



MEMORANDUM

TO: Media

FROM: Tim Murtaugh
Trump 2020 Communications Director

DATE: April 29, 2020

RE: Biden Misrepresentations

While Joe Biden remains in his basement, stumbling his way through friendly, pre-recorded interviews with the assistance of notes, it's important for reporters to recognize that he is also relying on another tactic to shield himself from criticisms or attack President Trump. With increasing frequency, Biden is obviously misrepresenting news reports and his own past positions in an effort to put controversies to bed or to level charges against the President.

If reporters find themselves in the unlikely situation of actually interviewing Joe Biden, or if seeking comment from his campaign staff, it will be important to keep this Biden tactic in mind.

The following are examples of situations where Team Biden falsely represented news accounts or his own record:

Tara Reade: As of the writing of this memo, Biden has not personally answered questions about the allegations by former Biden senate staffer Tara Reade that Biden sexually assaulted her in 1993. Instead, the Biden team has relied on a [New York Times](#) examination of those charges, with campaign staff claiming that the Times has completely cleared Biden of the allegation.

In [talking points distributed to surrogates by the Biden campaign](#), supporters are instructed to cite the Times report by saying, "In this case, a thorough review by the New York Times has led to the truth: this incident did not happen."

In fact, the New York Times concluded no such thing.

Times reporters interviewed Tara Reade, "lawyers who spoke to Ms. Reade about her allegation; nearly two dozen people who worked with Mr. Biden during the early 1990s, including many who worked with Ms. Reade; and the other seven women who criticized Mr. Biden last year, to discuss their experiences with him."

The Times story was an examination of recollections of numerous people, including those who confirmed that Reade told them about the alleged assault at the time. It did not reach a conclusion on the veracity of Reade's claims and it is dishonest for the Biden campaign to claim it did.

Indeed, in a stunning rebuke of the Biden campaign tactic, the New York Times issued an unusual statement on Wednesday, April 29, 2020:

“Buzzfeed reported on the existence of talking points being circulated by the Biden campaign that inaccurately suggest a New York Times investigation found that Tara Reade’s allegation ‘did not happen.’ **Our investigation made no conclusion either way,**’ a spokesperson for the Times said in a statement.”

Erroneous and corrected Politico story: On April 24, 2020, Politico ran a story falsely claiming that President Trump owed the Bank of China tens of millions of dollars because he held a minority share of a New York City building financed, in part, by the Chinese state-controlled bank. Within days, the Politico piece had been massively edited and corrected to reveal that the Bank of China had only held the debt for 22 days and had sold it in late November 2012. Politico updated the story by changing its headline to past tense, including information about China no longer holding the debt, and even taking the extraordinary step of running an editor’s note explaining and apologizing for the major error. In addition, CBS News, which had followed on the original Politico story, deleted a related tweet and made a public declaration of having done so.

Biden appeared in an interview with Jim DeFede of CBS4 in Miami on Monday, April 27, 2020 – after Politico had made its original correction – and used the now-debunked Bank of China story to divert attention away from his son Hunter’s business dealings with China.

“My son’s business dealings were not anything where everybody – what he’s talking about. Not even remotely, number one. Nothing to do with me, number two,” Biden said in his usual unintelligible presentation. “And talk about business dealings – look at the business dealings the president has with China. He owes, apparently, millions of dollars to the Bank of China.”

Additionally, despite the Democratic National Committee’s deletion of tweets referencing the original false Politico story, the Biden campaign has yet to remove tweets that also propagate the false Bank of China charge.

The Biden campaign cannot be allowed to use a debunked news report to shield Hunter Biden’s business dealings with China from criticism.

Biden’s own op-ed: Biden frequently points to an op-ed he placed in the January 27, 2020 edition of USA Today as proof that he had called for all sorts of remedies to the coronavirus outbreak, including that he was among the first to demand President Trump invoke the Defense Production Act. The op-ed contained no such demand.

“During the novel coronavirus pandemic, Biden also has demonstrated a fuzzy sense of time. In the four cases documented below, he claims that he first called for a specific action sooner than he actually did. Sometimes he cites a Jan. 27 opinion article he published in USA Today, titled ‘Trump is worst possible

leader to deal with coronavirus outbreak,” [wrote Glenn Kessler in the Washington Post](#). “The op-ed appeared only days after the Chinese government shut down the city of Wuhan in an effort to stem the crisis. **But the article itself was more of an attack on President Trump and a recollection of Obama administration steps taken against the 2014 Ebola outbreak than a detailed plan for action against a possible pandemic.**”

Biden also conveniently fails to mention that his top advisor on the coronavirus, [Ron Klain, appeared at the Aspen Institute on February 11, 2020](#) and discussed whether the coronavirus would be a “serious epidemic.” Klain said, “The coronavirus may be that, it may not be that. The evidence suggests it’s probably not that.”

Further, Biden held eight (8) campaign rallies in the month of March, including six (6) that occurred after President Trump’s most recent rally. He cannot be allowed to pretend that he was shouting from the rooftops about the coronavirus by misrepresenting his op-ed, ignoring what his top advisor said, and omitting the fact that he continued to campaign normally into the second week of March.

“Xenophobic” China travel restrictions: For two months, Joe Biden was harshly critical of President Trump’s January 31, 2020 decision to restrict travel from China.

On the day the President announced the travel restrictions, Biden called them “[hysterical xenophobia and fearmongering](#).”

The very next day, [he did it again](#).

Then he was critical of travel restrictions [again](#).

And later, he called them “xenophobic fear-mongering” [again](#).

Then, suddenly, he must have had a change of heart, because his campaign staff told CNN that [he actually supported the travel restrictions](#).

Biden also apparently forgets that coronavirus advisor [Klain said on national television](#) that he was against restricting travel from China, calling it “premature” – on January 28, 2020 – the day [after](#) Biden’s aforementioned op-ed appeared.

Biden cannot re-write two entire months of opposition to the travel restrictions simply because his staff finally decided to claim he supports them

CONCLUSION

Joe Biden may be more befuddled than any major party candidate for president has ever been, but he cannot be allowed to misuse facts and events as they suit him.

When his campaign portrays the New York Times as the judge dismissing the Tara Reade allegation, please remember that’s not what was reported.

When he and his campaign wield the Politico story on the Bank of China as a weapon against President Trump, please remember that it was massively corrected, and Politico issued an apologetic editor's note.

When he holds up his USA Today op-ed as though it were a complete roadmap through the coronavirus crisis, remember that it was not.

And when he pretends to support President Trump's China travel restrictions, remember he spent two months calling them "xenophobic,"