

In only three words – “you ain’t black” – Biden reinforced every stereotype about the Democratic Party’s historic relationship with the African-American community. He implied that black voters are incapable of determining for themselves which candidate to support and that Democrats have taken their votes for granted for years.

Biden apologized for his remark, attributing it to his propensity for being “a wise guy” given to off the cuff commentary not intended to be taken seriously.

Black leaders weren’t buying it.

The founder of Black Entertainment Television, for instance, ripped into the former vice president and suggested he spend the remainder of the campaign apologizing to the African-American community.

The episode is indicative of the nervousness among party leaders over Biden’s viability as the candidate capable of turning Trump out of office. It focused yet again on the concerns over his continued stumbles, mistakes, occasionally incoherent ramblings and propensity toward revisionist history to inflate and embellish his record and accomplishments.

Even in the insular campaign setting brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, when preparation time and talking points rehearsal are ample, Biden has blundered and appeared disconnected from reality.

His discomfort in speaking into a camera in the makeshift studio in his basement in Wilmington, Del., is palpable. He’s remarkably ill at ease, and it shows through. Fairly or not, his performances feed the perception that he is a 77-year-old man in decline and whose cognitive abilities have slipped.

His preoccupation with choosing a vice presidential running mate has taken on the feel of American Idol competition rather than a sober and objective examination of the qualifications and intellect of someone who may very well assume a considerably out sized role in a Biden Administration.

All that’s missing is a panel of B-list celebrities passing judgment on singers, dancers, acrobats, musicians, ventriloquists and comedians. Restoring a sense of dignity to the search is crucial to avoid tumbling over the line from seriousness into farce.

Hess committed to a female running mate and while he hasn’t committed to an African-American, there exists an ex³/_e

It does not, however, mitigate the shame of “you ain’t black.”

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