders with Joe Biden. It's dangerous streets. It's an economy that's in free fall. It's World War Three with Joe Biden and just the opposite, secure borders, safe streets, great education for our kids and world peace --

KURTZ: Right.

LAKE: -- for President Trump.

KURTZ: Now, obviously you were also controversial in challenging your gubernatorial loss, but rather than looking backwards, you said in your last campaign, you didn't want the backing of John McCain and his supporters and family. Meghan McCain has rather emphatically rejected your outreach effort. Is it too late to mend fences on that front?

LAKE: Well, that's not what I said. That that has been a quote that's been twisted and turned and spun and reimagined by the fake news media from, you know, two and a half years ago. I think it's never it's never too late to mend fences. I believe in forgiveness and I believe that it's important to ask for forgiveness. And I think that I've done a very good job at doing that.

I would love nothing more than to have the support of every single voter in Arizona. And I have reached out to the McCain's and I've asked them, you know, I've asked Meghan McCain to sit down and have a cup of coffee or have lunch together.

We both are mothers. And as a mother, I'm horrified by what the future looks like right now for my children. I'm sure that Meghan McCain feels the same way, that she looks at the future with Joe Biden --

KURTZ: All right.

LAKE: -- and is horrified by what she's seeing. So, I'm always willing to --

KURTZ: I have to jump in. We only have a minute left. I'm sorry to rush you. You, in the past have been an outspoken opponent of abortion, calling it the ultimate sin. But now you've told NBC that Arizona's 15- week ban seems reasonable. And you told "The New York Times" you don't support a national ban. Is this an evolution in your thinking?

LAKE: No, you know, I'm not -- I don't get to decide what the law is. You know, that was decided by Governor Doug Ducey. And I am not running to make those laws that was made by the legislature. I'm not running for the state legislature. I'm running for a federal office.

And so, that is the law that's on the book. And I think that that's more reasonable than some of these other laws that we're seeing in other states. What we have to do, Howie, is concentrate less on how many weeks and what the law is, because we're going to have 50 different laws around the country.

KURTZ: Right.

KURTZ: And we need to focus on giving women more options so that they can make a better, more healthy choice. And we can see them realize that, you know, the beauty of becoming a mother.

KURTZ: Right.

LAKE: Right now, we are left --

KURTZ: We are unfortunately out of time.

LAKE: --short --

KURTZ: Let me let me give you a last sentence here.

LAKE: Oh, wonderful. Thank you. Well, thanks for having me on. And for people who are out there, this is a critical race. The road to the White House and the road to the Senate majority goes directly through Arizona. We're looking great in the polls, but we could use help if you're out there. And you want to get involved to save our country, go to KariLake.com. Find out how you can --

KURTZ: Okay.

LAKE: -- get involved in my campaign. Make a donation. Thank you so much, Howie. Thank you, Kari Lake. After the break, President Biden's State of the Union. Most of the pundits liked it. But how much will voters care?

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: Most of the media heat preys on President Biden's State of the Union speech, which was portrayed as a major challenge for an 81-year-old President.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, U.S. PRESIDENT: Now, my predecessor, a former Republican President tells Putin, quote, "Do whatever the hell you want." That's a quote. A former President actually said that bowing down to a Russian leader. I think it's outrageous, it's dangerous and it's unacceptable.

JIM ACOSTA, "CNN NEWSROOM" HOST: Democrats are breathing a sigh of relief after President Biden's fiery State of the Union address.

JOE SCARBOROUGH, "MORNING JOE" CO-HOST: It was his best speech of his presidency. By far, strongest speech and most importantly, for people that were thinking, oh, he's too old, he's too this, he's too that, man, he like I said, he gave a lot more than he got.

SEAN HANNITY, "HANNITY" HOST: Clearly, overcompensating from the normal everyday Joe that can barely string two sentences together. I might call him, "Jacked-up Joe". And that's being charitable. He sounded like a hyper caffeinated, angry old man.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Kevin Corke, newspaper headlines -- fiery, forceful in your face. Even some of Biden's critics say, look, he was pretty energetic. But do average voters care about this speech as much as we in the media?

KEVIN CORKE, FOX NEWS SENIOR NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Absolutely not. People have bills. People have to pay for groceries. Have you been shopping lately? You put gas in the car. They're not really as dialed in as I think most of us inside the beltway are.

But I think that said, it sort of went two ways. You either thought he was Abraham Simpson, you know, yelling at the clouds or you thought he was Churchillian. You know, I felt like he did what he needed to do. I thought that's exactly what you expect. He could have been, however, a little bit more measured in reaching out to folks who don't necessarily back his policy.

KURTZ: Yeah. Also could have been a little shorter.

CORKE: Yeah.

KURTZ: But they're all along now. Griff Jenkins, Biden was up against a growing media narrative supported by a lot of Democratic doubters in the polls that he's too old for the job. So, he did botch some words, et cetera. But if the President had mumbled and stumbled through his speech, then wouldn't the media have said it was a failure?

GRIFF JENKINS, FOX NEWS NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT: Well, of course. And look, I think Peggy Noonan got it right. Her headline was there's life in the old boy yet. And so, if your goal was to put him out there, if you're the White House, put him out there to show that he's still got it. I mean, Hakeem Jeffries was saying he's on fire, smoking Joe.

KURTZ: Yeah.

JENKINS: So, they accomplished that. But I think to my colleagues, understated, I'm going to take it a little further.

KURTZ: I don't agree with them.

JENKINS: This was the guy, you know, Joe Biden came in on the inauguration. I was out there freezing, listening to it, pledging unity, lecturing us on unity for the last four years. And yet that was one of, by all measures, one of the most partisan, divisive State of the Unions we've ever had.

KURTZ: It was a partisan speech. And of course, it was a campaign year speech. There was some heckling by Republicans. Let's take a brief look at that.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JOE BIDEN, U.S. PRESIDENT: The result was a bipartisan bill with the toughest set of border security reforms we've ever seen. Oh, you don't think so? Oh, you don't like that bill? That conservatives got together and said it was a good bill? I'll be darned. That's amazing.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Kevin, was that an effective response or retort to heckling by Marjorie Taylor Greene and others?

CORKE: Smart play. You always want to try to, again, win your side. And then if you get a few others, that's great. But I thought what he did really, really well in that instance was he actually engaged, which sort of takes some of the pressure off of the delivery. There was a point, though, Howie, where he seemed to freeze right before Marjorie Taylor Greene kind of may have bailed him out. That is exactly what Democrats don't want to see. They want to avoid that, which is why he sort of got, he sort of escaped, I think, in this particular circumstance.

KURTZ: Griff, I'm old fashioned. I remember a time when Presidents would be listened to politely by the party without all this, but it's become a feature. The media take on these exchanges, I have to say, is very simply that the hecklers are rude. Fair or unfair? \

JENKINS: Well, yes. And, you know, everybody remembers Joe Wilson's "You Lie". I mean, all of a sudden we felt like the decorum has been broken. This doesn't feel comfortable. But I do think a little bit to what Kevin was saying, I think the White House was hoping they would get even more than what they got from people like Marjorie Taylor Greene because it allowed to show him engage.

However, I think the most memorable line of the State of the Union now is Lakin Riley being mispronounced Lincoln Riley, of course, the USC coach's name. And then now, Biden having to walk back the use of the term illegal - -

KURTZ: Right.

JENKINS: -- which is in the actual law, I mean, we call --

KURTZ: Right.

JENKINS: -- them illegal aliens in the law --

KURTZ: It's offensive to the progressive wing of his own party.

JENKINS: And now that's what everyone's talking about.

KURTZ: So, the speech drew 32 million viewers, which is fairly low, in fact, lower than most of Trump's States of the Union addresses. So, most Americans didn't see it. But I'm not sure that matters because television has been replaying the clips again and again.

CORKE: And social media has changed everything now. I think T.V. plays it over. We'll see plenty on shows like this. And I think that actually helps the White House message get out. If they have snippets, it also helps the opposition get out snippets that help them, as well.

KURTZ: Trump says of the speech, angry, polarizing, hate filled and calling Biden a psycho. To him, that's counterpunching.

JENKINS: Of course it is and an opportunity. But hey, let's see if we can get him on a debate stage and let him go toe to toe because the image of a President and a teleprompter in the State of the Union is a far more -- easier venue to be in than on stage debating each of those.

KURTZ: You guys are obviously rooting for debate, just like everybody else. But our debate has ended, Griff Jenkins and Kevin Corke. Still to come, a new push to ban TikTok and two football stars turn on the waterworks.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

KURTZ: TikTok has urged all its users, 18 or over, to lobby Congress against a new effort to force its Chinese owner to sell the hugely popular app. And it didn't work. A House panel just voted 50 to 0 to ban TikTok unless there's a sale. TikTok is viewed as a national security threat because of the influence of the Chinese Communist Party. And President Trump also tried to ban it. Trump is now opposing the move, saying it will give too much power to Facebook. Joe Biden says he'll sign the bill.

I think all these mean girl attacks on Alabama Senator Katie Britt for her somewhat awkward response to the State of the Union are way over the top. But then there's a story she told while ripping Joe Biden's border policies about hearing a Mexican woman talk about being in sexual slavery for four years.

That kidnapping and rescue happened back between 2002 and 2006, all in Mexico. And the woman doesn't appear to have ever lived in the U.S. or sought asylum here, Britt told Fox News Sunday. She was not being misleading about the timing, adding that human trafficking has gone up under Biden. Everyone knows that Tom Hanks' line from "A League of Their Own".

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TOM HANKS, ACTOR, "A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN" MOVIE: Why are you crying? There's no crying. There's no crying in baseball.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: Well, there's plenty of crying in sports these days, starting with Jason Kelce, brother of Travis Kelce, boyfriend of Taylor Swift. When Jason decided to retire from the Philadelphia Eagles, he held a 40-minute news conference that began with crying.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

JASON KELCE, FORMER NFL ALL PRO-CENTER: Thanks for coming, guys. Let's see how long this lasts.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: I mean, this thing was a blubber fest from beginning to end. By the time Jason wrapped it up, his brother Travis was also turning on the tears behind his sunglasses. But wait, the Kelce brothers do a podcast together. And here come those tears again.

(BEGIN VIDEO CLIP)

TRAVIS KELCE, KANSAS CITY CHIEFS TIGHT-END: I just appreciate you showing me the way and bringing us all along the journey with you.

(END VIDEO CLIP)

KURTZ: "New York Times" says there's a clear message here. It is normal and healthy for men to cry. And I agree. The age when men repress all their emotions should be long gone. But isn't there a point when all the bawling should stop?

That's it for this edition of "Media Buzz". I'm Howard Kurtz. Remember, next Sunday, we'll bring you the Donald Trump interview to be conducted this week in Florida. And you could subscribe to my daily podcast, "Media Buzzmeter". Join the fun as we riff on the day's top stories. We are back here next Sunday. You know the time, 11 Eastern. Hope to see you then.

(COMMERCIAL BREAK)

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