

= Joe Biden presidential campaign , 1988 =

Joseph Robinette " Joe " Biden , Jr . , a Democratic United States Senator from Delaware at the time , was a candidate for President of the United States in the 1988 United States presidential election .

Biden announced his candidacy in June 1987 , and was considered one of the potentially strongest candidates in the field . However , in September 1987 , newspaper stories stated he had plagiarized a speech by British politician Neil Kinnock . Other allegations of past law school plagiarism and exaggerating his academic record soon followed . Biden withdrew from the race later that month .

= = Leading up to the announcement = =

= = Development of a candidacy = =

Biden had been mentioned among possible contenders in the 1984 presidential election . He had considered the notion in 1983 , urged on by pollster Pat Caddell , who thought there was space for a young candidate . A fiery speech he gave to several Democratic audiences had simultaneously scolded Democrats for outdated thinking and encouraged them regarding future directions , and had gained him some notice in the party . However , Biden did not enter the race that season . Nonetheless , he won one vote at the 1984 Democratic National Convention .

Biden was active on the party speaking circuit from 1985 on , and was considered one of the best orators among the potential presidential candidates for 1988 . The declared absence of Senator Ted Kennedy from the field , to whom Biden was sometimes compared , was also encouraging to a possible Biden candidacy .

Biden received considerable attention in the summer of 1986 when he excoriated Secretary of State George Shultz at a Senate hearing because of the Reagan administration 's support of South Africa , which continued to support a system of apartheid .

= = Status among candidates = =

Biden was initially considered one of the potentially strongest candidates as campaigning began in 1987 . This was because of his moderate image , his speaking ability on the stump ( rated second only to that of Jesse Jackson ) , his appeal to Baby Boomers , his high profile position as chair of the Senate Judiciary committee , looming for the Robert Bork confirmation hearings , and his fundraising appeal ? his \$ 1 @ . @ 7 million raised in the first quarter of 1987 was more than any other candidate . By the end of April he had raised \$ 2 million , using not just contributions from Delaware but also establishing a base of support among young professionals and Jewish voters in a number of urban- and suburban @ - @ oriented states . He had no campaign debt , and Fortune magazine termed his " most impressive start " a " surprise " .

When the campaign began , former Senator Gary Hart , who had made a strong nomination run four years earlier , was considered the clear front @ - @ runner . Indeed , The Wall Street Journal referred to the eight @ - @ person Democratic field as " Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs " . The field 's chances were greatly improved once Hart withdrew from the race in May 1987 , following revelations of Donna Rice and Monkey Business .

However , Biden did not see a rise in his poll numbers immediately after the Hart withdrawal , and was particularly stagnant in polls for the Iowa caucuses . Nevertheless , Biden had confidence that he could prevail ; on the eve of his announcement , he said : " I 'm going to win this thing . I really am . I just know it , I can feel it in my fingertips . " Some political professionals saw Biden as believing that he could simply will himself to win the race , but his continued ability to raise campaign funds gave him credibility as a candidate .

= = Announcement = =

At age of 45 , Biden became one of the official candidates for Democratic nomination , formally declaring his candidacy at the Wilmington train station on June 9 , 1987 .

In his speech , Biden said that Americans should rise above " the mere accumulation of material things " . In language intended to recall John F. Kennedy , he said , " For too long in this society , we have celebrated unrestrained individualism over common community . For too long as a nation , we have been lulled by the anthem of self @-@ interest . For a decade , led by Ronald Reagan , self @-@ aggrandizement has been the full @-@ throated cry of this society : ' I 've got mine so why don 't you get yours ' and ' What 's in it for me ? ' ... We must rekindle the fire of idealism in our society , for nothing suffocates the promise of America more than unbounded cynicism and indifference . "

Biden also laid out the platform he was running on , which included a middle stance between protectionism and free trade , opposition to the Reagan Strategic Defense Initiative , and support for child welfare , reduction of poverty , and the war against illegal drugs . Biden also emphasized the need for integrity in government .

= = Campaign staff and policy team = =

Biden 's campaign manager was Tim Ridley , his press secretary was Larry Rasky , and his pollster and strategist was Pat Caddell . Biden 's Senate chief @-@ of @-@ staff Ted Kaufman served as the campaign treasurer and principle fundraiser . John Marttila served as a political consultant and Tom Donilon served as another strategist . Biden 's sister Valerie Biden Owens also served a major role in running the campaign , as she had in all of his Senate campaigns , and was considered " first among equals " in making decisions .

= = Campaign developments 1987 = =

= = = Summer 1987 = = =

Once underway , Biden 's campaign messaging became confused due to staff rivalries and bickering . Four different themes were presented , sometimes simultaneously : " Pepsi Generation " , " Voice of optimism " , " Save the children " , and " Scold the voters " . Pollster Pat Caddell in particular was a disruptive force within the campaign , but he had been Biden 's friend for 15 years . Another of the themes was generational change ; Biden hoped to inspire a new generation , as John F. Kennedy had inspired his . But that theme was not catching on especially well . Biden was also hurt by his never having been a player in the Washington social scene .

By August 1987 , Biden 's campaign had begun to lag behind those of Michael Dukakis and Richard Gephardt , although he had still raised more funds than all candidates but Dukakis , and was seeing an upturn in Iowa polls .

= = = Kinnock controversy = = =

Major controversy beset Biden 's candidacy , beginning on September 12 , 1987 with high @-@ profile articles in The New York Times and The Des Moines Register . Biden was accused of plagiarizing a speech by Neil Kinnock , leader of the British Labour Party . Kinnock 's speech , delivered to a Welsh Labour Party conference on May 15 , 1987 , and then rebroadcast during the UK 1987 general election , included the lines :

While Biden 's speech included the lines :

Biden went on to duplicate other parts of Kinnock 's speech , such as their forebears ' ability to read and write poetry , their strength in working for hours underground in a mine only to come up and play football afterward , and their being limited by lack of a " platform " upon which to stand .

Biden had in fact cited Kinnock as the source for the formulation on previous occasions . But he

made no reference to the original source at the August 23 Democratic debate at the Iowa State Fair being reported on , nor in an August 26 interview for the National Education Association . Moreover , while political speeches often appropriate ideas and language from each other , Biden 's use came under more scrutiny because he fabricated aspects of his own family 's background in order to match Kinnock 's .

Following the Kinnock attention , reports came from the San Jose Mercury News of Biden giving a February 3 , 1987 , speech to the California Democratic Party that reused without credit passages from a 1967 speech by Robert F. Kennedy , and of Biden giving 1985 and 1986 speeches that did the same with a passage from a 1976 speech by Hubert H. Humphrey . In the Kennedy case ? which got the greater attention , since there was film footage of both versions that television news programs could play side @-@ by @-@ side ? Pat Caddell stated that the reuse without credit was his own fault , and that he had never informed Biden of the source of the material . It was also reported that the California speech had taken a short phrase from the 1961 inaugural address of John F. Kennedy .

After Biden withdrew from the race , it was learned that he had indeed correctly credited Kinnock on other occasions . But in the Iowa speech that was recorded and distributed to reporters ( with a parallel video of Kinnock ) by aides to Michael Dukakis , the eventual nominee , he failed to do so . Dukakis , who disowned any knowledge of the Kinnock video , fired John Sasso , his campaign manager and long @-@ time Chief of Staff , but Biden 's campaign could not recover .

= = = Academic revelations = = =

As a part of the Kinnock controversy , it was revealed that Biden had been involved in a similar incident during his first year at Syracuse University School of Law in 1965 . Biden initially received an ? F ? in an introductory class on legal methodology for writing a paper relying almost exclusively on a single Fordham Law Review article , which he had cited only once . Biden was allowed to repeat the course and passed with high marks . Though the then @-@ dean of the law school , as well as Biden 's former professor , downplayed the incident , they did find that Biden drew " chunks of heavy legal prose directly from " the article in question . Biden said it was inadvertent due to his not knowing the proper rules of citation . After ending his Presidential campaign , Biden requested the Board of Professional Responsibility of the Delaware Supreme Court review the issue . The Board concluded on December 21 , 1987 , after Biden had withdrawn , that the senator had not violated any rules , although Biden did not release this result until May 1989 .

As revealed by a video shown on C @-@ SPAN , when questioned by a New Hampshire resident about his grades in law school , Biden had replied " I think I probably have a much higher IQ than you do , I suspect , " and then inaccurately recollected graduating in the " top half " of his class when he actually graduated 76th from 85 , that he had attended law school on a full scholarship , and had received three degrees in college . In fact , he had earned a single B.A. with a double major in history and political science , and had received a half scholarship to law school based on financial need with some additional assistance based in part upon academics . During this time , Biden also released his undergraduate grades , which were unexceptional .

= = = Withdrawal = = =

The Kinnock and academic revelations were magnified by the limited amount of other news about the nomination race at the time , when most of the public were not yet paying attention to any of the campaigns ; Biden thus fell into what Washington Post writer Paul Taylor described as that year 's trend , a " trial by media ordeal " . Biden lacked a strong demographic or political group of support to help him survive the crisis . The controversy also hit Biden in his most vulnerable area , accentuating the notion that he lacked mental and verbal discipline .

Biden withdrew from the nomination race on September 23 , 1987 , saying his candidacy had been overrun by " the exaggerated shadow " of his past mistakes . His formal campaign had lasted only three and a half months .

= = Aftermath = =

Because of his early withdrawal , Biden did not participate in the 1988 caucuses and primaries , in which Governor Michael Dukakis defeated Jesse Jackson , Senators Al Gore and Paul Simon , and other longer @-@ standing contenders .

In retrospect , Biden would take the blame for his mistakes during the campaign . On one , he said , " All I had to say was ' Like Kinnock . ' If I 'd just said those two words , ' Like Kinnock , ' and I didn 't . It was my fault , nobody else 's fault . " On another , he ruefully recalled , " ' Hey pal , you want to compare IQs ? ' What an immature thing to say . "

Biden had felt poorly physically during parts of the campaign , suffering repeated headaches and at one point in September 1987 having to halt a speech in New Hampshire for 15 minutes after feeling faint . In February 1988 , he suffered the first of two brain aneurysms that required life @-@ saving surgery and seven months away from the Senate in order to convalesce . Biden and others would speculate that had his campaign not ended early , the aneurysms might have been more severe or detected later and that he might not have lived out the year .

In any case , Biden would not run again for the presidency until his 2008 campaign , twenty years later . This time he made it to the Iowa caucuses , but withdrew after a poor showing . Meanwhile , Biden and Kinnock had become close friends after the plagiarism incident . Meeting in August 2008 , after Biden had been chosen by Democratic nominee Barack Obama as his running mate , Biden introduced Kinnock to his Senate staff by saying : ? Hey , you people ! Do you know this guy ? He used to be my greatest speechwriter . ? Obama and Biden proceeded to win the general election against the Republican ticket of John McCain and Sarah Palin ; Biden 's 1988 campaign lapses were never a significant issue in the race , and Biden invited Kinnock to the inauguration .