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USA

# Biden and Trump Accuse Each other of Ending American Democracy

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**The New Year brought the opening salvos in the battle for the U.S. presidency in the November 2024 election as president Joseph Biden and former president Donald Trump accused each other of threatening to end American democracy. Both candidates claim that this is an election not so much about policies as about the very meaning of American government and society. At the same time, the U.S. Supreme Court has just announced that it will take up the issue of Colorado and Maine having stricken Trump from the ballot for promoting and engaging in insurrection. And the first primary contests are only days away, Iowa on January 15 and New Hampshire on January 28.**

In his first real attack on Trump as his likely rival in this campaign, Biden, taking advantage of the third anniversary of the January 6 insurrection and attempted coup at the U.S. capitol in 2021, and with Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, the bivouac of George Washington's army in the American Revolutionary War as the venue, made a blistering speech in which he accused Trump of attempting to destroy the fundamental institutions of American democracy.

"Today we are here to answer the most important of questions: Is democracy still America's sacred cause" Biden said. "This isn't rhetorical, academic, or hypothetical. Whether democracy is still America's sacred cause is the most urgent question of our time. It is what the 2024 election is all about.

"We must be clear," Mr. Biden asserted. "Democracy is on the ballot. Your freedom is on the ballot."

Trump responded by accusing Biden of "fearmongering." He claims that Biden is the "true danger to democracy." Trump accuses Biden of using the Justice Department to persecute him, with the former president now accused of felonies in several federal and state cases. Trump warns that if the Democrats can do this to him, they can do it to anyone. He defends the January 6th insurrection as a legitimate protest, praising the convicted and imprisoned as heroes, and still claims that the 2020 election was stolen from him by Biden and the "deep state."

Trump continues to lead other candidates in the Republican primary by as much as 30 points and the latest polls show Trump and Biden neck and neck. Trump's principal argument is that "crooked" Biden is "corrupt and incompetent," especially failing to control immigration at the southern border. In words like those of Adolf Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, he says, "Illegal immigration is poisoning the blood of our nation. They're coming from prisons, from mental institutions — from all over the world." In his speeches he praises authoritarian leaders like Kim Jong Un is "very nice." And he quotes Vladimir Putin to the effect that Biden is persecuting him.

So far, the candidate of other parties or those running as independents, from Jill Stein of the Green Party to independents Cornel West and Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. haven't received much coverage in the media or support from the public. Though, according to a recent Gallup poll, 63% of Americans say we need a new third party. But the leaders of the unions, the major Black and Latino organizations, and women's groups remain loyal to the Democrats, and there is so far no sign of a crack. With the holidays behind us, the Biden-Trump contest will dominate the news throughout 2024.

While couched in terms of a struggle over democracy, in reality, this is a contest between Biden, the head of the party of the corporate, neoliberal plutocracy and Trump the leader of an authoritarian quasi-fascist movement.

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