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## **HEED BIDEN'S FAREWELL WARNINGS: "We" Must Fight Oligarchy's Power, Fact Check Blocks, "Tech-Industrial Complex", Presidential Immunity**

By [Robert Weiner](#) and [Khel Gordhan](#)



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On January 15th, Biden gave his farewell address as president of the United States. He began the speech by commending the labor of American workers and briefly discussed some of his administration's accomplishments. These included adding 16 million jobs and improving infrastructure programs. Thanks to these remarkable achievements, a post-Covid recession most economists had predicted was avoided. However, in the 2nd half of his speech, Biden gave a chilling series of warnings. He spoke out against the increasing "oligarchy" power concentration into the hands of a few ultra-wealthy people, labeling them the "tech-industrial complex". This term echoes the "military-industrial complex" President Eisenhower warned about in his farewell address in 1961. The nation must hope that Biden's warnings will not be ignored as Eisenhower's have been. If left unchecked, this oligarchical system could threaten the very structure of our democracy. In his speech, Biden argues oligarchy has already manifested itself in 3 distinct ways.

First, this power has made itself known by corrupting social media platforms. In exchange for power and profit America's billionaires have sacrificed the integrity of their social media platforms. As Biden explains, "Americans are being buried under an avalanche of misinformation and disinformation enabling the abuse of power." We don't need to look far to see this happening. Musk's ownership of Twitter has seen the removal of fact-checking and the silencing of those who criticize him or his allies. For example, when Ken Klippenstein, an American journalist, published a dossier on J.D. Vance on the campaign trail, he was temporarily suspended. Mark Zuckerberg has recently moved in this direction, removing fact-checking from Facebook on the 7th of January this year. Something must be done to restore the integrity of these platforms.

Secondly, the power of the ultra-rich can be seen through the proliferation of AI. Forms of artificial intelligence, like ChatGPT, can serve wonderful roles. As Biden points out, AI could even help end cancer as we know it. However, these tools can be exploited. Without safeguards, AI could lead to further exploitation. They can "-spawn new threats to our rights, our way of life, to our privacy, how we work, and how we protect our nation". Therefore safeguards must be put in place to ensure that A.I. is "safe and trustworthy and good for all humankind".

Biden also warned of how oligarchical power has manifested itself in government. Groveling to billionaires for funding can make or break political campaigns. On the inaugural stage right behind President Trump, were the 1st, 2nd, and 4th richest people in the world according to Forbes: - Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, and Mark Zuckerberg. In a world where your vote is tied to the dollar, people with a fatter purse have a greater say.

Biden also proposed an 18-year term limit and stronger ethics reforms for the Supreme Court. The 2.4 million dollars worth of gifts, a number growing by the revelation, taken by Justice Clarence Thomas last year, underscores the need for our highest court to be held accountable. Biden also called for an end to members of Congress exploiting their inside information to trade stocks. According to Gallup polls, last year only 17% of Americans approved of the way Congress handles its job. Each year the approval rating for Congress falls and it's no accident why. Unethical greed by our representatives must come to an end.

Most importantly, Biden called for an end to presidential immunity: "The President's power is not absolute and it shouldn't be," Biden said. The president should not be a king free from consequences. That tyranny was what the founders of this country revolted against.

Apparently, with the dawn of a new Trump administration comes the rise of a new Gilded Age, where money and influence matter more than competency and integrity. Nothing has set that tone quite like Elon Musk, an unelected billionaire, doing the Hitler salute on Trump's inaugural stage twice.

Biden's speech isn't merely a warning against corruption, but also a call to action. "Yes, we sway back and forth to withstand the fury of the storm, to stand the test of time, a constant struggle, constant struggle. A short distance between peril and possibility. But what I believe is the America of our dreams is always closer than we think. And it's up to us to make our dreams come true."

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