

'Dark Brandon' shows up at State of the Union, mops the floor with lost Republicans

President Joe Biden, at the ripe age of 80, came out with ample vim and vigor in [Tuesday night's State of the Union address](#) and proceeded to mop the House floor with the howling, discombobulated remains of the Republican Party.

[Preaching populism and leaning hard on his noted skill as the empathizer-in-chief](#), Biden bounded through a speech that acknowledged the nation's struggles while remaining unerringly optimistic. He went off script regularly, parrying Republican lawmakers who heckled him, at one point backing the whole party into a corner and getting them to swear to protect Medicare and Social Security benefits.

I've never seen anything like it in a State of the Union speech – they ran at him like a pack of lemmings and, with a wink and a grin, he politely directed them to the cliff.

Joe Biden's State of the Union pep shows a reelection run may be coming

Whatever the White House cooks are feeding Biden these days, I'd like a plate of it myself. It's like he's Benjamin-Buttoning all of a sudden. And as he ponders running for reelection and nervous Democrats eye a younger candidate, Tuesday's speech suggests he's still got it when it comes to retail politicking.

Biden, of course, will never be mistaken for a great orator. But his address [relentlessly hit notes most Americans would cheer](#), putting the Republican lawmakers in a bind.

How do Republicans not applaud democracy?

Biden said, "[Our democracy remains unbowed and unbroken](#)." Republicans kept quiet.

Biden talked about a boom in infrastructure projects. Republicans kept quiet. Biden quipped, "I'll see you at the groundbreaking."

Biden said the unemployment rate is the lowest it has been in decades. Some offered tepid applause while others kept quiet.

If you don't cheer for democracy, improved infrastructure and a low unemployment rate, people are going to wonder whose team you're on.

Kevin McCarthy's State of the Union experience was one long squirm

The Republican lawmakers' unwillingness to applaud popular accomplishments that help people, coupled with repeated acts of childish heckling that Republican House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, seated behind Biden, tried and failed to shush, showed how weak and devoid of ideas their party has become.

Throughout the speech, McCarthy gave a clinic on squirming uncomfortably. At one point, Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene [shouted "LIAR!" at Biden](#). When the president was speaking about a man who lost his child to a fentanyl overdose, [Republicans began shouting Biden down](#), one yelling, "It's your fault!"

Dark Brandon deflects Republican heckling with policy

Biden [responded by asking Republicans to join him](#) and launch "a major surge" to stop fentanyl production and provide border agents with "more drug detection machines to inspect cargo."

That, of course, shut the Republicans up, because they don't want to consider a solution, they just want to have something to holler about.

Americans have rejected Republicans' performative outrage

The midterm elections showed clearly that the American people are not buying the kind of performative outrage Republicans are selling. But on Tuesday night, while the older guy they routinely describe as "senile" was energetically promoting hope and ideas that might make the country a better place, performative outrage was, again, all GOP lawmakers had.

You could see it in McCarthy's face as he tried to silence the please-put-me-on-Fox-News loudmouths in his caucus. He looked defeated. He looked like he was going to race home after the speech, write mournful poetry and enter a lengthy goth phase.

At SOTU, Biden showed America who's normal and who's crazy

You don't have to love Biden or even like him to see why he was feeling peppy Tuesday night. The 80-year-old kid from Scranton, Pennsylvania, was facing opponents who couldn't stop punching themselves.

C'mon, folks. This ain't fair.

In the Republican rebuttal to Biden's address, Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders said: "The dividing line in America is no longer between right or left. The choice is between normal or crazy."

She's not wrong. But I don't think she understands which side the American people see as crazy. (Hint: It's the side that let itself get outfoxed on live TV by a president they keep calling old and incompetent.)