

# Psychiatrist sees signs Biden was medicated for State of the Union performance

By [Jeff Mordock](#) - The Washington Times - Friday, March 8, 2024

A psychiatrist who has worked with elderly dementia patients said President [Biden](#) exhibited signs of stimulant use to mask cognitive decline in his amped-up, aggressive State of the Union speech on Thursday.

Mr. [Biden](#), 81, often raced through his remarks with the speed of an auctioneer, loudly shouting his words despite having a microphone in front of him.

Speed and volume of speech can be a sign of using [Adderall](#) or another amphetamine, said Dr. [Carole Lieberman](#), a forensic psychiatrist based in Beverly Hills, California.

“If you look at how [Joe Biden](#) usually is — slow and stumbling — compared to how he was during the State of the Union — fiery and angry — these are signs that are typical for someone taking [Adderall](#) or any amphetamine,” she said.

Dr. [Lieberman](#), who has not personally examined the president, said the signs of potential pharmaceutical use go beyond how Mr. [Biden](#) spoke during the nearly 90-minute speech, but also in his mannerisms.

For example, Mr. [Biden](#) typically rests his hands on the podium while delivering a speech from the teleprompter. During the State of the Union, he frequently gestured and moved with his hands at a rapid rate, she said.

At various points, Mr. [Biden](#) appeared to slur some of his words. That’s not new for the president, who sometimes slurs his words when he gets excited, but Dr. [Lieberman](#) said the speed in which he slurred suggested he was “psychopharmacology helped.”

“It was a word salad on speed,” she said.

Mr. Biden’s unusually energetic performance raised some questions on social media.

“No one is going to remember a single thing Biden says tonight. Everyone is going to remember how weirdly amped up he is and how bizarrely fast he’s speaking,” former White House press secretary Ari Fleischer wrote on X.

Frank Luntz, a Republican pollster and political consultant, wrote on social media that Mr. Biden’s address was “the loudest State of the Union speech I can remember.”

“Let’s see whether undecided voters like being yelled out,” he said.

The White House dismissed the criticism as well as the question about possible drug use.

“The translation of that is they agree with us that [Joe Biden](#) hit a home run. Republicans cried after he beat Paul Ryan in their 2012 debate, and it didn’t work then, either. Sorry the president kept them up past their bedtime last night,” White House spokesman Andrew Bates said in a statement to The Washington Times.

There is some evidence that [Adderall](#), which is used to treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, could also be used to treat cognitive diseases such as Alzheimer’s or dementia.

A 2022 study published in the Journal of Neurology, Neurosurgery & Psychiatry found medications that treat attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, such as [Adderall](#), can generally improve cognitive performance in Alzheimer’s patients.

“It’s given to focus someone’s attention so if you give it to someone who is not focused and give it to them ahead of a big event like the State of the Union, it will improve their focus,” Dr. [Lieberman](#) said of [Adderall](#). “But it’s treating the symptoms rather than boosting the brain and it’s addictive so it’s dangerous.”

Regardless, Dr. [Lieberman](#) said she’s noticed signs of what she believes is a cognitive decline in the president during the State the Union remarks. She said it was most apparent in his two biggest gaffes of the evening.

At one point, Mr. [Biden](#) appeared to flub a joke about how expensive prescription drugs are in America compared to other countries.

“Any of you want to get in Air Force One with me and fly to Toronto, Berlin, Moscow — I mean, excuse — And, well, even Moscow probably,” Mr. [Biden](#) said.

In another miscue, Mr. [Biden](#) bungled the name of Laken Riley, a young nursing student in Georgia whose murder is being blamed on an illegal immigrant.

“Lanken — Lanken Riley, an innocent young woman who was killed,” Mr. [Biden](#) said, according to the official White House transcript, though it sounded like he called her Lincoln Riley.

“He couldn’t correct his mistakes. He mentioned Moscow in a sentence where it made no sense. You could see him try to fix it, but he didn’t know how to correct himself. He couldn’t say the correct word,” Dr. [Lieberman](#) said. “Anyone could trip over Laken Riley’s name but he didn’t know how to correct it. If he knew enough about her to talk about her, he would know enough to call her by the right name.”

She also said anger and shouting on display Thursday night could be a sign of dementia because some patients can become frustrated ahead of important events and respond aggressively.

“The emotional volatility is a sign of dementia and was amped up because of the [Adderall](#) or amphetamine they gave him,” she said. “He wasn’t just talking loudly. He was shouting in a room where everyone could hear him and he had a microphone.”

It is not the first time someone has suggested Mr. [Biden](#) has had to take medication to stay on message. In 2020, President Trump accused Mr. [Biden](#) of using drugs to enhance his performance during the Democratic primary debates.

Mr. Trump went so far as to demand Mr. [Biden](#) take a drug test before their first debate, adding that he would take a test himself.

“I think there’s probably — possibly — drugs involved,” Mr. Trump said at the time.

Questions about Mr. [Biden](#)’s cognitive abilities have dogged his reelection efforts. A report by special counsel Robert Hur on Mr. [Biden](#)’s mishandling of classified documents intensified those concerns.

The report described the octogenarian’s memory as “hazy,” “fuzzy,” “faulty,” “poor” and having “significant limitations.” It noted that Mr. [Biden](#) could not recall when he served as vice president or when his son Beau died.

Mr. [Biden](#) has insisted his memory is fine, but frequent mental miscues have overshadowed his reassurances. A recent Morning Consult/Bloomberg poll found that 8 in 10 voters in seven battleground states say Mr. [Biden](#) is “too old to be president.”

Mr. [Biden](#) had his annual physical last month but did not take a cognitive test.

- *Jeff Mordock can be reached at [jmordock@washingtontimes.com](mailto:jmordock@washingtontimes.com).*