

OTHER VIEWS

Joe Biden should get out while he’s still ahead

We got used to his serial gaffes long ago. “That’s just Joe,” his friends and supporters say about his latest gaffes today.

I’m not one to make fun of him by calling him “Sleepy Joe” or any of his other nicknames, but now I’m starting to feel sorry for Biden.

He’s showing signs of mental confusion. And he’s looking and acting way too old for his political aspirations.

If I could talk to Biden, I’d tell him the truth everyone knows but doesn’t have the heart to say out loud:

“Joe, face reality. It’s time to get off the stage. You don’t need any more of this campaign crap. It’s time to quit while more people still love you than feel sorry for you. While you still have a little dignity left. While you still have time to spend with your family.”

Biden knows the score better than any pundit or fake journalist you’ve seen on TV.

He knows he’s too old and too out of touch to run. But he won’t admit it. He’s hanging on, pretending he has a political future when all he has is a past.

It’s only because of his name recognition that Biden is still leading in the polls, basically doubling up on the numbers of Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren.

But Biden is kidding himself if he thinks he can win the primary and defeat Trump next year.

In today’s new leftward sliding Democrat Party, he’s a living relic, another over-the-hill D.C. lifer with stale ideas pretending to be “woke” and carrying too much politically incorrect baggage from yesteryear.

Biden’s popularity in his own party peaked months ago and can only go downhill from here.

When the dozen Green New Dealers running for president start dropping by the wayside, their leftwing supporters are not going to all jump on the Biden Bandwagon. They’ll sign on with Warren or Sanders.

What Biden is doing is re-running the Hillary Clinton campaign – only four years later.

It’s not working for him, either.

He still thinks that he’ll take the White House next fall by repeating the campaign slogan “I may be too old. I may be too moderate. I may be boring. But only I can beat Trump.”

That might have worked for him in 2016, but we’ll never know because he deferred to President Obama’s wishes and the Clinton Machine.

Now Biden’s running a hapless, desperate, half-hearted campaign that’s become more like a personal sob-story tour.

In Iowa he’s been doing what he wouldn’t have done four years ago – using the death of his wife and daughter in a 1972 traffic accident as a way to talk about the importance of free health care for all.

So what should poor Joe do?

If I were advising him, I’d tell him to do exactly what Indianapolis Colts quarterback Andrew Luck did just this week – retire.

Luck shocked the pro football world this week by calling a press conference and saying he had decided to quit the game he loved – at 29.

Luck explained that after seven years in the NFL, he was too physically beat up and mentally worn out to go on.

Biden doesn’t have \$50 million to live on like Luck does. But he does have the \$15 million he’s reportedly made since he left the Obama administration.

That booty and a dozen speeches a year ought to be enough to keep Biden and his loved ones from having to move into a sidewalk tent in Los Angeles.

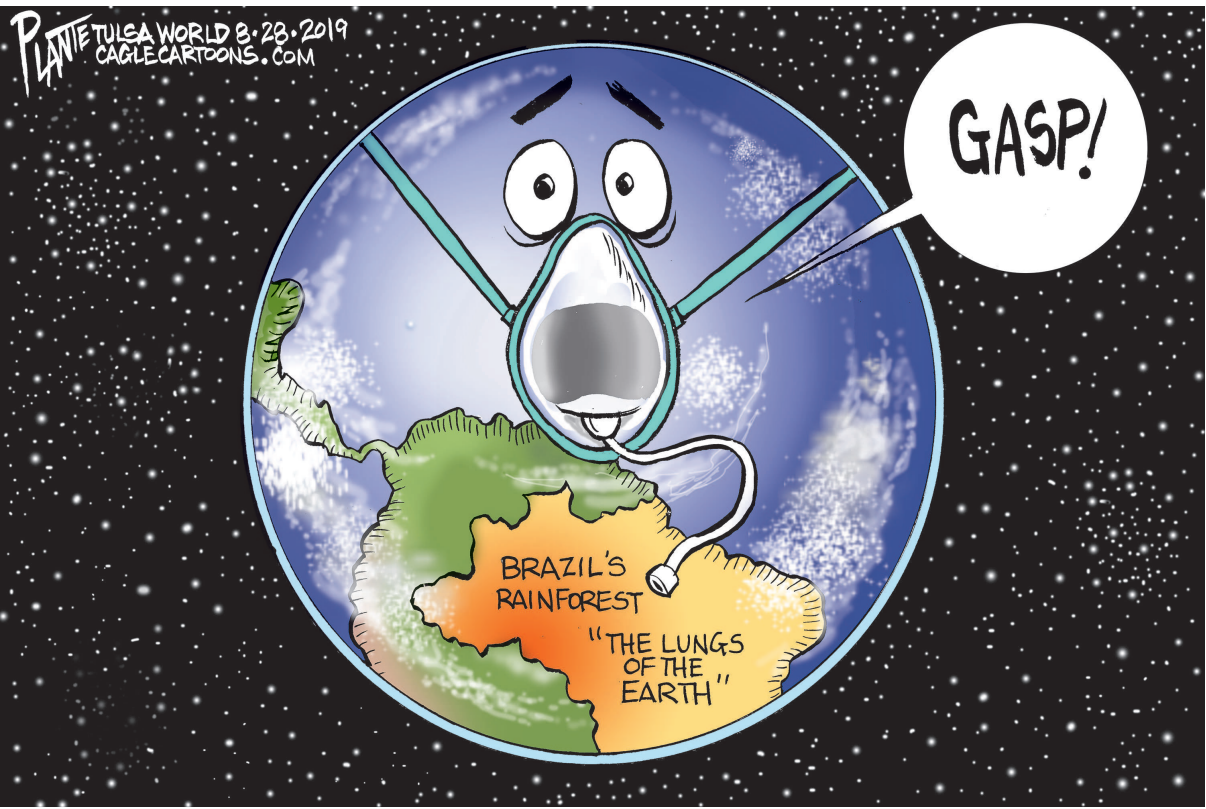
So what should Biden do?

Does he want to leave the national political playing field as a successful VP or as a failed presidential candidate?

Does he drop out of the race on his own or risk embarrassing himself so much he’s pushed out.

If I were him, I’d call Andrew Luck for guidance.

— Michael Reagan is the son of President Ronald Reagan, a political consultant, and the author of “Lessons My Father Taught Me: The Strength, Integrity, and Faith of Ronald Reagan.”



‘Trump must be stopped, and we must help’

There’s nothing Donald Trump won’t do to attack immigrants. Recently finalized immigration regulations threaten not thousands of families, but millions, and not only at the border, but here in Union County and all over the country. I believe Trump must be stopped, and we must help.

This new front in Trump’s class war puts visas up for auction, telling hardworking families in lower-wage jobs they need not apply. Immigrants who came to the United States with nothing and built better lives are some of the best American success stories. Trump’s plan makes this impossible for all but the already wealthy.

A decade after the recession, things are still tough for many of us. When hard work just isn’t enough, public safety-net programs — from baby food through the WIC Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to EpiPens through Medicaid or blood pressure medicine through Medicare — help close the gap.

Trump’s “public charge” regulation proposed last fall and now finalized weaponizes public programs, turning them against immigrants seeking admission to the U.S. or applying for a “green card.” Every doctor’s visit or family meal would put immigration status at risk. And since there is no way to account for which carrots an immigrant parent ate and which ones a U.S.-born child ate, the regulation effectively denies basics like food and housing to whole families.

Conservative estimates peg the regulation’s impact affecting 26 million persons nationwide. That includes the one-fourth of all children in the U.S. — the vast majority

born here — who live in immigrant families. It’s hard to overstate the consequences for Oregon, where the rule would affect thousands. As our neighbors lose basics like food, medical care and access to housing, every problem Oregon faces will worsen.

Because it targets immigrants of color, this policy will widen racial disparities on everything from infant mortality to housing stability. The Migration Policy Institute estimated it could affect more than 10 million Latinos and 3.8 million Asian American and Pacific Islander immigrants. In the wake of President Trump’s “s---hole” comment, news media reported an increase in deportations targeting African immigrants.

This is Trump at his worst — threatening working families to rig the game for the rich and drive racists to the polls. The “public charge” policy was crafted by Stephen Miller, architect of Trump’s family separation policy. Like that brutal policy, it’s a dangerous plan that’s ripe for abuse. Public charge has been manipulated before, against Jews and Irish and Italian Catholics. There’s no reason to think Trump won’t abuse it again.

Advocates for immigrant families and state attorneys general are already preparing litigation. But again and again, Trump and Miller have shown they won’t let the law stand in the way of their atrocities. And this isn’t the last wave in Trump’s attacks. He’s already proposed additional regulations targeting immigrant families’ health, incomes, food and homes.

Congress can end the abuse and protect immigrant families, but Congress is not always focused

My Voice

Bill Whitaker is a resident of La Grande.

My Voice columns should be 500 to 750 words. Submissions should include a portrait-type photograph of the author. Authors also should include their full name, age, occupation and relevant organizational memberships. Send columns to La Grande Observer, 1406 Fifth St., La Grande 97850, fax them to 541-963-7804 or email them to news@lagrandeobserver.com.

on the issues that matter for real people. So we must join together to tear down Trump’s paperwork wall. Demand that Oregon’s congressional representatives — including our congressman Greg Walden — take action to protect our state’s children and families.

Stopping Trump isn’t enough. Our leaders must also advance policies that create opportunities for all to succeed. A congressionally chartered plan to cut child poverty in half and legislation establishing Medicare for all would make immigrant families — citizen, documented and undocumented family members — eligible for the public programs that can help them build productive lives and also contribute fully to our economy and our communities.

Exclusion, poverty, illness and hunger don’t lead to greatness. We must rise up together to build a country we can be proud of.

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