



By: Tomorrow's Affairs Staff

The investigation into Biden – a controversial decision, which could end up costing the Republicans a lot



Kevin McCarthy, Speaker of the US House of Representatives, says the House will open a formal impeachment inquiry against US President Joe Biden. This decision is one of those that might be a mistake, because it is riddled with controversies.

McCarthy announced that he had tasked 3 House committees to investigate Biden and determine whether the US president took advantage of his son Hunter's affairs when he served as vice president under Barack Obama's administration.

For 9 months, 2 of these 3 committees have been looking into Joe Biden in an effort to find a smoking gun that would show he benefited from his son's allegedly corrupt business abroad.

There is no such evidence or any basis for accusations against Biden. This is the first controversy that follows the House Speaker's decision to open an impeachment inquiry.

The House had a way to find tangible proof and witnesses using its committees that would prove the Bidens' corruption. But that did not happen.

Where did the House chairman and his supporters (are they just that, or are they also his sponsors?) find the confidence that the evidence that should lead to impeachment would emerge after all?

No vote in the House

Kevin McCarthy launched the investigation without a House vote. This in itself is not a precedent. The rule to reach decisions related to impeachment by a simple majority was changed by the Democrats under Nancy Pelosi in 2019, when they launched the impeachment proceedings against Donald Trump.

In order to mitigate the negative perception that a decision made by one man as opposed to the entire House of Congress creates, McCarthy cited this terrible precedent while announcing his decision.

‘[The] Speaker can’t decide on impeachment unilaterally, it requires a full vote of the House of Representatives’, said McCarthy when Nancy Pelosi opened an impeachment inquiry into Trump in 2019.

But now he has done the same thing that he accused the leader of the Democratic majority of doing just 4 years ago. This is another major flaw in McCarthy's decision.

Even if the investigation found evidence of Biden's corruption and satisfied the expectations of McCarthy and his partners, how much political legitimacy would such a discovery have, given that the entire procedure came from one man rather than the House majority?

A decision without much legitimacy

The problem with the decision to investigate Biden is low legitimacy. Even though this decision has the support of almost all the participants in the race for the Republican presidential nomination, the question is whether this decision could win a majority in the House.

The narrow Republican majority represents a significant risk factor when the legitimacy of a controversial decision needs to be checked, and this one regarding the impeachment inquiry against Biden is precisely that.

McCarthy will not put a proposal to a vote if he is not absolutely sure it will pass with the Republican majority.

However, some moderate Republican representatives might not agree with this, precisely because of its lack of foundation and the impossibility of producing a direct political effect – the impeachment.

Pressure from far-right Republicans

Kevin McCarthy ordered an investigation against Biden under apparent pressure from far-right Republican representatives. They are, in fact, the main electoral base of the Speaker of the House: they brought him to that position, and they can now make the most of that influence.

James Comer and Jim Jordan, the chairmen of the House Oversight Committee and the Judiciary Committee, are among the most ardent supporters of Donald Trump and his re-candidacy for the presidency.

The impeachment inquiry against Biden is, in fact, an operation of the most right-wing faction of the Republican Party, carried out through Kevin McCarthy, who owes his presidency of the House to that faction.

This is a new controversy because it obviously did not result from consensus within the Republican Party, let alone as a well-discussed and measured decision made a year before the presidential elections.

Revenge for the indictments against Trump

Perhaps the biggest problem regarding this decision is its "vindictive" character. Its motive is to criminalise Joe Biden at a time when he is more motivated than ever to run for president again.

It is vindictive because Trump has been criminalised and will spend most of his campaign participating in legal proceedings. The start of the impeachment process against Biden appears to be an effort to balance the candidate's criminality, which is currently entirely on Trump's side.

This logic casts doubt on Republican claims that the indictments against their most popular candidate have done no harm to his reputation among voters.

If they want to damage Biden's image in the same manner - by launching an investigation

and searching for evidence against him - then it is entirely realistic that Trump will also suffer damage due to the indictments.

We do not know precisely how the House Speaker's order to conduct an impeachment inquiry against President Biden will end. But we know how it will not end - with impeachment.

Due to the Senate's disregard for the House's prior impeachment decisions, none of the 4 previous investigations into 3 presidents resulted in their impeachment.

Given the Democratic Senate majority, even if the investigation and subsequent impeachment proceedings would miraculously pass in the House, which is quite unlikely, that will not happen right now.

The Republican Party will not emerge strengthened from this action because it will not complete the procedure designed to have only one outcome - impeachment. Their accusations will not have proof, much less sanctions for the offender. In this case, the offender is the US president.

If the goal is to complicate the forthcoming internal party elections for presidential candidates and to breathe wind into Donald Trump's sails, the effect could be the complete opposite because the attack on Biden in this manner is doomed in advance.